SOME INTERNAL MEDICINE AND PHARMACOTOXICOLOGICAL CLINICAL VIEWS AND PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL ESSENTIALS, REGIONALLY PROTECTED, BRAND-NAME OR UNBRANDED EQUIVALENTS, OFF-LABEL AND “ME-TOO”, NEGLECTED, REPURPOSED, COMPLEMENTARY, PRESCRIBED AND/OR DISTRIBUTED OVER-THE-COUNTER, DIFFERENTLY MARKETED AVAILABLE OR NOT COUNTERFEIT DIAGNOSTIC, PREVENTIVE AND THERAPEUTIC MEDICINAL PRODUCTS

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Summary

The current variegated multitude of denominations, classes and registries of natural, synthetic and biological drugs can be managed globally at relatively low cost through the international database of adverse events and reactions (ADR), where these events are reported with full transparency, collected systematically, and checked on the actual clinical records (private, professional, public and/or published); however the same data can equally be obtained in conditions standardized according to methodologies and provisions repeatedly optimized by the WHO. These data are freely and readily available online to citizens, researchers and teachers, regulators, entrepreneurs, manufacturers, both before and after drug marketing, and also in transitional phases of biological and experimental pre-clinical research.

The current situation, laughably repetitive and clearly no longer sustainable, has been made substantially obsolete, unproductive and at the same time illiberal, oppressive and counterproductive, and shall have to be updated based on the criteria traditionally supported and adopted by the WHO-ITA / ITA-OMS, approved by the WHO. Italy is one of the six founding members of the international network that has begun here and now involves more that 79 members.

Key words: Internal Medicine, Experimental and Clinical Pharmatoxicology, Drug Lists and Availabilities, 2009 and 2010

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“... whoever has a great deal of internal warmth of his own will prefer to keep away from society in order to avoid giving or receiving trouble and annoyance”. Arthur Schopenhauer, *The art of controversy.


The inventor of genome sequencing technology, a pioneer of systems biology and medicine [1] considers his future, called P4, preventive, personalized, preventive and participatory, and we can surely consider the commonly generalized P5 factor too, i.e. their always optimizable probabilistic trend, at least for those uses and inevitable abuses of medicinal products presented as for emoticons by current politics (i.e.: [2]). The previous interventions, predominantly of a general type [3] have addressed some aspects that reflect the competitiveness of the current state of social freedom that also distinguishes our healthcare, which nonetheless is rapidly evolving, also from the regulatory point of view, even though some issues remain sometimes confused and therefore ineffective if not actually counterproductive. There is no doubt on the desirability if not the need to be alert, especially to events happening elsewhere (Cf. [4]), where the debate is often harsh [5] and new proposals are never unanimously shared, although the general principles involved are firmly acquired [6], as we may subsequently stress here. Solutions, including brilliant ones, are not lacking, but they need to be found practicable by testing them with repeatedly standardizable criteria if they are to be considered as exemplary [7]. Other solutions that have long been awaiting our clarification and implementation with regard to the very basic classification of the properties, that can be defined as exquisitely clinical-pharmacological, will also be critically addressed and/or examined in short sections below.

1. The utilization of essential drugs

The mythical WHO Technical Report Series (TRS) 615, Geneva 1977, and the enclosed 1st Model Lists of essential drugs (which have reached the 16th edition for adults and the 2nd for children as of March 2009 (English ed., see www.who.int/medicines/publications/essentialmedicines/en/index.htm, accessed April 1, 2010) include a double list, a core list – reporting minimum medicine needs for a basic healthcare system, listing the most efficacious, safe and cost-effective medicines for priority conditions according to the statement of Alma Ata (1978) – and a complementary list, presenting essential medicines for priority diseases for which specialized diagnostic or monitoring facilities and examinations are needed. The lists are subjected to biannual updates/modifications also based on the priorities of the different disease forms in the various countries. They report, among other things, the definition of therapeutic equivalence, which has become the reference for generic drugs and may be also for biosimilars, referring the reader to non-proprietary names for the identification of the active principles. Although these criteria have become established with some perplexities and reservations, they have however consistently been adopted all over the world in the best academic teaching and publications. For comments on and clarifications to the WHO proposals by Italian experts see articles cited in references [8], whereas the presentations have been made by the voluntary collaborators, also WHO-ITA / ITA-OMS, from the authors’ two Institutes of Ancona University, now Polytechnic University of Marche (Cf. [9]).
It is substantially advocated that essential drugs, including life-saving ones, be always available and provided in the least expensive formulation among those licensed, and their cost sustained by the State in the most advanced and civilized societies.

