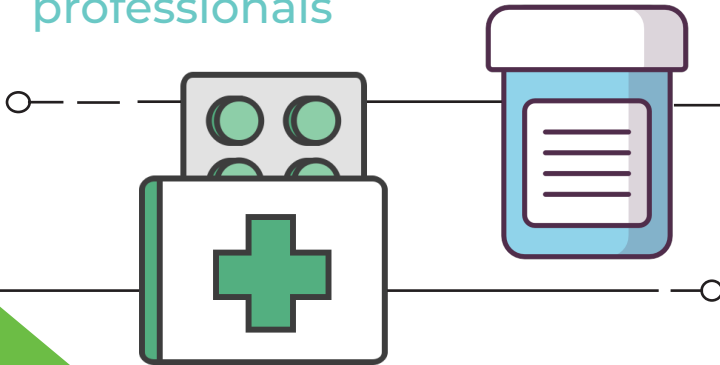


2018 EAHP Survey on Medicines Shortages

Other healthcare professionals



- Medicines shortages were reported to be a major issue faced in hospitals across Europe.
- In terms of delivering the best care to patients and/or operating the hospital pharmacy, an overwhelming 90% of respondents answered 'Yes', providing strong evidence that shortages of medicines is an extremely common problem in hospitals today. 7% of respondents answered 'No', and 3% were unsure.
- Antimicrobial agents were the type of medicine most frequently reported as having shortage problems, with 77%.
- The medicine which was reported to be most frequently associated with supply issues was Piperacillin/tazobactam with 272 responses across 18 countries.

What impact medicines shortages had on patient care?



59% care delayed



31% cancellations of care



25% medication errors



25% suboptimal treatment



20% increased length of hospital stay



5% readmissions due to treatment failure



1% death

Issues with other healthcare professionals

Shortages of medication can lead to confusion, and possibly conflict, with other healthcare professionals. This may be because they do not understand the causes for shortages or how the procurement process works. Some comments that illustrate this are:

- *“It’s sometimes hard to convince doctors that “common” drugs can have shortages. It can be a **source of tension between pharmacist and doctors.**” – France*
- *“Mostly shortages don’t reach the patient, but doctors and the nurses aren’t satisfied with this situation. They accuse the pharmacists that they are not able to organize medicines.” – Austria*
- *“No information about reasons of shortage - no warning with time enough to resolve the problem with calm - change the supplier, and when the shortage is solved the original supplier delivers the shipment and your stock is suddenly huge - doctors, nurses and patients are confused with the frequent changes.” – Spain*

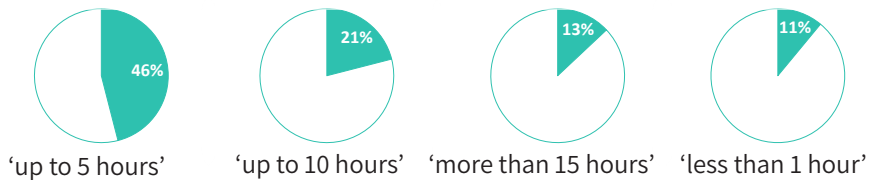
As the following comment from Belgium explains, when managing a shortage, it is important to have good communication between the hospital pharmacists and other healthcare professionals involved in the care of a patient.

- *“A **shortage of a medication has a lot of impact for the hospital pharmacy.** A cycle begins: Good follow-up is necessary, the search for an alternative must begin, good communication to your co-workers (doctors- nurses and hospital co-workers) is fundamental. When the Original product is delivered again (end of shortage), the cycle described above has to be repeated.” – Belgium*

It may also be important for other healthcare professionals to understand that information about the underlying cause of a shortage, or an expected return date for medicine, may not be known to the hospital pharmacist, as this information has not been conveyed by suppliers or manufactures. When hospital pharmacists were asked to provide details about their own personal experiences with medication shortages, one theme that emerged in the responses was the lack of reliable or timely information from manufacturers and suppliers on the commencement or duration of shortages.

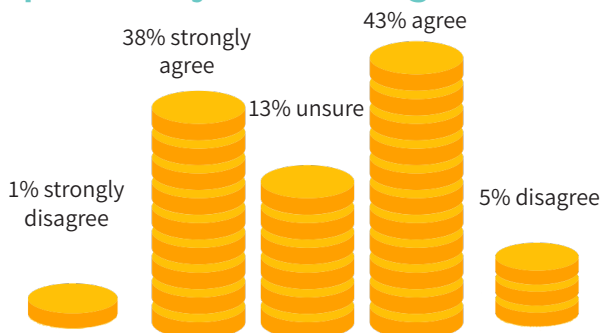
- **“Increased amount of time spent collecting Information** from pharmaceutical companies, wholesalers, other pharmacies, pharmaceutical salesmen to find available substitutes and/or remainders of stock” – Austria
- **“Often it is difficult to get an information about how long the shortage will be.** So, you don’t know how much of a replacement medicine you have to buy (which is most often more expensive)” – Switzerland
- **“Most of the time, we don’t have information about the shortage situations.** We just discover it few day after the order and it’s already too late because we have 1 or 2 month’s storage” – France

Amount of time spent dealing with medicines shortages



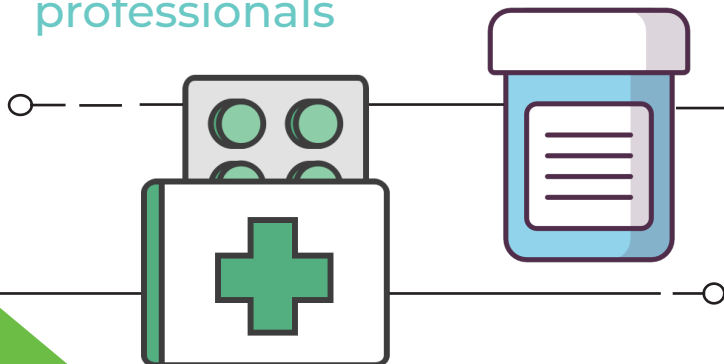
Budgetary and resources issues caused by medication shortages can be due to having to pay more to procure a drug from another supplier or paying more for an alternative drug, possibly having to devote more staff time to the issue or are due to the impact on the patient (such as potentially increased length of hospital stay or readmissions).

Are medicines shortages in my hospital having a negative impact on my overall budget?



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Other healthcare professionals



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