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Role of Hospital Director in the Establishment of a Successful Antibiotic Stewardship Program

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ABSTRACT

The antibiotic stewardship program (ASP) is a coordinated program that promotes the appropriate use of antibiotics, improves patient outcomes, reduces antimicrobial resistance, and decreases the spread of infections caused by multidrug-resistant organisms. It is now considered a cornerstone for rationalized antibiotic consumption in any hospital. Any established ASP should be supported by the hospital director in different aspects to be promoted as a successful action in any given health care system.



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Rationalized prescription of antibiotics is the main target of an Antibiotic Stewardship Program (ASP) which leads to improve patient clinical outcomes and diminish treatment failures, side effects, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), hospital costs, and lengths of stay, and finally C. difficile infection (CDI). (1-4)

In 2014, CDC released the Core Elements of Hospital Antibiotic Stewardship Programs. The Core Elements determined essential components for a successful ASP. The Core Elements are implementable in all hospitals. (5)

Implementation of ASP warrants high-level collaboration among concerning persons involved in an antibiotic prescription.(6)The first step of success in the ASP is high-level support from the hospital director. (7) The primary goal of the hospital director is preparing high-level patient care and balance the financial situation of the hospital, which plays a clear role in the ASP's final success. The hospital director needs to update data to make the right decisions, provide resources, and reaching targets. (8)The hospital director plays a critical role in helping the ASP to get the necessary facilities to reach the aims. The director can encourage the hospital's head of departments to collaborate with the ASP team. He can also engage other mid-level administrators such as the chief nursing officer and head of the pharmacy department to close cooperation with the ASP team. (9)

In 2019, CDC updated the hospital Core Elements according to earned experiences and added new evidence. (10) The 2019 update outlines examples of hospital director participation, which are categorized as "priority" and "other". Priority examples of hospital director commitment include: (10)

- "1- Giving stewardship program leader(s) time to manage the program and conduct daily stewardship interventions.
- 2- Providing resources, including staffing, to operate the program effectively.
- 3- Having regular meetings with leaders of the stewardship program to assess the resources needed to accomplish the hospital's goals for improving antibiotic use.
- 4- Appointing a senior executive leader to serve as a point of contact or "champion" for the stewardship program to help ensure that the program has resources and support to accomplish its mission.

5- Reporting stewardship activities and outcomes (including key success stories) to senior leadership and the hospital board regularly (e.g. including stewardship measures in hospital quality dashboard reports).”

On the other hand, the other examples of director participation include: (10)

“1- Integrating antibiotic stewardship activities into other quality improvement and patient safety efforts, such as sepsis management and diagnostic stewardship.

2- Having clear expectations for the leaders of the program on responsibilities and outcomes.

3- Making formal statements of support for efforts to improve and monitor antibiotic use.

4- Outlining stewardship-related duties in job descriptions and annual performance reviews for program leads and key support staff.

5- Supporting training and education for program leaders (e.g. attendance of stewardship training courses and meetings) and hospital staff.

6- Supporting participation in local, state, and national antibiotic stewardship quality improvement collaborative.

7- Ensuring that staff from key support departments (outlined below) have sufficient time to contribute to stewardship activities.”

In conclusion, ASP provides better conditions for antibiotic prescriptions in the hospital. Full support from the hospital director and his active role can increase the rate of the ASP success.

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