2. Some global, regional and national regulations, protections, behaviours, and costs

While the reader is referred to the international, global and regional healthcare and pharmaceutical legislation and problems (Cf. [10, 11]), it must briefly be stressed that over the last few years there has been a tendency, especially in Italy, to protect the patents of innovator / originator products, which have become the reference for the brand-name (or unbranded) equivalents (as reflected in the Italian law no. 405/01). According to the WHO definition, a therapeutic equivalent is a drug that can be commercialized only after the expiry of the patent and the certificate of complementary protection (CCP) of the innovator drug. The CCP, introduced in Italy with law no. 349/91, prolongs the duration of the period of exclusive exploitation of the product by the originator company by up to 18 additional years, in addition to the 20 years patent protection period, with a marketing authorization (MA). This act was superseded by EEC regulation no. 1768/92, which introduced the supplementary protection certificate (SPC), reducing the added protection to 5 years, but guaranteeing the validity of the national certificates granted before 1993. Italy has therefore approved law no. 112/02 to modify the duration of the CCP for the issue of the MA by the Italian Drug Agency (AIFA), which involves the control of requirements (Cf. [12]) according to a reduction procedure lasting 6 months per solar year, which began in 1.1.2004. After the owner’s demonstration of the chemical and pharmaceutical equivalence of the generic according to the regulations of the European Medicines Agency (EMEA) (Cf. [13]) and of its bioavailability, i.e. the rate and amount of the active principle released into the circulation, again in line with EMEA provisions [13], the product is declared as population bioequivalent to the patented one, a conventional statistical “surrogate” of therapeutic equivalence, which is required for MA emission. At least 8 years must have elapsed since the initial authorization to the originator and at least 10 from the equivalent reference product. Mutual recognition procedures are applied for most equivalent medicines. At both the national and the local levels the same documents are required as for an MA application, which envisages product quality monitoring even after the commercialization through the announced European post-marketing network [12] of official laboratories and with the Italian Istituto Superiore di Sanita’ (ISS), to which we will go back later to highlight the outstanding contributions, certainly not merely repetitive, of that WHO-ITA / ITA-OMS, and other European bodies, in which Italy has participated, also as one of the six founding member (membership is now over 79), and to which it has contributed by starting the global electronic network, as acknowledged by the Geneva Headquarters (Cf. [14]).

According to law decree no. 97 of 28 April 2009, coordinated with laws no. 77 of 24 July 2009 and no. 147, of 27 June 2009, which turned the decree into law, “the sale price of equivalents is … (further) reduced by 12% …, up to 31 December 2009, …, the NHS, in paying pharmacies what they are owed for selling the drugs, retains … 1.4 % of the total (which is also made up of any quotas paid for by the citizens and of conventional and legal deductions. … For equivalents … the quotas of the sale price before VAT… paid out to the other parties are revised as follows: drug manufacturers: 58.65 %; wholesale retailers: 6.65 %; and chemists 26.7 %. The remaining 8 % is redistributed between chemists and wholesale retailers … “. The quota earmarked for pharmaceutical expenses, out of the total 19.3 billion € allocated to the NHS, was 13.6 % in 2009 and 18.4 % in 2010. The proposed cuts envisage further reductions in the price of generics by 1.5 billion € (off-patent and others, whose price should be cut by 60-70%, considering that hospitals already enjoy a 70 % discount) and a reorganization of distribution, with overall savings of ca. 2 billions, by entrusting AIFA with centralized procurement at the lower prices stated by
manufacturers [16]. Streamlining of off-label drugs, which has been going on for some time elsewhere, may involve contrasts (see (1)). The ruling (no. 13981/09 of 30 December 2009) of the Administrative Tribunal of Latium requiring physicians prescribing “medical specialties to state the reasons for the intolerance and ineffectiveness of an equivalent” in prescriptions, is a case in point (see examples of current and earlier costs in Table 1).

Therefore in Italy, too, not only the chemist but also the physician, who is responsible for diagnosis and prescription, is placed at the frontline, like the student and the academic researcher, by healthcare and pharmaceutical politics, with continuous analyses (rejected in the Comment, Cf. [17]), statements and critical debates, which unfortunately are never conclusive, by the various parties, even those involved indirectly, similar to those produced by the international bodies [18].

If this presentation is not sufficiently analytical, examination of the references will afford a more exhaustive picture, uncertain as it looks today. Here we highlight the outstanding successes, well beyond serendipity, of pharmaceuticals companies, which have always benefited from the undeniable contribution of academia, each with their respective activities and roles. However, university researchers are concerned and perplexed by the symptoms, which albeit not new have now become very marked, represented by the multiple failures of Big Pharma projects, which can no longer be tolerated, where more abundant funds have been invested not only to produce competitive “me-too drugs”, but especially to develop innovative routes to replace older drugs, after the failure and closure of rich and prize-winning Laboratories. The torcetrapib trial, which involved Japanese families carrying a CETP mutation, is a case in point. The drug-induced elevation of HDL lipoprotein levels killed more participants than it was intended to save, leading to early cancelling of the trial, for which 15,000 people had been recruited and 800 million US dollars had been spent. The company, given the failure to develop a new blockbuster to replace the highly successful atorvastatin – whose patent also in Italy will expire on 8 November 2011 – has not turned to other preventive or therapeutic cardiovascular drugs, considered an excessive and intolerable risk, nor has it promptly entered the field of brand-name equivalents (according to the 25 year old Waxman-Hatch Act), or of multiple medications, like a “polypill” (Cf. [19]), but rather it has decided to close down the cardiovascular drugs advanced research section, a decision that has been judged as an exemplary lack of faith in a highly successful and long-standing methodological strategy, that of the clinical trials [20]. This requires a re-examination of the generalized and topical context of our alternative project [3], which will also be addressed below.

