



MEDICINE SHORTAGES

PATIENTS IN NEED

MARCH 2023



THE GLOBAL HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL SHORTAGE

From the United States to Europe and beyond, healthcare systems are being stretched to their limits due to a lack of qualified medical professionals. According to a 2020 Lancet study, an estimated 6.4 million physicians will be needed in order to meet global universal health care goals.



THE GLOBAL HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL SHORTAGE



The United States is no stranger to physician shortages; according to data published by the Association of American Medical Colleges, there could be a shortage of 54,100 to 139,000 physicians by 2033.



In Europe, three years into the pandemic that decimated personnel across all sectors, healthcare managers and governments are scrambling to rescue a workforce with worker shortfall of 2 million people



Greece is sounding alarm bells over long emergency response times due to a shortage of personnel



England lacks tens of thousands of nurses with a record number of vacancies



Nurses top the list of all occupations experiencing shortages in Finland



Maternity wards in Portugal are struggling to stay open due to lack of doctors



MANAGING WARFARIN SHORTAGE IN AUSTRALIA

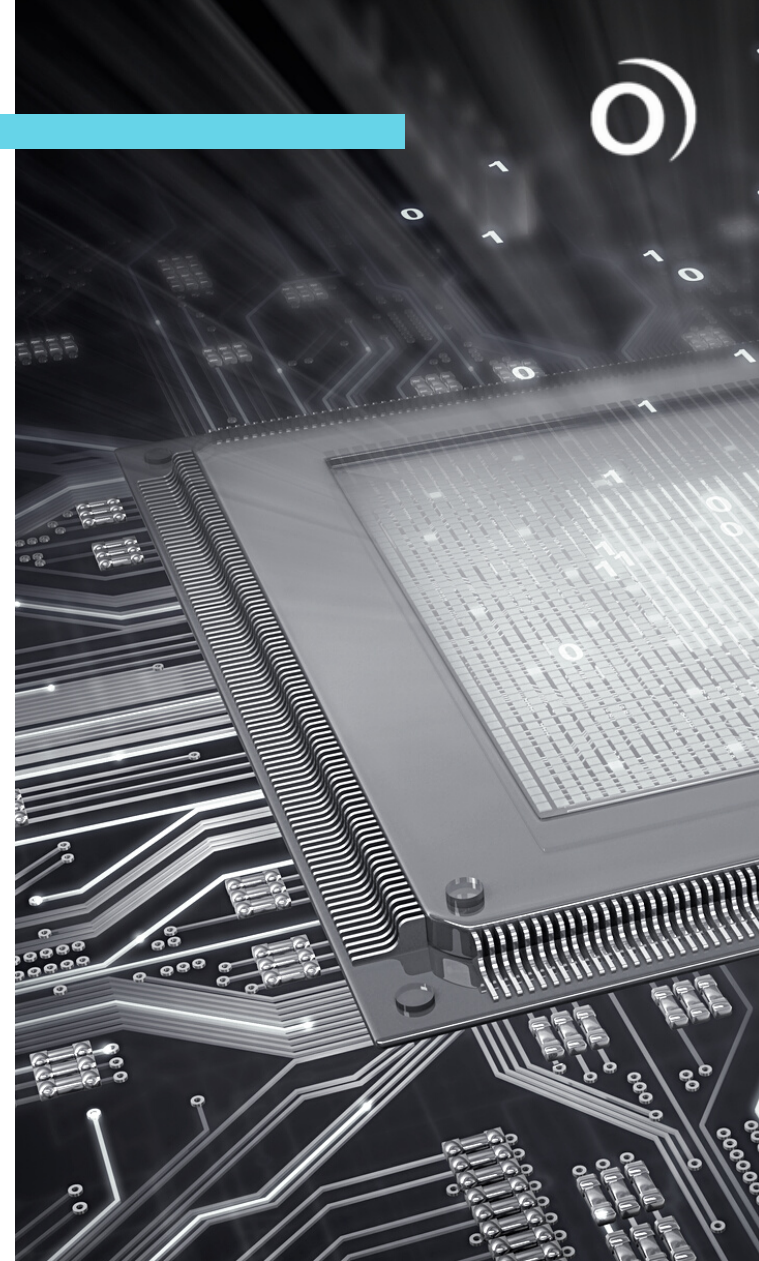
A nationwide shortage of warfarin, an important blood-thinning medication, is causing serious concern among cardiologists in Australia. According to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, 100,000 Australians rely on warfarin every year. The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) reports that all three available dosages of warfarin are “emergency supply only” due to “manufacturing issues”.

GLOBAL CHIP SHORTAGE

According to Gartner, the world has been gripped by a global chip shortage due to a variety of factors. This shortage has had far-reaching implications, especially in the healthcare industry.

