



SPANISH NETWORK OF PHARMACOEPIDEMIOLOGY

Fundación Gaspar Casal

EPIMED is an online analytical tool that identifies patterns of medication use in routine clinical practice in different hospitals.

The reports generated by EPIMED can be used to identify opportunities for improvement in prescription habits, to estimate the potential benefit of and prioritize prescription policy proposals, to evaluate the impact of policies that have previously been implemented. It can also be used to calculate real costs of medical processes, and compare them across hospitals.

EPIMED uses data obtained from the Minimum Data Set and the Unit Dose Drug Distribution System, which include electronic prescribing systems, transcription of medical orders, automated dispensers, and the outpatient dispensing system. The uses of medications are coded by IR-DRG, which are categorized for the levels of severity, and allow for international comparison as well as cost measurement per IR-DRG. This also allows for the inclusion of patients that are not hospitalized in the traditional sense—those undergoing outpatient surgery and other ambulatory procedures. Variability in drug prescription habits across hospitals is an indicator of inappropriate use, and suggests that patients may be receiving inadequate care.

Furthermore, studies have indicated that misuse is a key factor in rising drug prices. It is thus important to identify disparities in the criteria for choosing courses of pharmacological intervention, in order to develop and prioritize strategies that will contribute to a more rational use of medications. EPIMED represents an effective and timely method of compiling and analyzing pharmaceutical use data. In brief, EPIMED is firmly committed to transparency in the healthcare system, improving information flows between hospitals that are part of the network, while promoting the proper use of medicines in the environment of hospital pharmacy services.