3. Counterfeited, equivalent and biosimilar, orphan and medicinal products for neglected diseases

After stressing that it is not academia alone, but primarily the genius, investments and ability of private manufacturers, that created the new and most interesting reference drugs, it is impossible not to fear the diffusion of closures, firstly and as eventual next beginning of 2009’ 312 medicines in US developments for the still same top deadly heart and stroke diseases, particularly with the growing acceptance of comparative effectiveness research [21] extended to drug generic versions, and the needed more stringent and far outstandingly applied safety standards, being “In these uncertain times, the decision a reminder that pharmaceutical innovation is vulnerable to market forces, changes in medical practice, and regulatory requirements” [20]. The open academy, which is not, directly or indirectly, dangerously connected to market or external political forces, certainly fully agree. Nevertheless, the anti-counterfeiting task forces of the IMPACT groups sometimes still appear to have limited effectiveness, both on guaranteeing the quality of raw chemicals (just think of the heparin disaster), and on marketing and/or selling illegal clones through online shops (Cf. [22]), as well as on the application of possibly the best available methodologies to Good Laboratory Practice, animal and human experimentation, completeness of recording, transparent adherent
evaluation and public communication of what is being done. Indeed, it is astonishing that Big Pharma should now apply their resources to brand-name (and unbranded) “generic” equivalent marketing, rather than to pure innovation products, or at least to research, development and strong marketing of biosimilars. But the same equivalent products may be equal in most, but not all cases, like for instance the therapeutic effects [23]. The surrogate biokinetics markers of choice, as indeed also recommended in the most recent EMEA guidelines, raise doubts and confusion when they state for instance ([13], p 10/27) that “non-compartmental methods should be used for determination of pharmacokinetics parameters in bioequivalence studies. The use of compartmental methods for estimation of parameters is not acceptable” (see note (2); [24]), when the blood concentration of a product is not a biomarker indicator of effect (see note (3); [25]), and for the products with a narrow therapeutic range the very large acceptance confidence or fiducial inference interval for AUC-$C_{\text{max}}$ geometrical means does not pre-indicate how much it may need to be tightened (see section 4.1.9, etc; p 15-16/27), even where now “consultation begins on automatic switch to generic drugs”, as in the UK [26]. And it is not surprising that bioequivalence testing is performed, as recommended, on so-called normal adult individuals, without any proof of the different potential reactions in non-healthy subjects or in physiologically frail individuals. Nevertheless we recommend again David Gilbert’s incredible work, a salutary preliminary endeavour [27].

A different question is that of biosimilars, which “are the hope and the future of research and will lead to a greater development of generics, now called equivalents” [28]. In the US the law grants only 5-years protection for “small” molecules and for their tests and equivalence investigations compared with those of the originator drugs. For biosimilars, i.e. the protein molecules, and for barely different “me-too” drugs, full Biologics Licensing Application (BLA) and a protection period of at least 12 years has been proposed to avoid law suits and often out-of-court transaction, as in the case of equivalent generics, like off-label drugs (Cf. [29]), plus an additional 12 years for minor variants (although this is unlikely to be accepted, since the more influential shareholders aim for the latter at a different BLA, with development aimed at the highest possible profit for the first 12 years and sale as therapeutic alternatives). The papers of Engelberg et al [30] and Garber [20] are rich in other ideas, which do not rule out the final victory of the policy of the current presidency, which is against prolonging the 5-years protection period for biosimilars, with investment by manufacturers aimed alternatively especially to the more innovative phases, as for the generics in general, etc. In any case, biosimilars, which are more complex, require preclinical and clinical research and pre- and post-marketing monitoring, including obviously the best possible pharmacovigilance, specifically on the trends of immunogenicity evolution, stringent quality control, and so forth. Therefore we present here the tribulations of clinical trials (Cf. [31]) and the urgent need to adopt as soon as possible our proposal (Cf. [13]), reiterated and discussed below in Section 5. A very significant element is that the verification of indications must be conducted expressly, not considered as automatically interchangeable [32]. It may be added that this class of drugs is often less topical than orphan, and that it tends more than any other to personalized medicine, and consequently does not ignore the global issue of rare and neglected diseases [33].

In Italy somatotropin was the first biosimilar, approved in 2006 with the specific EMEA guidelines, while others (another human growth hormone analogue, two erythropoiesis-stimulating agents, and filgrastim) have been authorized for distribution with reduction of shipping costs and a retail price reduction of 25 to 50 % compared with the originators. Market expectations are greater than ever before, since by 2015 at least 15 other patents will expire in Europe and 45 in the US [34].

