

UTILIZATION AND COSTS OF REIMBURSED INHALED β 2-AGONISTS IN ALBANIA DURING THE YEARS 2008-2010

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Abstract

β 2-agonists are bronchodilators that are used in the treatment of obstructive airway diseases as pathologies with high global prevalence and in constantly growing. **Objective:** In this retrospective study was assessed the trend of utilization of reimbursed inhaled β 2-agonists in Albania during the period 2008-2010. **Materials and Methods:** Data on quantities and costs of analyzed drugs were taken from Health Insurance Institute (HII) database. International ATC/DDD methodology and International Classification of Diseases (ICD-9) were used to quantify the use of inhaled β 2-agonists in DDD/1000 inhabitants/day according to drugs and diseases diagnoses. **Results:** Total consumption of inhaled β 2-agonists increased from 2.49 DDD/1000 inhabitants/day in 2008 to 3.43 DDD/1000 inhabitants/day in 2010. Increased consumption of these drugs was associated with almost reduplication of the cost. Inhaled β 2-agonists were reimbursed mainly for the treatment of bronchial asthma and COPD. Salbutamol was the most used drug in 2010 with 2.19 DDD/1000 inhabitants/day. Increased consumption of combinations of LABAs plus ICS was associated in parallel with decrease in the use of inhaled long-acting β 2-agonists (LABAs) during the years 2009-2010. **Conclusions:** The total use of inhaled β 2-agonists in Alba-

nia was at low level compared to other countries such as Italy and Norway. Combined inhaled β 2-agonists had the highest consumption in Italy and in Norway, but not in Albania.

Key words: Utilization of drugs, ATC / DDD methodology, ICD-9, inhaled β 2-agonists.

Introduction

Bronchodilator drugs are most useful in the treatment of obstructive airway disease, of which bronchial asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are the most common pathologies and important causes of global morbidity and mortality.

According to latest World Health Organization (WHO) estimates (2007), currently 300 million people worldwide have asthma and 210 million people have COPD. Furthermore, asthma is considered to be the most common chronic disease among children (1). It is estimated that the number of people with asthma could grow to as many as 400-450 million people worldwide by 2025 (2). WHO also predicts that, by 2020, COPD will be the third leading cause of mortality and the fifth leading cause of morbidity in the world (3). β 2-agonists belong to the class of bronchodilator drugs and are widely used in the treatment of obstructive airway diseases. Inhaled β 2-agonists have greater use than β 2-agonists for systemic use. The major advantage