

8036 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Some committees also have special non-voting members, such as supply specialists and nursing personnel, whose functions range from that of observer to advisor in their areas of expertise.

A principal function of the P and T committees is to administer the system for evaluating and selecting from among numerous drugs those considered most useful in patient care. The committee's selections are reflected in a continuously revised compilation of drugs approved for use within the medical facility--the station formulary. In carrying out this function, the P and T committees generally receive some assistance from headquarters level in the form of policy guidelines, regulations, and information published by various professional medical service groups. Agency policy statements and regulations, where available, are generally limited to setting out the scope and authority of the P and T committees. Headquarters may provide recall and adverse reaction information about specific drugs, and furnish data on the commercial availability and prices of drugs. However, the selection of drugs for inclusion in the station formulary is reserved to the P and T committees. At military hospitals, the hospital commander is responsible for approval or disapproval of drugs recommended by P and T Committees.

Most of the information on specific drugs which is made available to members of the P and T committees in their consideration of changes to the station formulary comes from two sources; professional journals and the drug manufacturers. The drug companies supply most of their information to individual physicians through sales representatives (detailmen) and by direct mail advertising.