4. Research, trial tribulations, and off-label, and redirected (or otherwise) discoveries

We want to start this section with two paradoxes. 1st - The cost of the traditional three-phase clinical trial is mounting so much that it is not always sustainable (Cf. Malakoff D. Spiraling costs threaten
gridlock, in [31]), particularly where and when regulator agencies insist on systematic comparative research, namely findings must show better trends throughout re-study of previous busters, and not any time vs repeated placebos only [21]. Therefore traditional multistep, multisite, double or triple-blind, randomized, cross-over studies, even those modelled on global epidemiology data, are no longer the best investment, but new originators, and even similarly financed research into biosimilars, no longer offer the best revenues as in the past, because patient groupings are of course less and less numerous due to the shift towards more personalized, individual diagnostic procedures extensively applied and finalized; in any case, the cost of a cure (up to 200,000 $ annually for imiglucerase for Gaucher’s disease; see: [30]) would be unsustainable by individuals, families, and even social, national and supranational care organizations, like the extraordinary insurance premium.

2nd – Consider the hypertension paradox [35], where the number of people with uncontrolled high blood pressure has continued to rise despite one of the most resounding medical successes of the past half-century, mostly due to failure to adopt a healthy lifestyle. This paradigmatic example also shows that clinical trials are outdated and that they may be useful only in some fields. The role of digoxin in managing acute heart failure syndromes [36], where the still inconclusive trials require a rethink, is another facet of the problem.

In [37-40] we list the contributions, from January 2009, on the issues discussed most frequently in the major general and specialist clinical journals with regard to the regulation of clinical-pharmacological trials [37], focusing on dyslipoproteinemic [38] and pharmacogenetic associations [39]. These papers, as mentioned and discussed in [14] and [31], also raise objections on the transparency and independence of regulatory organs and the ethics of not wholly legitimate interests involved in the personalized studies financed by them [40], which are especially - or better exclusively, entrusted with the transparent performance of controls on the investigations of others; on other conflicts of interest of the various potentially independent organs representing professional categories, on the need for patients and physicians to contribute disinterestedly, consistently and in a civilized way, to data collection without a predetermined selection, in order to help the updating of never definitive conclusions of the same meta-analyses; on the non-acceptance of repeatedly, globally standardized statistical-epidemiological criteria from the basic, general pre-clinical phase to the routine clinical work; etc: every reader will recognize his own preferred topics. Beware of the suicide of “seeding trials”, like the 1999 ADVANTAGE trial, defined as intellectually redundant and wasteful, apparently aimed at promoting new treatments “which have little to do with science, and much to do with marketing”, a masquerade of research! Nevertheless, “researchers refine in vitro test that will reduce the risk of “first in human” drug trials [41], “phase zero trials: a platform for drug development?” [42] are proposed; the “collection of data on patients’ race and ethnic group by physician practices” [43] is undertaken; “an independent external validation and evaluation of a specific risk prediction [44] is advocated; and finally (!) some want to go “beyond the impact factor” [45]; in addition an articulated, complex, fatigue, “flexible blueprint for the future of drug development” [46] has been drawn up without however really coming to grips with the already obsolete issue of the quantification of placebo effects, of complementary medicine, of the inevitable social epidemiology of drug addiction and of the absolutely significant presence of off-label effects, on which premonitory reviews have been presented also by ourselves (Cf. [14, 47, 48]). It is one of the latter secondary neglected effects, unfortunately not at all uncommon (found in up to one third of paediatric prescription products [49]), that has given rise to one of the most bitter, bewildering and unforgettable stories of marketing through misinformation and manipulation [50]. Consciously or otherwise, the need for reforming their advertising [51] is also associated not only with the need for drug reclassification – which has repeatedly and consistently been advocated by the authors (Cf. [3], [14] (p 82, and [25]), and [47]) – but also of enhancing the sustainable treatment of this group of orphan diseases and drugs, starting with diagnosis [33, 52], with the recovery, it, too, still not
systematically structured, of reviews [53], issues that have already been addressed but need to be further discussed.

5. The WHO-ITA / ITA-WHO Pharmacovigilance Monitoring Programme involving the Marche Region and Ancona University and the continuative realization of our original epidemiological-exploratory, analytical clinical pharmacotoxicology laboratory network

Here we will not mention our abundant literature, which is summarized in the previous references. The pharmacovigilance literature of 2009 is scanty (Cf. [54]), as if the gradually obsolescing topic had become tiring and boring; nonetheless, the relevant problems as presented and discussed this far are still fundamentally unresolved and have unfortunately extended and become worse.

