

Pharmaceutical Situation in Barbados: WHO Level II Health Facilities Survey, 2010

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Problem Statement

- ✓ The key contributors of morbidity and mortality are heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, cancer, hypertension, and HIV/AIDS among adults.
- ✓ Life expectancy at birth is 75.8 years; 15.75% of the population over 60 years.
- ✓ Medicines from the Barbados National Drug Formulary (BNDF) are provided free at pharmacies of the Public Health Facilities (PHF) and with payment of a dispensing fee at private pharmacies (PF) to patients 65 years old (yo) and over, Children under 16 yo and persons prescribed for hypertension, diabetes, cancer, asthma and epilepsy.
- ✓ Patients from 16 to 64 yo can receive the same medicines at subsidized prices.

Objective

Assess the pharmaceutical situation in Barbados related to access, quality and rational use of medicines.

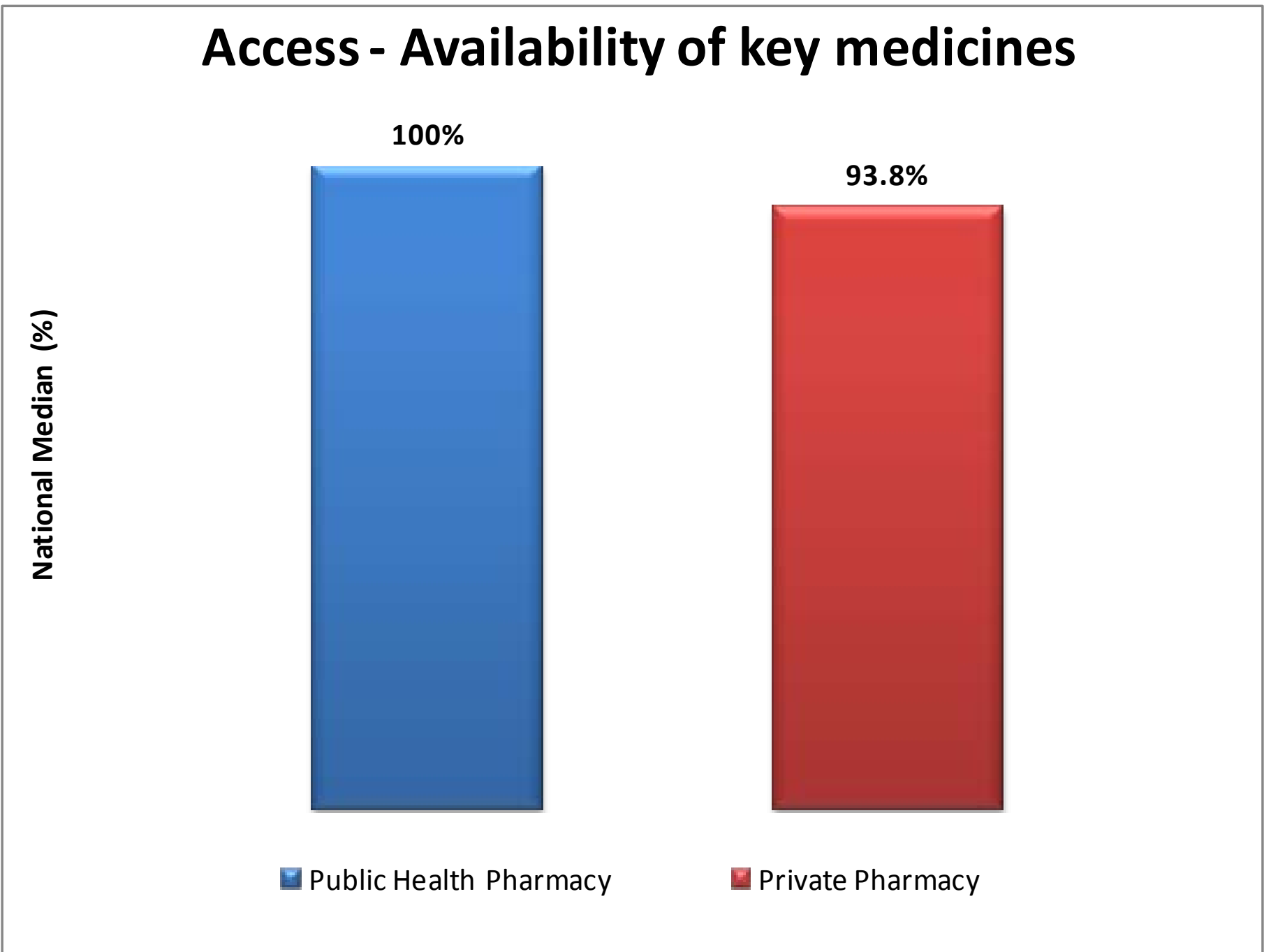
Design, Settings and Study Population

Design: A cross sectional study was undertaken from October, 2009 to July, 2010 using WHO Level II Health Facilities survey. Analysis was done with Epidata and Excel.

Setting: Barbados is a middle income country with a population of 275,700 (2009).

Study population: All 18 PHF which dispense medicines to outpatients and 30 PF randomly selected were surveyed and 1026 outpatients interviewed.

Key Results



Geographical Accessibility

- ✓ Public Health Facilities – 97% of patients traveled less than one hour

Indicator	National (Median)	25th Percentile	75th Percentile
Prescribing indicators			
Average number of medicines per prescription at public health facility dispensaries and public health facilities(SF6)	3.00	2.00	3.00
Average number of medicines per prescription at public health facility dispensaries and public health facilities(SF7)	3.07	2.82	4.40
% patients prescribed antibiotics in public health facilities	23%	13%	33%
% patients prescribed injections in public health facilities	7%	0%	13%
% prescribed medicines on the formulary at public health facilities	99%	97%	100%
% medicines prescribed by generic name (INN) at public health facilities	36%	25%	48%
Patient care indicators			
% medicines adequately labeled at public health facility dispensaries	100%	100%	100%
private dispensaries	100%	96%	100%
% patients know how to take medicines at public health facility dispensaries	100%	100%	100%
private dispensaries	100%	100%	100%
% of prescription medicines bought without prescription in private pharmacy	0%	0%	7%
Facility specific factors for the rational use of medicines			
Availability of standard treatment guidelines at public health facilities	55%		
Availability of formulary at public health facilities	92%		

Acknowledgements

All support from Ministry of Health and Barbados Drug Service Team

Technical support from

- ✓ PAHO/WHO Caribbean Programme Coordination Office (CPC)
- ✓ Harvard Medical School -PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center in Pharmaceutical Policy

Participating Institutions:

- ✓ Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH)
- ✓ Psychiatric Hospital
- ✓ Medical Officers of Health and Sisters in charge of the Polyclinics
- ✓ Heads of all health facilities visited, and Householders that cooperated with the study.

Collaboration from

- ✓ Barbados Statistical Services (BSS)
- ✓ Government Information Service (GIS)

Conclusions

Even though the availability of medicines in public pharmacies was excellent at the time of the survey, only the data from current stock was available. The software used needs to be improved for retrieving historical data. It is also necessary to expand availability of STG. Use of INN for prescribing should be encouraged, as part of the promotion strategy of generics. Dispensing of prescription medicines without a prescription should be discouraged and addressed regarding legal and ethical aspects. Managerial policies related to pharmaceuticals need to be improved. The development of Good Practices through the distribution chain is recommended. These findings were used as evidence for updating the National Pharmaceutical Policy, discussed with stakeholders in early 2011 and submitted to Cabinet for approval.