

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN PHARMACEUTICAL OPERATIONS

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Introduction

At the world level there is the concern for building a new health system adapted to the 21st century. In this regard, the system that assures the quality care in pharmacotherapy and assessment of the quality of using the medication represents a guarantee for an efficient and safe pharmacotherapy for the patient and society. The assurance of quality in the pharmaceutical care represents a more and more solicited and important concern for the profession of pharmacist [5].

Quality may seem an ambiguous term, as we can recognize quality when we see it, but the definition of quality is most of the times subjective. In Webster's Dictionary quality is defined as a level of excellence [11]. This definition helps at analyzing the definitions of the specific quality from the domain of health and supports the idea according to which quality represents a continuous excellence. From the definition given by the Office of Technology Assessment we can assert that in the process of medical care, quality may be measured and used for the care offered to the patients. Although the patients are not always the best arbitrators of the quality of the pharmaceutical care, as they may not know what they want, may not have clear ideas about what they need. Therefore, the pharmacist has the duty to offer services of qualitative care to the patient [1].

Pharmaceutical Services

The pharmacies take an integrant part from the system of health care. The pharmacists are authorized professional persons for assuring pharmaceutical care in health and they develop their activity in conformity with the legislation and regulations in force, as well as the strict and professional rules [12]. This is the vision of the international organizations: World Health Organization (OMS) and the European Commission [15].

The pharmaceutical services represent the assembly of all actions performed by the pharmacist, necessary for warranting the pharmaceutical care of the population. Their purpose is to ensure the best answer to the needs and health problems of the population entirely and of the patient individually. The pharmaceutical services are part of the health system and have as purpose the improvement of the health condition and increase of life quality of the population [6], [8], [9], [13], [14].

Pharmaceutical Care

The pharmaceutical care consists in the responsible provision of the therapy with medicine for obtaining some clear results that improve or maintain the quality of the patient's life. The pharmaceutical care is a term with international recognition, defined as being the practice in which the pharmacist assumes his responsibility for the needs of the patient regarding the medicine and is considered responsible for the satisfaction of these needs [1].

Therefore more and more, the task of the pharmacist is to ensure that the treatment with medicine of a patient is properly indicated, is the most efficient available, the most suitable possible and the most convenient for the patient. By assuming this direct responsibility for the health needs of the patient, the pharmacists may bring a significant contribution to the result of the therapy with medicines and the quality of the patients' life [2], [6], [8], [9], [14].

Methods of assuring the quality

In the domain of pharmacy, the raw materials or the structure for a qualitative care are numerous and different: the number of pharmacists on a shift, the area of confidentiality, the quality of the pharmacists, the total area of the pharmacy, the bibliographical materials about medicines and access to on-line information, the stock of medicines and the counselling areas.

As the pharmacists are responsible for all the stages of using the medicines, the processes within the pharmacy may refer to any of these stages: prescribing, release, administration and monitoring. Among the indicators of the processes there are found the compliance with the clinical norms, the percentage of the prescriptions evaluated from the point of view of fairness and the percentage of the patients counseled.

The results represent the stimulant of the management of the therapy with medicines, which determine the pharmacists to assume a role in educating the patients and the management of the chronic diseases. Among these activities, they succeed to improve the pharmaceutical care of the patients through: (1) Increase of the control of the patients on their medical affections [3], [7] and (2) Decrease of using the resources from the budget of the system of health insurances [7]; (3) Improvement of the knowledge of the patients regarding the diseases and their medication [2], [11]; (4) Increase of adopting and maintaining the non-pharmaceutical regime [11]; (5) Increase of satisfaction of patients regarding the care they benefit from [4], [7]; (6) Saving the money of the patients [4], [7]; (7) Improvement of the quality of the patients' life [2], [11].

The capacity of the pharmacists to identify, settle and prevent the problems related to medication, as well as assuming the responsibility in the domain of chronic diseases make the object of many papers, their results representing the final purpose of the therapy and they may be analyzed through more methods [1], [2], [4], [10].

Conclusion

If we apply the ideas mentioned above in the pharmaceutical practice, we may state that the qualitative improvements shall produce the clinical results wanted, such as an increased quality of life, as well as a greater satisfaction of the patients. In the end this will make the pharmacy create the image of a supplier of pharmaceutical care of the best quality.

The processes for improving the quality were used for monitoring the errors of medication and for avoiding the errors of prescribing.

In general, the techniques for improving the quality were used in an institutional frame, but they become more and more frequent in the pharmacies that offer services of assisted care.

Quality represents the essential component of the competent and professional pharmaceutical practice. Many of the changes for improving the quality are simple, may be fast implemented but they have a massive impact on the quality of the patients' care.

Quality in the domain of the pharmaceutical care reached a position of maximum visibility and the pharmacist is recognized as the key – actor in this process. Therefore, the pharmacists shall be required more and more to be involved in assuring the quality of all the segments within the system of using the medicines.