

Moderator: could you take a look at this and tell me what is this?

Respondent: the J and the I. Are very common.

Moderator: well. How do you treat?

Respondent: with the antifungals. The PO and the ointments.

Moderator: what ointments do you have?

Respondent: clotrimazole, ketoconazole all the azoles.

Moderator: what about the oral one?

Respondent: the same and also the Griseofulvin.

Moderator: do you get good responses with these drugs?

Respondent: mostly yea. They take a long time. And usually effective.

Moderator: what do you think if it's not effective?

Respondent: may be its resistant. And so we will add other antifungal.

Moderator: do you add other antifungal or stop the previous and change?

Respondent: we will add other antifungal.

Moderator: you said the drug will take a very long time. Do the patient will complete the whole course, do they have compliant?

Respondent: sometime there are problem to adherence that is actually the problem of all drugs. Usually they want to get rid of it since it adhere on the skin.

Moderator: if it's the case of problem of poor compliant, is it because they forget to take the medication. Not able to find the medication they need?

Respondent: we can go both ways. Sometimes we can't find the medication like the PO of antifungal as you we don't have this at this time. This is the only [name] hospital in this region but there is no PO here. It's not available in the private market. Availability is the major issue we don't find the drug. The other side effect is the vomiting and the GIT problem. This can discourage the patient not to take the drug.

Moderator: why do you think there is such availability issue?

Respondent: I am not sure actually. Most drugs are not available the government the whole sellers and it's an interrelated thing. There is a lot of reason. The problem is everywhere from the top structure to lower structure. There is also increasing entrance of drug from the black market.

This will increase and decrease the price of the drug at the market. The price of the drug is not available.

Moderator: can you tell me about the drug market? Is it imported illegally?

Respondent: yea. It's imported illegally. Through the borders it enters to the country. Then there are people who will carry that on the bag and comes to the pharmacy and they distribute.

Moderator: so they sell to private pharmacy? Not directly to the patient.

Respondent: Sometimes they do especially in the local areas. In the regional areas they can do that.

Moderator: from where do you get your drugs?

Respondent: from the whole sellers. There are a couple of whole sellers in [named area]. And [named area] so we will get from there.

Moderator: are they private whole sellers? Or the government whole sellers?

Respondent: they are private whole sellers. Actually the demand right here the government will supply.

Moderator: so the government will supply the drugs?

Respondent: yes. But only if there are shortage we will buy from the private whole sellers.

Moderator: what about the ointment? Are they available?

Respondent: now a days its' also becoming a problem. The major issue is the availability of the drug. For example Itraconazole not available anywhere. Its' the most effective antifungal drug. We can't find it. One of my family member died because of the fungal infection and we can't find the drug. The major problem is the availability.

Moderator: what do you think should be improved to change the availability of drugs? Do you have any ideas of what can be done?

Respondent: I think some whole sellers should specialize on some drugs. For example of one whole seller specialize on the antifungal drug. It can import antifungal drug. Like specifically antifungal drug. And the other whole sellers will specialize on the other drugs. So this will make them more responsible. You will go to their place and you can easily find the drug. It will be more focused. What happening now is, you have to search all the places to find one drug. And more, attention should be given to it.

Moderator: more attention by the government?

Respondent: yes by the government. We need to educate the people. It's transferred by the skin contact. Nobody knows the way of transmission. If people know that they will be careful and they know it can be treated and cured. Usually in the rural areas people will treat it by using the herbal medications. When I was child, I was once treated by the herbal medication. They will cut

the leaves of the tree it was effective. But it will leave the scar. The other problem is the education.

Moderator: when you dispense the drugs to the patient do you give an advice on this? Or, is it the Doctors responsibility?

Respondent: it's our responsibility as the clinical pharmacist to advise the patient on the side effect, the benefit of the drug. What to expect? When to expect? If there is no any change to come and consult us.

Moderator: do they often come back?

Respondent: yes they do. After seven or fourteen days they will come back. And if it is not improving we will add on other antifungal drugs.

Moderator: are they concerned about side effect?

Respondent: yes. It will worsen the case it may cause the gastric upset but we will compensate by giving other drugs. We will add some drugs like the omeprazole.

Moderator: do you know any issue of resistance associated with the drugs you prescribe?

Respondent: the adherence is the main issue of resistance. May be there could be other issues but I don't know.

Moderator: do you have any recommendation, on how to improve the patient adherence, is it by education?

Respondent: the main issue is the education. If you don't know what to take and how to take it they are not going to adhere to it. So we need to counsel them a lot. There is a lack of training and health education. We need to teach how to clean their skin. These are the major issues, to wear separate clothes.

Moderator: why do you think the people are not giving those training is it the time constraint issue? They may don't think it's not in their job description?

Respondent: it's just the tiredness. Over worked. We serve more than 200 patients. We are very busy.

Moderator: out of those hundreds do you turn away some patients and say you don't have those medications?

Respondent: yes.

Moderator: how many do you say?

Respondent: almost we turn away from 60 or 70 patients.

Moderator: where do they go after that?

Respondent: they will go to the government owned pharmacy. If they don't get the drug they will go to private pharmacy. And search for it.

Moderator: do you think it will affect whether they will take the drug or not at the end?

Respondent: yes, it's expensive. Even it's expensive here. We try to give to some patients by making it free. For those who can't afford it.

Moderator: but is it cheaper than the private pharmacy is that right?

Respondent: yea it's somehow cheaper.

Moderator: what about the production of the antifungals here in Ethiopia?

Respondent: there are some being produced. But not much attention is given. Usually more attention is given to the chronic ones. There are some companies producing it in [name] and [name] but that is not enough. There is a lot of governmental hospitals.

Moderator: do you know the drugs which are produced in Ethiopia?

Respondent: the Azole groups: ketoconazole, Itraconazole, fluconazole.

Moderator: the ointment or the PO's?

Respondent: all even though they are produced in Ethiopia, some of them will not have the active ingredients. And are not carefully produced. And the government regulatory agent will let them pass easily. Most of the drugs do not have the active ingredients. We do expect like the 100% of the active ingredients but it could be like 50%, 70% and or less than the 7% sometimes.

Moderator: even if they are produced here in Ethiopia they will not be supplies well?

Respondent: there are a lot of issues. They will not meet the market demand. We do have like three companies.

Moderator: do you know if there is any assessment done to check the amount of the demand and amount of the production?

Respondent: yes. There is. You can ask the store man they will fill out our consumption ratios every year and will send that to the government. They will see the demand.

Moderator: when someone comes in and ask, you don't have the medication available do you take a note of that? Do you only tell the government what you have sold?

Respondent: on the prescription there will be three or four drugs written, may be the available drugs are two and I will do x on the other available drugs. That prescription will go to the head of the pharmacy. So they can see what we demanded. We know what we should have. If you ask every pharmacist they know what we should have. We have requested the drugs what we need like 100 times but there is no any response to that. This should be available.

Moderator: how long you don't have oral antifungal in this pharmacy?

Respondent: like eight moth. The ointment just become available last week

Moderator: if you can't purchase the drug through the government agency will you purchase them through the private agents?

Respondent: we have to convince the government they should give us the stamp to buy from the private ones. And we have to search for the drugs in the private pharmacy and it will take a month.

Moderator: I am interested in the issue that the antifungals which are produced here had a low ingredient. Do you think that result in the knock on effect of adherence in the patient?

Respondent: yes. Definitely. If they take for 14 days and it will not work. Not effective why do we advise other patient to take it any longer. Some patient of better life will ask for the brand drugs from the [name] and [name] they are expensive but highly expensive.