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Utilization of generic versus brand name psychopharmaceuticals during a ten-year period in Croatia

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Rational drug utilization is an important segment of every national health policy. The aim was to determine distribution and trends in the outpatient utilization of generic versus brand name psychopharmaceuticals and to evaluate the rationality of prescribing psychopharmaceuticals during a ten-year period. Using the World Health Organization Anatomical-Therapeutic-Chemical classification/Defined Daily Doses (ATC/DDD) methodology, the number of DDD was calculated from data collected from all Zagreb pharmacies on the number and size of drug packages, during the 2001-2010 period. The ratio of generic and brand name drug costs served as an indicator on assessing the rationality of drug utilization. Total cost for psycho pharmaceuticals increased by 20.1%, more for brand name than for generic agents (32.7% vs. 7.4%). The highest share of generic psychopharmaceuticals as compared with brand name drugs according to DDD per 1000 inhabitants per day (DDD/1000/day) was in the group of psycholeptics (83.6% in 2001 vs. 82.2% in 2010), most in hypnotics and sedatives, and least in antipsychotics. The share of generic psychopharmaceuticals in total drug utilization according to DDD/1000/day was decreased by 12%. The greatest decrease was in antidepressants, i.e., by 46% according to DDD/1000/day; and in antipsychotics by 30.9%. In the therapeutic subgroup of mood stabilizers, the share of generic drugs in total drug utilization declined by 32% according to DDD/1000/day. There is a potential to achieve some savings with generic psychopharmaceuticals. Combining the initiatives to lower the price of generics with demand-side measures to enhance their prescribing is important to maximize prescribing efficiency.

Biography

Marina Polić-Vižintin completed her graduation from the School of Medicine, University of Zagreb in 1982 and PhD thesis defended in 2015, at the same School of Medicine. She passed a specialist exam in Social Medicine in 1989. She is currently working at Dr Andrija Štampar Teaching Institute of Public Health. She did her Post-graduate study in Gerontology and in Public Health. She is also a Senior Lecturer at the University of Applied Health Studies in Zagreb, subject Public Health. She participated in a number of research projects and took active part in many congresses and seminars in Croatia and abroad. She has published numerous professional and scientific papers in Croatian and international periodicals.

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