Abstract

Drug selection methods with scores have been developed and used worldwide for formulary purposes. These tools focus on the way in which the products are differentiated from each other within the same therapeutic class. Scoring Analytical Tool (SAT) is designed based on the same principle with score and is able to assist formulary committee members in evaluating drugs either to add or delete in a more structured, consistent and reproducible manner. Objective: To develop an objective SAT to facilitate evaluation of drug selection for formulary listing purposes. Methods: A cross-sectional survey was carried out. The proposed SAT was developed to evaluate the drugs according to pre-set criteria and sub-criteria that were matched to the diseases concerned and scores were then assigned based on their relative importance. The main criteria under consideration were safety, quality, cost and efficacy. All these were converted to questionnaires format. Data and information were collected through self-administered questionnaires that were distributed to medical doctors and specialists from the established public hospitals. A convenient sample of 167 doctors (specialists and non-specialists) were taken from various disciplines in the outpatient clinics such as Medical, Nephrology and Cardiology units who prescribed ARBs hypertensive drugs to patients. They were given a duration of 4 weeks to answer the questionnaires at their convenience. One way ANOVA, Kruskal Wallis and post hoc comparison tests were carried out at alpha level 0.05. Results: Statistical analysis showed that the descending order of ARBs preference was Telmisartan or Irbesartan or Losartan, Valsartan or Candesartan, Olmesartan and lastly Eprosartan. The most cost saving ARBs for hypertension in public hospitals was Irbesartan. Conclusion: SAT is a tool which can be used to reduce the number of drugs and retained the most therapeutically appropriate drugs in the formulary, to determine most cost saving drugs and has the potential to complement the conventional method of drug selection as it is effective in aiding decision making process through the pre-established criteria and increasing scientific ground of decisions and transparency.

Keywords

Angiotensin Receptor Antagonists, Cost Savings, Formularies, Hospital, Malaysia.