



The Process of Drug Dispensing and Distribution at Four Brazilian Hospitals: a Multicenter Descriptive Study

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SUMMARY. A multicenter descriptive study was carried out in two steps: an interview with providers involved in the medication processes, and then non-participating observation of their environment and practices. Only one hospital was found to have a bar-coding, dispensing system connected to a computerized prescription system. In all participating hospitals at least 90% of the drugs were dispensed and distributed as unit doses, but in none of them did pharmacists assess prescriptions. The study findings showed that the processes of drug dispensing and distribution in Brazilian hospitals encounter several problems, mostly associated to work environment conditions and inadequacy in drug ordering and requests.

RESUMEN. Fue realizado un estudio descriptivo multicéntrico en dos etapas: entrevista a los profesionales responsables de los sistemas de medicación y observación no participante del ambiente y de las actividades de dichos profesionales. Los resultados mostraron que solamente el hospital A tenía sistema de código de barras para la autorización y la prescripción por sistema computarizado. En todos los hospitales la autorización y distribución de por lo menos el 90% de los medicamentos era hecha en dosis individualizadas, pero en ninguno de los hospitales hubo evaluación de las prescripciones por los farmacéuticos. Los procesos de dispensación y distribución de los medicamentos en hospitales brasileños registran varios problemas, asociados principalmente a las condiciones del ambiente y a las inadecuaciones de las recetas.

KEY WORDS: Dispensing, Medication errors, Medication systems.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Dispensación, Errores de medicación, Sistemas de medicación.

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