After being delegated by the Italian Health Minister [56] and by the 5th Meeting of the Representatives of the National Participating Centres [57], we have worked on, continuously and devotedly (Cf. note (4)), even though we have never been acknowledged by the successive national, regional and local Agencies, by the local community [58], but especially by the Medical School and the merged Hospitals, which have forgotten to complete the provisions of the official headquarters we identified (Cf. “Villa Gusso”, [59]), as well as to provide an alternative one, thus systematically opposing all development. The rich national and local (regional) funds totalling together 551,475 € for the sole year 2008, and 535,000 € from the AIFA research budget, was a huge sum [60], will obviously require verification to establish whether they have been cautiously invested - have been integrated by our total commitment and at our personal expense while working for the University. Our original project, convergent with the views of the late Sir Richard Dole and expressed at the interregional level of our national scientific society, also through the public press [61], has been confirmed and applied in subsequent contributions, disseminated in national professional journals and also in the online journal of which we are cofounders [62]. In contrast, all the problems outlined in the previous sections, which have otherwise remained outstanding, with consequent deficiencies and inefficiencies, have the potential, today more than ever, to be developed at low or no cost if private and public, general and specialist facilities, surgeries, emergency departments, toxicology centres, and outpatient clinics, as well as more complex autonomous hospitalization, cure and rehabilitation facilities, could be persuaded to report patient histories to a single, systematically collaborative, stable interactive network, without never locally isolated superimpositions, namely that of the WHO international project. In France this structure has absorbed, for instance, the networks of toxicology centres and first aid facilities, and in Italy it has promoted the interuniversity network, for epidemiological-exploratory, analytical as well as didactic assistance, for both research and development [63]. The healthcare personnel currently not participating, e.g. those not included in any Registry (Cf. [64]), like the same studies defined as independent and then financed by AIFA projects, and even without making recourse to monitored release methods, agreed at the time [65], but respecting first of all the conditions of “overall patient load”, certainly not surreptitious, fictitious and to a certain extent privileged, theoretically predisposed ideal but limited, with reference and patient populations that must not be conditioned by rigid or flexible, nor preordained, structured criteria of recruitment, inclusion and exclusion, extended to the same cited institutive research claimed by AIFA, are not excluded. Therefore only through previous randomization, without following the approach of waiting and limiting the manufacturers’ explicit request to conduct their own studies before, during and after marketing. Without the monitoring process to be able to be used especially and/or exclusively as a “process useful to limit access to the drug”, respecting the natural variability in prescription decisions in the various areas and if necessary devising and pursuing automatic collateral studies, especially ex-post to establish any use and potential abuse of the available medicinal products, otherwise subject to the heterogeneity of goals. The exploratory, epidemiological, observational and analytical network

which now encompasses nearly 80 Countries, had initially been proposed only in similar programmes of the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) of the US Congress (see also, Teselic RA, OTA, 12. 16. 1975, modified by Table IV, p 7, in [66]).

TABLE 1. Pharmacy prices for an over-the-counter and an ethical drug, brand-name and generic. Drugs that a) can be replaced with a less expensive product, and b) where the difference is to be charged to the patient if the GP prescribed a generic whereas the patients wants the brand-name drug.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Producer</th>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Brand name</th>
<th>Generic</th>
<th>20 tabs</th>
<th>30 tabs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angelini</td>
<td>Tachipirina</td>
<td>4.24 €</td>
<td>5.00 €</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayer</td>
<td>Sampirina</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abogen</td>
<td>Acetamol</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teva</td>
<td>Paracetamol</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Producer</th>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Brand name</th>
<th>Generic</th>
<th>10 mg</th>
<th>20 mg</th>
<th>20 mg</th>
<th>40 mg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSD</td>
<td>Sinvacor</td>
<td>4.27 €</td>
<td>4.94 €</td>
<td>10.54 €</td>
<td>15.80 €</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sigma Tau</td>
<td>Sivastin</td>
<td>(*) 51,700 L.re</td>
<td>27,600 L.re</td>
<td>10.74</td>
<td>16.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progefarma</td>
<td>Lipimil</td>
<td>5.5,300 L.re</td>
<td>27,600 L.re</td>
<td>9.24</td>
<td>14.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note (*). Non-approved clinical indications

“Transcription on the regional pad of drugs prescribed by a specialist for clinical indications not included in the summary of product characteristics of the Health Ministry entails a personal responsibility of the GP. However such prescription is legal if the written consent of the patient is previously obtained. In such case the patient is charged the full price of the product in presence of authoritative medical literature confirming the rationale of the prescription (as per law no. 94 / 1998). In the absence of authoritative literature to warrant it, the prescription of drugs for clinical indications that have not yet been recognized is to be considered as a trial and is subject to the provisions of the decree of the Health Minister of 27 April 1992 and subsequent modifications, whereby the cost of trial drugs is to be sustained by the sponsoring drug manufacturer and not unduly charged to the NHS (encl 1, par. II, 2.3, d), it is under direct responsibility of the experimenter (encl 1, par. II, 2.5, j), and requires written informed consent by the patient and previous authorization by an ethics committee. Prescriptions for unapproved clinical indications charged to the NHS could be considered as fraud against the state (art. 640 penal code); in case of adverse side-effects the patient could sue for damages for culpable liability (verdict no. 3599 of 18 April 1997 of the Third Section of the Supreme Penal Court). The GP can refer the case to the
Medical Association, the local NHS Director and the Director of the hospital from which the putatively improper transcription request proceeds”. Mauro Marin, general practitioner and expert in legal healthcare issues. Pordenone, mail 31. 3. 10. 10:00.

