
Price, availability, and affordability of cardiovascular medicines: a cross sectional survey of selected community pharmacies in Galle Municipal Council & Bope-Poddala MOH Areas (Galle District) in Sri Lanka

Jayarathne M.L.N.P.^{1*}, Gunawardena S.², Prasadi G.A.M.¹

¹*Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Ruhuna*

²*Department of Physiology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna*

Approximately 75% of global deaths from cardiovascular diseases occur in low and middle-income countries due to less access to essential cardiovascular medicines. Access to medicines is hindered by poor availability and unaffordable prices. The objective of this study was to assess the price, availability and affordability of cardiovascular medicines in community pharmacy sector in Galle municipal council and Bope- Poddala MOH areas, Southern Province, Sri Lanka. A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted in sixteen community pharmacies to collect data on price and availability of selected cardiovascular medicines. Thirty cardiovascular medicines were selected on the basis of WHO model list of essential medicines 2019 and national essential medicines list of Sri Lanka 2014. Average availability of surveyed cardiovascular medicines in community pharmacy sector was 82.50%. Among selected cardiovascular medicines, 76.67% medicines had high availability, 10% medicines had fairly high availability and 13.33% medicines had very low availability. Median price ratio (MPR) of lowest priced generic equivalents (LPGs), highest priced generic equivalents (HPGs) and prominent brands were ranged from 0.12 to 7.46, 0.18 to 7.46, and 0.18 to 7.46, respectively. The percentage price variation between minimum price and maximum price of selected cardiovascular medicines ranged from 0.00% to 2037.21%. The cost for purchasing LPGs, HPGs and most prominent brands were ranged from 0.02 to 5.12, 0.02 to 6.65, 0.02 to 5.86 days wages, respectively. This study demonstrates that, some cardiovascular medicines are still unavailable and unaffordable to the community. Also, a wide inter-brand price variation can be observed in community pharmacies.

Key words: *Cardiovascular diseases, affordability, community pharmacies*

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*Corresponding author: piyumalijayarathne@gmail.com