Makes it increasingly difficult for healthcare professionals to access necessary medical supplies such as scanning systems used for diagnostics. It has also led to delays in receiving needed medical equipment in hospitals across the country which can further complicate patient care

Patients have been some of the hardest hit by this global chip shortage crisis. Many patients have had appointments cancelled due to lack of availability of diagnostic equipment or medical devices needed for treatment or surgery. In addition, many hospitals are having difficulty obtaining supplies needed for surgeries such as implants or prosthetics that use chips or other electronic components.





ALBUTEROL SHORTAGE EXPECTED TO WORSEN AFTER PLANT SHUTDOWN

CNN recently reported that an ongoing shortage of albuterol, a medicine commonly used to treat patients with breathing problems, is expected to get worse after a major supplier to US hospitals shut down last week.





THE CZECH PHARMACEUTICAL DRUG SHORTAGE CRISIS

The Czech Republic, like many countries, is experiencing a drug shortage crisis. This shortage has been caused by several factors, including price caps that fail to consider any alternatives, and a decline in margins that has led to some drug companies having second thoughts about whether they should continue offering certain drugs on the market.

The most significant factor causing the current drug shortages in the Czech Republic is price caps. As with other countries around the world, pharmaceutical manufacturers are under pressure to keep prices low.

GROWING MEDICINE SHORTAGE CRISIS IN THE UK

The medicines shortage crisis in Britain is only getting worse, with 70 commonly taken drugs now out of stock.

The shortage of medications has been attributed to a variety of factors. Firstly, there have been supply chain challenges due to the pandemic. The pandemic has caused an increase in demand for certain medications, leading to shortages when manufacturers are unable to keep up with demand.

Many drug companies are based overseas, making it difficult for them to ship products quickly and efficiently during the pandemic when borders are closed or travel is limited.





A SPIKE IN FLU CASES IN CHINA SPURS A SHORTAGE OF ANTIVIRALS

China's 1.4 billion population appears to have contracted influenza even as their latest and largest Covid-19 outbreak waned. To combat this rise in cases, China plans to expand its vaccination program for both Covid and influenza this year. Vaccinations for influenza will be provided free-of-charge for those aged over 60, disabled persons, and children under three years old. For other residents, authorities plan to provide vaccines at "reasonable prices" while providing subsidies if needed.

GERMAN GENERICS BODY URGES BROADER BOTTLENECK BILL

The German government has recently released a draft bill that seeks to remedy supply chain bottlenecks for generic drugs, such as antibiotics and oncology drugs.

While this is a step in the right direction, Pro Generika, the country's trade association for off-patent drugs, is urging the government to go further and apply these proposed changes to all generic medicines.

The draft bill proposes more stringent rules for manufacturers of generic medicines, such as requiring them to give advance warning of any potential shortages.



EFFECTS OF WAR AND SANCTIONS ON RUSSIAN MEDICINE PRODUCTION

The biggest effect from war and sanctions has been on medical equipment imported from Europe and the United States. Not only does Russia rely heavily on these imports for devices such as pacemakers and radiotherapy machines, but these imports are also particularly significant for complex and critical machines.





SHORTAGE OF AMOXICILLIN IMPACTS PHARMACISTS NATIONWIDE

In November of 2022, the nationwide amoxicillin shortage was brought to the public's attention. A survey conducted in February 2023¹ by Jackson Pharmacy Professionals showed that this shortage is still ongoing, as 73% of participants reported a shortage of the antibiotic in their workplace over the last 45 days.

Currently, most of the amoxicillin used in the United States is procured from abroad. However, more than 90% and 70% of pharmacists surveyed believe that domestic production would result in higher quality products and greater availability overall—even if it means spending 5-10% more on manufacturing costs in America. By producing domestically instead of overseas, it can be ensured that all patients receive safe and effective medication whilst also creating jobs.

FLUOXETINE HYDROCHLORIDE SHORTAGE IN NEW ZEALAND

In New Zealand, there is currently a shortage of Fluoxetine Hydrochloride 20 mg capsules. This medicine is used to manage depression and anxiety, and it's one of the most commonly prescribed SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors). To combat this shortage, healthcare professionals have been asked to limit their prescriptions of Prozac, which is the brand name for fluoxetine hydrochloride.





DRUG SHORTAGE CRISIS IN TAIWAN

Hospitals have reported shortages of 58 drugs, raising alarm among healthcare professionals and directors across Taiwan. The National Health Insurance Administration (NHIA) met with medical representatives and heads of medical centers to discuss the drug shortage, with the Taiwan Community Hospital Association providing the meeting with a list of 58 drugs were in short supply. In response to these reports, NHIA Director-General Shih Chung. NHIA announced plans to address this crisis by cutting its drug procurement budget by up to NT\$15 billion (US\$492.13 million).





ADDERALL SHORTAGE: 4 MONTHS AND COUNTING

For the past four months, patients, doctors, and pharmacists have been struggling to find a reliable source of Adderall.

According to the FDA's website, an increase in demand and lack of an active ingredient needed to make the drug are some of the primary reasons for this shortage.

