

# A Review on Integral Role of Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee in Medication Management and Usage

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## ABSTRACT

Inappropriate drug use is a major problem and a compromise to patient's safety associated with healthcare. It is an obvious expectation of patients to get safe and accurate treatment but sometimes mismanagement of drug therapy may create an undesired situation having potential to cause adverse drug events. So, to overcome this problematic situation, it is an integral requirement of a healthcare organization to constitute a multidisciplinary committee of dedicated members having enthusiasm to work towards patient's safety. Such committee is called as pharmacy & therapeutics (P & T) committee. P & T committee works by creating, maintaining and monitoring of medication management system in healthcare organization.

**Keywords:** Pharmacy & therapeutics (P & T) committee, medication errors, adverse drug events, Pharmaco- economics, patient's safety

## INTRODUCTION

Poor quality, excess cost and irrational drug usage are the main drugs usage related issues of health care system. These problems can lead to potential adverse drug events to the patient. An improper medication management is a question mark on the quality of patient's care and safety. Many research studies shows that lack of medication management system is a clear compromise to the patient's safety. So, to overcome this problem, it is very essential for the healthcare organization to constitute a committee of dedicated healthcare professionals and is called as pharmacy and therapeutics (P & T) committee. Pharmacy and therapeutics committee is very important for the proper management of

medications in a healthcare organization. The P & T committee develops, implement and monitor the medication usage policies in the healthcare setup. The basic process involved in medication management & usage that requires continuous monitoring is:

- Selection and procurement,
- Storage and handling,
- Prescribing and transcribing,
- Preparing and dispensing,
- Administration and Monitoring of the drugs.

While selection of the drugs for the hospital drug formulary, it should be analyzed for its pharmaco-economic properties which mainly includes cost, efficacy, risk and utility of the drugs. Only

limited brands (maximum 2 or 3 brands) of a particular drug should be kept in the drug formulary. The storage of drugs must be maintained to ensure the stability and efficacy of the drugs. Proper handling and transport of drugs must be maintained to avoid any physical damage to the drugs. Good prescribing and transcribing of drugs order must be ensured to avoid misinterpretation and prevent the possibility of adverse drug events. Administration of drugs must be accurate and the prescribed drugs need to check for its therapeutic appropriateness prior to administration. Monitoring of drug therapy is the responsibility of all health care professionals (Doctors, nurses, pharmacists) involved in patient's care.

Clinical pharmacy services should be employed to monitor the overall medication management process in the healthcare setup. Implementation of clinical pharmacy services is highly effective in improvement of medication usage.

### **Structure of Pharmacy and Therapeutics committee:**

P & T committee should consist of all stakeholders involved in medication process. The structure of P & T committee should include following healthcare professionals:

- Chairperson (should be a practicing physician and head of a clinical speciality like paediatrics, geriatrics or critical care)
- Secretary (should be a clinical pharmacist with speciality in pharmacology, pharmaco-therapeutics and pharmaco-economics )
- Representatives from following departments:
  - Physicians (Heads of all clinical specialities)
  - Nursing department (Head of Nursing)
  - Pharmacy department (Heads of pharmacy purchase & dispensing services)
  - Microbiologist

- Medical director/ Medical superintendent
- Quality & systems
- Dietetics
- Information technology (IT) department

The chairman of the committee is the approval authority and is a responsible person to take decisions on the sole discretion of other committee members for the improvement of medication process. A clinical pharmacist should be appointed as the secretary of the committee to take care of all the activities of the committee. The main primary responsibilities of the clinical pharmacist includes monitoring and evaluation of system effectiveness, analyze the pharmaco-economics properties of new drug requests, to schedule the committee meetings on discussion with committee members at defined interval, to prepare meeting agenda, presentation and minutes of committee meeting. The committee secretary also maintains the record of all activities of pharmacy and therapeutics committee. The members of committee discuss the issues and give inputs to resolve them and also suggest the strategies to improve the system more efficiently. All decisions for process improvement should be circulated well by P&T committee to all healthcare professionals involved in patient's care for the implementation and monitoring purpose.

### **Functions of pharmacy and therapeutics committee:**

- Development, implementation and monitoring of the medication management & usage policy.
- Maintain the hospital drug formulary (addition and deletion of drugs from the formulary).
- Ensure proper supply, storage and distribution of drugs.
- Promotes rational use of drugs and evidence based practice.
- Monitor and evaluate the performance of the medication management system continuously (by conducting drug utilization evaluation (DUE)).

- Identifying, advice and resolves the drug related issues (proper supply, storage, medication errors, adverse drug reactions).
- Implement and conduct the effective tools and techniques including training, educational material and counseling (when required) for the improvement of medication management and usage.

## CONCLUSION

Healthcare accreditation bodies like NABH and JCI also recommend the presence of a multidisciplinary committee to take a lead role in the improvement and maintenance of the medication usage in a healthcare organization. Many evidences show the number of incidences of potential and serious adverse drug events happened due to improper drug usage. So, to overcome this major problem, a team of dedicated and patient care oriented healthcare professionals should be constituted as a pharmacy & therapeutics committee. It should not be only to fulfill the requirements but with a zeal to work towards patient's safety and to improve healthcare system.

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