Note (2) Salient facts of compartmental and non-compartmental model pharmacotoxicokinetics, from [24].

While comparative dynamics tests of any drug require a minimum of three dosages to estimate the needed basic dose-effect linear slope and calculate their geometric mean (m_{g} and / or x_{g}) being one value spent as a degree of freedom, to infer a linear AUC kinetics, the same three doses must be applied. Thereafter, through convolution, is it possible to evaluate at least the simplest fitting to a first order simultaneous linear model, by Fick’s law, both for the pre-eminently absorbed, and the superimposed next dominant elimination kinetics trends. For absorption: \( \frac{dx}{dt} = k_{1}t; \quad x = a (1 - e^{-k_{1}t}); \quad \ln (a - x) = \ln a - k_{1}t; \quad \log (a - x) = (\log a - k_{1}t) / 2.303; \quad \text{for elimination: } \quad \frac{dx}{dt} = -k_{2}t; \quad x = x_{0}e^{-k_{2}t}; \quad \log x = (\log x_{0} - k_{2}t) / 2.303. \)

The distribution equation, which underlies the integral AUC, by convoluting the function \( x_{0}k_{1}e^{k_{1}t} \) for \( e^{-k_{2}t} \), for the model: \( X_{1} \rightarrow X_{2} \rightarrow X_{3} \), is:

\[
X_{2} = x_{0} \left[ k_{1}/(k_{2} - k_{1}) \right] \left( e^{k_{1}t} - e^{-k_{2}t} \right),
\]

\[
t_{\text{max}} = \left[ (1/(k_{2} - k_{1}) \right] \ln (k_{2}/k_{1}), \quad \text{and}
\]

\[
C_{\text{max}} = x_{0} \left( k_{2}/k_{1} \right) \left[ k_{2}/(k_{2} - k_{1}) \right],
\]

where \( C_{\text{max}} \) is linear with the dose administered, \( t_{\text{max}} \) does not change with the various doses, and \( 2t_{\text{max}} \) is the flexion point, since it is also possible to estimate \( k_{1} \) and \( k_{2} \) with graphic semilog derivation (e.g. again with the least squares method), whereas Cl (clearance, in l/h) = dose (mg) / AUC (mg x h)/l; \( V = \text{dose} / C_{0}; \quad t_{1/2} = 0.693 \ V / \text{Cl}; \quad k = 0.693 / t_{1/2} = C / V, \) and bioavailability, F with reference to AUC_{test} / AUC_{reference} with regard to the interval of fiducial limits, where P measures the confidence or fiducial inference according to Student’s t distribution = \( (x_{g} - \mu) / s_{m} \), where \( s_{m} \) the standard error or standardized deviation of the mean, and at \( t = +/- 10\% \) is:

\[
P \left(-t_{0.10} \leq (x_{g} - \mu) / s_{m} \leq t_{0.10}\right),
\]

equal to 0.8 – 1.25 (asymmetric compared with 1 for log transformation). The complete set of kinetics parameters is of 7 elements, where: Cl x turnover time = V; turnover time x turnover number = permanence time; permanence time x yield = occupancy, and by selecting 4 of them, the others, up to 7, can be obtained. For non-linear enzyme (and receptor) systems, where kinetics trends are not (multi)exponential but hyperbolic, % of reaction velocity, \( v = (V_{\text{max}} \cdot s) / (K_{m} + s), \) intrinsic Cl V / C = \( V_{\text{max}} / (K_{m} + C) \), or at very low concentration, circa = \( V_{\text{max}} / K_{m} \).

Note (3) From [25], Chapter 9 (summarized and modified) – Pharmacodynamics. Dose-effect relationship. Cases where the concentration of a drug is not a good indicator of effect.

I – Drugs used at concentrations that produce maximal effect: in this “window” different, also adverse, events can be recruited, which exhibit higher DE_{50};

II – Fast acting drugs, irreversible (e.g. aspirin, early MAO inhibitors);

III – Delayed distribution, when the main site of action is found in a compartment where the drug has a slow distribution (e.g. digoxin; the effect increases when its concentration falls due to redistribution: anti-clockwise hysteresis of the dose-effect relationship);
IV – Acute tolerance (tachyphylaxis; clockwise hysteresis of the dose-effect relationship): e.g. cocaine and indirect sympathomimetic amines like pseudoephedrine and amphetamine;

V – Hormesis (inverse effects at the lower concentrations);

VI – “Wrong” effect measurement, e.g. warfarin, where prothrombin time increases as its concentration decreases. The rate of onset of the effect is a function of the rate of decay of the existing clotting factors, whereas the direct effect that is exerted on their rate of synthesis corresponds to the drug’s concentration;

VII – Active metabolites not measured by the analytical method used, e.g. first pass of several oral beta-antagonists;

VIII – Enantiomers, with optical isomers having different kinetic and dynamic properties, e.g. again various beta-adrenergic antagonists;

IX – Protein bond saturability and analytical measurement of total levels and of the effects associated to unbound fractions, e.g. non-linear phenytoin pharmacokinetics.


