

Vascular Access Devices: A Comparative Analysis of Complications and Their Cost Implications

Bouguerra Houda, MS; Waltl Franziska, BS; Koenraad Dierick, MSc, MBA
Terumo Blood and Cell Technologies

INTRODUCTION

Vascular access devices (VADs) play a crucial role in healthcare by providing access to the circulatory system for various medical treatments and procedures.¹ These devices come in several types, including central venous catheters and peripheral catheters.²

By significantly enhancing patient care, vascular access devices allow for the efficient delivery of treatments, such as chemotherapy, while minimizing the need for repeated needle sticks and patient discomfort. However, it's essential to note the fact that these devices can also present potential risks and complications.^{3,4}

The objective of this literature review is to identify and analyze the occurrence of adverse events linked to venous access, with a specific focus on peripheral vascular access and other frequently employed access devices. Additionally, it aims to estimate the economic impact and cost implications associated with these events.

METHODOLOGY

A literature review was conducted using PubMed to gather relevant studies and publications reporting on adverse events related to peripheral catheters (PVCs), peripherally inserted central catheters (PICCs), midline catheters (MCs), and central venous catheters (CVCs).

The identified adverse events included deep vein thrombosis (DVT), bloodstream infection (such as CLABSI or sepsis), pneumothorax, phlebitis, occlusion, and pulmonary embolism. Additionally, the cost associated with each of the adverse events was retrieved from the literature to assess its economic burden.

	Inclusion	Exclusion
Population	Adult patients requiring vascular access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Non-humanPediatric patients
Intervention	PIVC, MC, PICC, CVC	Other VADs
Comparator	PIVC, MC, PICC, CVC	Other VADs
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Safety outcomesAdverse event costs	Non-relevant outcomes
Study Design	Any primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Non-clinical studiesLiterature reviews, meta-analysesCommentaries, editorials, letters
Timeframe	Up to 2023	None
Language	English language	Any other language

Figure 1. PICOS Selection Criteria

RESULTS

The literature search yielded several studies reporting on the rates of adverse events associated with the different types of catheters.

Data on various complications, such as deep vein thrombosis (DVT), bloodstream infections, pneumothorax, phlebitis, cellulitis, dislodgment, infiltration, occlusion, pain/discomfort, leaking, hematoma, bleeding, and pulmonary embolism, were extracted and analyzed.

	Peripheral Intravenous Catheter (PIVC)	Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC)	Midline Catheter (MC)	Central Venous Catheter (CVC)
Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)	2.3% ^(5,6)	2.8% ^(5,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25)	2.5% ^(18,20,25,30,31)	10.9% ^(31,32)
Bloodstream Infection (BSI)	0.2% ^(5,7,8,9,10)	8.0% ^(5,20,21,24,25,26,27,28)	11.1% ^(20,25,30)	11.8% ^(27,33)
Pneumothorax	-	-	-	17.0% ⁽³²⁾
Phlebitis	11.9% ^(6,9,11,12,13,14,15,16)	17.0% ⁽²⁹⁾	-	-
Occlusion	8.8% ^(7,9,11,12,16,17)	3.4% ^(20,22)	1.8% ⁽²⁰⁾	-
Pulmonary Embolism (PE)	-	0.2% ^(20,27)	0.1% ⁽²⁰⁾	1.4% ⁽²⁷⁾

Figure 2. VADs Safety Profile

RESULTS (continued)

The findings revealed varying rates of adverse events across different types of vascular access. The rates of DVT ranged from 2.36% for peripheral catheters (PVCs) to 10.91% for central venous catheters (CVCs). Bloodstream infections had rates ranging from 0.21% for PVCs to 11.82% for CVCs. Other adverse events such as pneumothorax, phlebitis, occlusion, and pulmonary embolism also exhibited varying rates across the different access devices.

Adverse Event	Average Cost
DVT	\$6,452 (SD: 3382) ^(24,34,35,36)
BSI	\$11,197 (SD: 5963) ^(10,24,35,36)
Pneumothorax	\$5,439 (SD: 4302) ^(37,38)
Phlebitis	\$1,137 ⁽³⁹⁾
Occlusion	\$181 ⁽³⁵⁾
PE	\$8,670 (SD: 4376) ⁽⁴⁰⁾

Figure 3. Adverse Events Average Costs

	Peripheral Intravenous Catheter (PIVC)	Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC)	Midline Catheter (MC)	Central Venous Catheter (CVC)
Cost of Adverse Events				
DVT	\$152.23	\$184.91	\$161.23	\$703.84
BSI	\$24.01	\$897.69	\$1,250.84	\$1,323.80
Pneumothorax	-	-	-	\$924.75
Phlebitis	\$136.07	\$193.41	-	-
Occlusion	\$16.02	\$6.22	\$3.27	-
PE	-	\$19.83	\$8.67	\$122.40
Total Cost of Adverse Events	\$328.33	\$1,302.07	\$1,424.02	\$3,074.79

Cost per patient, assuming a population of 1 adult patient. Excluding other AEs such as hematoma, infiltration, and pain.

Figure 4. Economic Burden of Adverse Events (Average cost per patient)

Furthermore, the economic burden associated with these adverse events was calculated by multiplying the rates by their respective costs. The total economic burden was highest for CVC, with a total cost of \$3,074.79, followed by PICC (\$1,302.07), MC (\$1,424.02), and PVC (\$328.33).

CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the prevalence of adverse events associated with different vascular access types, with varying rates observed among these devices.

The economic burden analysis underscores the substantial cost implications linked to these adverse events. PICCs and CVCs and MCs exhibited higher cost implications compared to PVCs.

Understanding the rates and the economic impact of these events can help healthcare providers improve patient safety and cost-effectiveness of vascular access procedures.

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