

8102 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Audit of Prescriptions

Most prescriptions were written by community physicians. They accounted for the same proportion during each study period (Table 2). Generic and study drug prescriptions contributed less than 10 per cent of the total.

TABLE 2.—AUDIT OF PRESCRIPTIONS BEFORE AND AFTER PASSAGE OF THE JOINT RESOLUTION BY THE MEDICAL SOCIETY (1,000 PRESCRIPTIONS IN EACH AUDIT)

Item of audit	[Percent]		
	Before resolution	3 months after resolution	6 months after resolution
Source of prescriptions:			
Community physicians	76.0	76.8	77.4
University hospital.....	22.2	21.3	21.6
Attending staff.....	(13.6)	(12.2)	(15.7)
House officers.....	(8.6)	(9.1)	(5.9)
Other.....	1.8	1.9	1.0
All generic prescriptions.....	6.2	10.4	9.4
Study prescriptions.....	7.7	9.2	10.5

Analysis of generic versus brand-name prescriptions of study drugs for each period is shown in Table 3. Only one third of these were prescribed generically before the resolution was adopted, but this figure rose to 59.8 per cent in three months and was 49.5 per cent six months later. The decrease in generic prescribing in the third study period may have been due to the promotion of an inexpensive brand of tetracycline (Sumycin). Tetracyclines accounted for half the study prescriptions during this period, which also coincided with the influenza season. There were 53 prescriptions written for tetracycline (brand or generic) during this audit period. Of these, 34 were filled with the inexpensive brand referred to above, 16 were written on a brand-name basis, and 18 were prescribed by the generic name.

TABLE 3.—AUDIT OF PRESCRIPTIONS BEFORE AND AFTER ADOPTION OF THE JOINT RESOLUTION BY THE MEDICAL SOCIETY, ACCORDING TO USE OF STUDY DRUGS

Use of drugs	Before resolution		3 months after resolution		6 months after resolution	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Study prescriptions:						
Total.....	77	100.0	92	100.0	105	100.0
By private practitioners.....	55	71.4	60	65.2	87	82.9
By University staff.....	22	28.5	32	34.7	18	17.1
Prescribed generically:						
Total.....	28	36.4	55	59.8	52	49.5
Private practitioners.....	18	32.7	47	78.3	43	49.5
University staff.....	10	45.4	8	25.0	9	50.0

A total of 274 prescriptions for the 11 study drugs were filled among the 3000 audited. Of these, 215 (78 per cent) were limited to only four drugs; tetracycline; penicillin G, buffered; meprobamate; and prednisone (Table 4). It can be seen that in each case, the cost of the patient per day, as charged by the pharmacist, was less for the generically prescribed drug. Thus, it is clear that the pharmacists honored their agreement as set forth in the joint resolution.