Ancona, 14 June 2001, prot. F 297. **Operative Unit of Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology. Specific, excellence, planning and ongoing activities.**

Since 1973 the Service, the only one in the whole of Marche Region, has started, developed, and consistently met the regional requirements of teaching, research and joint clinical activities, suitable for the reference sector coordinated there on behalf of the University, namely Degree courses, Specialization, short Diploma courses, etc, by the following main activities, decided every year aiming specifically at the innovative advancement of the University and of local and regional healthcare bodies: 1) *Assays and auto-classification techniques* of iso-receptors, supraenzymatic-supramolecular systems and groups of analogues, from experimental analytical pharmacotoxicology to clinical-exploratory-epidemiological and socio-economic pharmacotoxicology; 2) *Redox and phosphorylation potentials with compartmental integration*: Implementation of non-invasive electro-physio-pharmacotoxicological techniques, spectrophotofluorimetric techniques extended to the near infrared, mass spectrophotometry and multinuclear magnetic resonance. The acquisition of accessory microimaging methods to analyse easy-to-collect bioptic and biomedical samples, has already been decided and is in progress; 3) *Routine therapeutic monitoring* of chemical-clinical specialist, applied pharmacotoxicokinetic parameters of more than 80 diagnostic products (and metabolites) and of current therapeutic, maintenance, rehabilitation or leisure-time use/abuse of multiaddiction drugs (reference programmes for Marche Region), antidotes, anti-doping and antipollution products as well as galenic preparations, generics, bioequivalents and biosimilars that are going to be distributed soon; 4) *Pharmacotoxicoepidemiology*: Creation and development of the pre- and post-marketing international pharmacovigilance ITA-OMS / WHO-ITA system; 5) *Time series pharmacotoxicokinetics*: power spectra of supra- and intracellular heart, tension, respiratory, and metabolic fluctuations interfaced as functional parameters with analytical, metabolic, non-invasive, chemical-clinical and clinical-specialist parameters; 6) *Multiparameter study of peptidergic-purine-pyrimidinergic, non-adrenergic, non-cholinergic, nitrinergic systems* (national and international projects involving CNR, ITA-USA and ITA-Canada; collaboration with the Canadian National Research Council and Manitoba university); 7) *Experimental and clinical pharmacotoxicological caspase modulation in apoptotic cycles*; 8) *Theranostics and analytical, chemical-clinical and exploratory-epidemiological pharmacotoxicogenomics*, initially involving
iso-guanylyl cyclase and NO-synthase modulation (current collaborative project with the integrated Biology, Physiology and Pharmacology Department, the Clinical Pharmacology Section and the Molecular Medicine Section of Houston Medical School, Houston, Texas); 9) Human pharmacotoxicology Section of the IMO Interuniversity Centre, Molecules and Organisms, Siena University.

Complete structuring of the methods of the analytical laboratory was started and pursued in collaboration with the Pharmaceutical Service of the local hospital by applying International quality assurance standards and in the framework of the objectivity statistical validations needed for the Pharmacotoxicology vigilance project, set up here as the University-Hospital national collaborative centre with the first 6 member Countries (at present 48) of the WHO system. In particular, the objectivity analysis of phase IV has been extended with respect to the original project as a reference excellence activity practiced there for the first national trial (naloxone), in view of the replacement of conventional trials with comprehensive experimentation, including all patients involved in the use/abuse of the medication, whose IT structuring has required the implementation of exploratory-epidemiological, iterative auto-classification programmes from the experimental to the clinical phase. A unique project design directed at the individual patient, avoiding the randomizations and limitations of current trials designs.

The excellence tasks and activities of the Operative Unit have included, in line with the opinion of 26 January 1979 of the Consiglio Superiore di Sanità, accepted on 28 November/2 December 1983 by the Joint Session of the EC Committees, International Chemical Agent Safety Programme and WHO European Regional Office (Cf. “L’ attivita’ del Servizio e’ principalmente sviluppata quale consulenza e specialistica di laboratorio”) the clinical-hospital activities of: a) Co-assistance to drug addicts; b) Drug treatment in wards carrying out trials of new products and/or formulations; c) Pharmacovigilance tests; d) Monitoring of bound and/or unbound concentrations of drugs (and metabolites) in easy-to-collect biopsy samples and tissues (e.g. blood; urine, CSF, aqueous humour); e) consultation concerning drug-related risks of teratogenesis, carcinogenesis, mutagenesis and abortion; f) Participation in the drawing up and management of vade mécum-prontuaries for internal use; g) Collaboration with ICUs, emergency departments and dialysis centres; h) innovative and/or important, specialist diagnostic including radiodiagnostic procedures (e.g. for transmitter and modulator metabolism; early toxicity markers; phenotypic and genetic receptor markers: theranostics and pharmacogenetics). They have been included in document no. 36 of 28 January 1988 of the local NHS body and Municipalities Association, in the relevant article of the Marche regional law no. 7 of 3 March 1982 and in the updated Region/University collaboration agreements. The Clinical Pharmacology section of the Italian Pharmacology Society has more recently updated and subjected them to econometric evaluation also using our contributions –original prototypes and joint WHO documents- in particular to multi-interdisciplinary verification based on current guidelines and therapeutic protocols, of database implementation and vigilance and utilization registers, of essential drug lists, prescription and adherence to medications, and relevant monitoring methods, as included in the paradigmatic divisions of disciplinary categories already practiced in our Country and University. The joint decision confirms that the participation of the Medical School to the achievement of the goals of the National and Regional Health Service takes the form of the Service of the Operative Unit, first structure charged with the task of performing drug information and documentation activities.

