Pharmacoeconomic Education in Brazilian Schools of Pharmacy

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Introduction

With limited financial resources for health, it is important to optimize the costs and maximize the health outcomes of the population. The Pharmacoconomics allows economic evaluation of products and services for health and helps a lot the healthcare decision-making. Therefore, there is a need for training of human resources with solid knowledge in pharmaco economics in Brazil. However, little is known to what extent Pharmaco economics is taught in schools of pharmacy in this country.1,2

Objectives

The objective of this study was to survey the pharmacy schools in Brazil to determine the extent of education in pharmaco economics offered during the school year 2012-2013.

Methods

A questionnaire based on previous studies was developed. This was emailed to 55 pharmacy schools in Brazil during October and December 2013. The schools were selected from the Ministry of Education website. University schools of public and private (only those that have high concepts in the National Examination Performance of Students) were included. In addition, a search was made in the database directories of research groups from National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq).

Results

Of the 55 questionnaires sent, 16 were returned (29%). Only two schools do not address the education of pharmaco economics in any moment. Most of schools address some concepts in different subjects (8 hours). Six schools have formal courses that teach only pharmaco economics and health technology assessment (over 30 hours). All participants agree that the education of pharmaco economics is important and ten schools believe that very few hours are devoted to the teaching pharmaco economics at his university. In search of directories of research groups in Brazil, 23 groups that develop research in the area of pharmaco economics in Brazil were found. More results could be seen in graphics below.

Conclusion

There is a large deficit in the availability of courses pharmaco economics in Brazil at both the undergraduate and graduate. There is a great opportunity for experienced individuals to fill this gap. Provide an education in pharmaco economics for pharmacy students is especially important in the context of evidence-based decisions and when health issues and allocation of scarce resources is a priority for Brazil.

2 Neveja E.D; Rascati, KL. Pharmacoeconomic Education in Colleges of Pharmacy Outside of the United States. American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education 2009; 69 (1) Article 52

Graph 1 - There is the discipline of Pharmaco economics in your pharmacy school?

Graph 2 - How many hours are dedicated to the academic teaching of Pharmaco economics in your pharmacy school?

Graph 3 - Most cited topics covered in the Pharmaco economics disciplines

- Modeling
- Quality of life measures
- Measures of effectiveness
- Health Technology Assessment
- Budget impact
- Types of costs
- Cost minimization analysis
- Cost analysis utility
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Pharmaco economics as a tool for optimization of resources
- Cost effectiveness analyses