Experience Report of a State Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee in SUS

Introduction: The rational use of medicines is one of the priority guidelines of the National Medicines Policy in Brazil. Within the scope of the Brazilian public health system (SUS), the Pharmaceutical Services are responsible for ensuring drug access to the population, which in a country of continental dimensions such as Brazil, is a major challenge for managers and health professionals. An important tool to promote rational use is the elaboration of the List of Essential Medicines by a Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, based on the local epidemiological perspective and adopting evidence-based decision-making.

Methodology: Qualitative analysis of the activities carried out by a State Committee of Pharmacy and Therapeutics through the review of its produced documents.

Results: The main activities of the Committee involved the elaboration and reassessment of the List of Essential and Exceptional Medicines (REMEME) and the establishment of the criteria for use of medicines, considering the Specialized Component of the Pharmaceutical Services. The first version of REMEME, developed in 2007 with a participative and decentralized methodology and in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization, included 14 drugs not included in the National List of Essential Medicines (RENAME) at the time, expanding the access to 43 new indications. The review conducted in 2013 resulted in 23 state protocols and 46 drugs on the State Complementary List. Subsequently, 12 were incorporated into RENAME and 01 was excluded. Nowadays, the list contains 33 drugs and 14 criteria for use, all related and disclosed in an electronic updated version.

Conclusion: The State Committee of Pharmacy and Therapeutics played an important role in the diffusion and use of medicines technologies in the State public health context. This Committee contributed to the public health system sustainability by maximizing access and coverage with quality, based on scientific evidence and promoting the rational use of medicines, combined with the optimization of resources from the state manager perspective.