References


[14] Rossini L. Pre- and post-marketing pharmacovigilance: The myths of the placebo effects and of the off-label use of drugs. Presented on 19th May, 2008 at the Accademia Marchigiana Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, Ancona. Pharmacologyonline 2008;2:80-94; 1211 Geneva 17 M10/07/22(2), 11 January 1980: “… We also greatly appreciate your offer to receive the next meeting of representatives of national centres in Ancona. Having regard to your initiative in establishing the first computer terminal link with the WHO Collaborating Centre in Uppsala, your centre has unique claim for consideration. … . Dr J.F. Dunne, Senior Medical Officer Pharmaceuticals, WHO Headquarters, Geneva.


De Martinis and Rossini


[57] 5th Meeting of the Representatives of National Centres participating in the WHO International Drug Monitoring Scheme, WHO-ITA / ITA-OMS, University of Ancona Medical School, Portonovo (AN), October 4/8, 1982.


[60] Marche Regional Government, Decree of the Health Service Director no. 133/S04, 5. 12. 08, Re: Agreement as per art 1, para 819, Law 296/06, Marche Region /AIFA, to implement the Pharmacovigilance Project “Actions for the resumption of adverse reaction reporting in Marche” (Cf. I fondi regionali di farmacovigilanza. BiF 2008; XV, n 6. Insert pp 3-15); Authorization of the Board of Università Politecnica delle Marche, Faculty Meeting of the Medical School of 9 March 2010, with reference to Bando AIFA 2008, area B 2 “Valutazione degli eventi avversi dei mezzi di contrasto e dei radiofarmaci utilizzati a fini diagnostici e terapeutici”; Bernardi M, Bradu D, Di Sarra B, Galeazzi G, Marcucci M, Montecchiani G, Moretti V, Moroni L, Re L, Rossini L, Rossini P, Tonnini C. Ionic and non-ionic contrast agents. A contribution by WHO-ITA and The Drug Documentation and Information Centre of Regione Marche. Pharmacologyonline Newsletter 2010;3: this Volume. It may be appropriate here to mention the verdict of the Marche Administrative Tribunal of 4 May 2010, no 201/2010, as per appeal no. 1520/1994, and registered mail 02141-4, 23.6.2010 no. 136889356/13-7,14-8, 15-9 and 16-0: “In Ancona a University professor, one of its very founders, was prevented from achieving the “desire” (conscious, anthropogenic) of any living creature to constitute this being as an I, and to reveal it as such to himself and to others as self-consciousness, by way of his own work, free and historical intentional becoming, sought evolution, conscious progress in the necessarily multifarious reality of fundamental social relations. Essentially to be achieved with the risk of satisfying its acknowledgement via a life-or-death struggle of pure prestige of realization and revelation of his destiny. Of acquisition of experience through dialectic suppression of its immediately subordinated limitedness, making it a source of human progress in the social historical overcoming process. In
the anguish of the feeling of the power of perfection that can be achieved only in the execution, with staid work, of what has been planned. Free task of educating endeavour, capable of stability, taking permanent autonomy of spirit embodied in the real historical world of the objective history of being, finally directed at freeing him from the same existential anguish” (modified from A. Kojève, Commented translation of Section A of Chap IV of the Phenomenology of the Spirit, in “Introduzione alla lettura di Hegel”, Adelphi Ed, Milano, 2010, pp 17-44). Something that here was denied as if because of substantial inexistence.

[61] 6th SIF Interregional Meeting, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Marche, Trentino-Alto Adige and Veneto, Portonovo (Ancona) 23 April, 1991. Introductory Address, and article, Il Corriere Adriatico, Ancona, “Pharmacology Today - Researchers Comparing Notes …“There is less and less justification for treating a patient on the basis of epidemiological studies and conventional small-sized, short-term therapeutic trials. Comparative studies need to be conducted for the various drugs in the various new and old therapeutic classes. In view of the possibly overwhelming and prohibitive costs of long-term ad hoc explorative-epidemiological studies, the alternative consists in analytical, systematic study by comprehensive observation of the very largest number of patient cohorts throughout informatics processing”.


