

**AVAILABILITY OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES AND
RELATED COMMODITIES AMONG TOWNSHIP
HOSPITALS IN YANGON REGION**

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ABSTRACT

Essential medicines are selected to meet the priority health needs of majority of the population. In Myanmar, the availability of essential medicines is still low and it may be due to many reasons. The general objective of this study was to determine the availability of essential medicines and related commodities among township hospitals in Yangon Region. A cross sectional descriptive study design was conducted in all township hospitals of Yangon Region by using semi-structured questionnaires, observation with checklist and interviews.

In this study, 75% of the responsible persons in 50 bed hospitals were pharmacists and 60% of responsible persons in 25 bed hospitals were compounders. They all had no specific training for drug supply management and only training concerning with forecasting were received. All the hospitals used consumption data and consumption method for forecasting of essential medicines and related commodities and used both manual and computerized systems. All hospitals had main medical store and 12 hospitals claimed that there was no enough storage space for 6 months' supply. There was no secure delivery area in all hospitals. Ten hospitals checked the stock immediately after receipt. Only 10 hospitals had thermometer for assessing room temperature.

Regarding with inventory management, all the hospitals used manual/paper based inventory management and stock control system. Only one hospital had a standardized computerized system linked to the Yangon Regional Department of Medical Service. The inventory cards for tracer items were available in the medical store of 16 hospitals and only 11 hospitals had regularly updated inventory cards. In almost all hospitals, re-order level was not reflected on stock card/computer. Important finding was that one hospital had 8 items of drugs stock out in tracer items with the highest amount. Only 7 hospitals counted the stock monthly.

It was recommended to develop and implement a comprehensive training program of drug supply management, to ensure adequate storage capacity, to renovate the building and to develop and implement a standardized and harmonize electronic inventory management system in all township hospitals.