

Mitigation Strategies and causes of Drug Shortages in Managing a Threat to Patient Safety

Hixious Andrew*

Department of Translational Medicine, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom

DESCRIPTION

Drug shortages in community pharmacies have become a significant issue in recent years. A drug shortage is defined as a situation where the demand for a medication exceeds its supply, leading to difficulties in obtaining the medication or delays in treatment. Drug shortages can have a significant impact on patients, both in terms of their health outcomes and their overall experience of care. Not only retail chains suffering from drug shortages, but two-thirds of local pharmacies are also struggling to fill vacancies. As the problem accelerates and affects the entire world, many countries have developed different strategies to overcome the problem. All kinds of pharmaceutical life-saving drugs such as oncology drugs, antibacterial drugs, analgesics, opioids, cardiovascular drugs, radiopharmaceuticals, and parenteral products are all in short supply. Medicine shortages affect all stakeholders from economic, clinical, and humanitarian perspectives. The first drug shortages on record can be traced back to insulin shortages in the early 1920s. Some of the ways in which drug shortages can affect patients include:

Delayed treatment

When a medication is in short supply, patients may experience delays in receiving their medication, which can lead to a delay in treatment or an interruption in treatment. This can have serious consequences for patients with chronic conditions, such as diabetes or hypertension, where consistent medication management is critical to maintain health.

Substitution with alternative medications

In some cases, pharmacists may need to substitute a patient's medication with an alternative medicine due to a shortage. This can lead to issues with medication efficacy, side effects, and interactions, which can compromise patient safety and health outcomes.

Increased costs

When a medication is in short supply, the cost of the medication may increase due to increased demand. This can lead to financial strain for patients who may need to pay out of pocket for their medications.

Emotional distress

Patients who are affected by drug shortages may experience emotional distress due to the uncertainty and unpredictability of their medication supply. This can lead to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.

Drug shortages can also have a significant impact on the health system completely. Some of the ways in which drug shortages can affect the health system include:

Increased healthcare costs

When a medication is in short supply, healthcare providers may need to switch to more expensive medications or treatments, which can drive up healthcare costs.

Increased workload for healthcare providers

Healthcare providers may need to spend more time managing drug shortages, such as identifying alternative medications, obtaining medication from other sources, and communicating with patients and other providers.

Compromised patient safety

Drug shortages can compromise patient safety by leading to medication errors, delays in treatment, and medication substitutions that may not be as effective as the original medication.

Correspondence to: Hixious Andrew, Department of Translational Medicine, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, United Kingdom, E-mail: andrewhix@ksnv-23.uk

Received: 26-Jan-2023, Manuscript No. JAP-23-23392; **Editor assigned:** 30-Jan-2023, PreQC No. JAP-23-23392 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 13-Feb-2023, QC No. JAP-23-23392; **Revised:** 20-Feb-2023, Manuscript No. JAP-23-23392 (R); **Published:** 27-Feb-2023, DOI: 10.35248/1920-4159.23.15.347

Citation: Andrew H (2023) Mitigation Strategies and causes of Drug Shortages in Managing a Threat to Patient Safety. J Appl Pharm. 15:347.

Copyright: © 2023 Andrew H. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Public health concerns

Drug shortages can also have public health implications, particularly if the medication in short supply is critical for the treatment of infectious diseases or other public health concerns.

There are several factors that contribute to drug shortages in community pharmacies. Some of the common causes of drug shortages include: Manufacturing issues such as quality control problems, equipment failures, or raw material shortages can lead to drug shortages. Regulatory issues such as delays in FDA approval, manufacturing plant inspections, or changes in drug labeling or packaging can also contribute to drug shortages.

Changes in market demand, such as an increase in the number of patients needing a particular medication or a decrease in the number of manufacturers producing a medication, can lead to drug shortages. Natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, or floods can disrupt the supply chain and lead to drug shortages. There are several potential solutions to address the issue of drug shortages in community pharmacies. Some of these solutions include, improving supply chain transparency can help to identify potential issues with drug supply early on and facilitate proactive measures to address them. Encouraging manufacturers to increase the production of critical medications can help to address supply shortages.