

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMOTING THE RATIONAL USE OF DRUGS IN HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

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Rational use of drugs is one of the most important concepts in modern healthcare system; it requires close attention and active policy. Rational use of drugs requires that patients receive their medications suitable to their needs in appropriate doses that meet their individual requirements and needs, for an adequate and appropriate period and at lowest cost.

According to WHO evaluations, medicines are wide prescribed and sold unsuitably, so that many patients fail to take them correctly. This leads to negative therapeutics and economic results. If drugs are used in an irrational way, they may cause many risks and health hazards and undesirable side effects. Common reasons for the irrational use of drugs in developed and developing countries include: bad or poor communication between health professionals and patients; over or under (unsuitable) use of drugs and prolongation of illness or of cause of different drug reactions; interruption in prescribing drugs in accordance with clinical guidelines; wrong or unfounded self-medication (including inappropriate use of antibiotics); lack of information and therefore increase in the cost of treatment or increased of mortality; inadequate training and education of some healthcare professionals etc.

Rational use of drugs is possible with the interaction of all interested parties. Healthcare professions, physicians and pharmacists must care about objective information of drugs they prescribe or recommend the patient and about critical assessments, risks or benefits of drug used. They also must be able to compare the advantages and disadvantages of the large number of drugs in the market and have some lucrative methods of promotion of drugs employed by pharmaceutical industries. Those persons play a key role in promoting the rational use of drugs in our society.

WHO recommends some important key-points in order to improve the rational use of drugs, among them: establishment of a national office or committee to coordinate policies on drug use in districts and hospitals and sufficient government expenditure to ensure availability of drugs and healthcare staff; development and use of national essential medicines list; inclusion of problem-based pharmacotherapy training in undergraduate curricula; continuing supervision, audit and feedback and medical training as a licensure requirement for health care professionals; use of independent drug information and avoidance of perverse financial incentives of pharmaceutical companies.

Activities to promote the rational use of drugs should be an important part of the national drug policy and should be developed taking into account the level of development of the national health system and available resources.