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INTRODUCTION

Treatment of cancer involves huge costs and medicines contributes a major part of it. In order to improve access to anticancer drugs every country has adopted a suitable policy to monitor price. Similarly India has adopted a policy to monitor prices of all drugs under National List of Essential Medicines of India (NLEM-2012) including anticancer drugs.

OBJECTIVE

This study was conducted to explore how anticancer drug prices are being monitored during 2015 to 2023 in India.

METHOD

A survey was conducted through internet search and searching websites of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) on Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) and notifications of NPPA during 1st April 2015 to 31st December 2023 to acquire data of drugs under price control and price of those drugs. Unit price as fixed by NPPA through notifications effective from 1st April 2015 and 1st April 2023 were compared and Unit price of the lowest strength used of a dosage form was considered for analysis. The data available was collected, collated and analysed statistically.

RESULTS

Results shows that 31 anticancer drugs are included under NLEM 2012 and all are included in the First Schedule of DPCO-2013. Out of 31 drugs, price of Folinic acid, Procarbazine and Daunorubicin were not available from the available sources and were not included in further analysis. It reveals that price of six drugs were increased during this period and varied between 1.91 to 26.08 percent with an average of 8.13(SD 10.05). Price of twenty two drugs reduced during this time and varied between 0.41 to 46.98 percent with an average of 38.55(SD 16.89) percent.

Calculation of Ceiling Price of a scheduled formulation:

$$P\textcircled{C}=P(s).(1+M/100)$$

Where

P(s)= Average Price to the Retailer for the same strength and dosage of the medicine
M= % Margin to retailer and its value =16

Calculation of Maximum Retail Price:
Maxium Retail Price=Ceiling Price+ Local Taxes as applicable

Calculation of Price of a scheduled formulation

Actinomycin D	Alpha Interferone	Bleomycin	Busulphan	Cisplatin
Cyclophosphamide	Cytosine-arabinoside	Danazol	Doxorubicin	Etoposide
Flutamide	5-Fluorouracil	Folinic Acid	Gemcitabine hydrochloride	L-Asparaginase
Melphalan	Mercaptopurine	Methotrexate	Mitomycin-C	Paclitaxel
Procarbazine	Vinblastine Sulphate	Vincristine	Carboplatin	Dacarbazine
Daunorubicin	Ifosfamide	Mesna	Oxaliplatin	Imatinib
Chlorambucil				

List of Anticancer Drugs under DPCO-2013

CONCLUSIONS

Price of anticancer drugs under NLEM was monitored by NPPA and price of 78.57 percent was reduced to a maximum of 46.98 percent and price of the rest was increased to a maximum 26.08 percent during this period making antineoplastic drugs affordable by common people.

REFERENCES

1. National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOHFW), Govt. of India, 2012.
2. Drugs (Price Control) Order, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Dept. of Pharmaceuticals, Govt. of India, 2013.

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