



Service Priorities and Programmes Electronic Presentations

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Submitting author: Mr Siu Yin WONG

Post title: Pharmacist, Queen Mary Hospital, HKWC

Pharmaceutical Review on Injectable Drug Switch

*Wong SYH, Cheung STD, Mak WMR, Chui CMW, Wong FFC
Department of Pharmacy, Queen Mary Hospital*

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Introduction

The change of drug availability due to drug shortage or contract renewal is not uncommon. Such drug product switch may generate concerns in healthcare practitioners when providing drug treatment to patients. Such concerns arise when there are changes in the aspects which include drug composition and concentration, dilution method, stability, storage and procedure of administration. Although we have a mechanism for collecting information from new suppliers and reviewing the differences, it may not always be adequate in considering concerns from frontline staff, and somehow their concerns are sometimes addressed as late as when the new drugs are being used at the point of care.

Objectives

To communicate with clinicians and nurses on the drug product switch and address their concerns if any before the actual switch takes place, via an earlier pharmaceutical review and timely clarification with the Chief Pharmacist's Office / suppliers / manufacturers by clinical pharmacists. At the same time, pharmacy staff can understand the details of the drug switch, the differences of products and action to be taken if any before the switch.

Methodology

A team of clinical pharmacists was formed and a two-step review process was implemented for each potential drug switch for injectable drugs in March 2015. The review focused on the aspects including administration route and method, reconstitution and dilution methods, and their stability, storage condition, paediatric indications, preservative, etc. After the pharmaceutical review, clinical pharmacists would decide on the necessity of further actions including clarification with suppliers, seeking for clinicians' feedback and preparing IV drug reminder for dispensing to wards with the new drugs.

Result

From March to December 2015, 24 injectable drug switches were reviewed. Two drugs needed clarification from suppliers for further product information. IV drug reminders to nurse on administration details were prepared for issuing to wards for 3

drugs. Clinician's feedback was sought for and special arrangement was made before the switch for 1 drug. The remaining 18 drugs required no further follow-up action. The new pharmaceutical review mechanism can ensure a smooth transition of products with clinical pharmacists, nurses and clinicians all well aware of the switch and the concerns can be addressed well before the switch so as to enhance a safe and effective drug therapy for our patients.