
Ensuring Timely Acquisition of Antimicrobials



The lack of supply of antimicrobials poses a public health threat. Hospitals in the U.S. face several barriers to acquiring antimicrobials in times of critical need. This can lead to huge negative effects on patient health outcomes.

Researchers from the University of Minnesota established that slow and unreliable processes could be a prominent barrier to acquiring much-needed antimicrobials to treat the patients with life-threatening infections. However, the team acknowledged the proactive information sharing between healthcare institutions could be fundamental tool for the timely acquisition of non-stocked antimicrobials.

As stated by the team, it is a hospital's responsibility to ensure patients receive timely and appropriate treatment required to save their lives, regardless of whatever antimicrobials are in relation to improve accessibility to antimicrobials and standard of care.

The research showed that hospitals differ in their stocking practices. They normally determine whether to stock certain antimicrobials depending on the costs and usage of antimicrobials and clinical utility. Generally, hospital pharmacies will buy a non-stocked antimicrobial from their wholesale distributor. However, during crises or urgent requirements, wholesale distributors may not be able to deliver quickly, and hospitals may need to purchase from another local institution – most commonly from neighbouring hospitals. However, this process usually lacks guidance.

Dr Jonathan Alpern, Assistant Professor of Medicine at the University of Minnesota Medical School, feels they need a better system in place, "or at a minimum, more data on how to acquire urgently needed therapies in an efficient and safe way".

The exploratory study has shown that stronger engagement between stakeholders is essential to implementing collaboration between hospitals and establishing an efficient system of information sharing. This way, hospitals can plan for safely acquiring non-stocked antimicrobials should be stocked in hospital pharmacies. Weighing the costs and burden on healthcare resources to obtain non-stocked antimicrobials is essential.

Overall, optimising the use of antimicrobials is essential for treating patients effectively. Implementing new mechanisms should improve the process of non-stocked antimicrobials.

Source: [Journal of the American Pharmacist's Association](#)

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