Predicted Impacts: Drug Shortages

The impact of drug shortages will continue to take an enormous toll on health care providers and patients. The staff hours alone spent on planning for a shortage; educating staff; restocking and barcoding the alternative products; dealing with secondary market vendors; prescribing, preparing, and administering unfamiliar alternative products; and fielding questions consumes a large portion of health professionals’ time, stealing valuable resources from clinical activities.

Numerous organizations and governmental agencies will work toward providing oversight on the availability of pharmaceutical products, developing more effective early warning systems for impending shortages, keeping clinicians informed about shortages and potential alternatives, and reducing the overall adverse effects of drug shortages.

Drug shortages will continue to adversely affect drug therapy, compromise or delay medical procedures, and result in medication errors.