The epidemiology of pharmacologically treated attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in the Region of Murcia, Spain: Differences by gender, age and location of residence

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION:
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is the most frequent disorder in childhood and adolescence, and is seen as a public health problem. The recommended treatment includes pharmacological and psychosocial treatment. The aim of this work was to study the changes in the prescribing of the medicines used in ADHD treatment in the Region of Murcia, as well as their socio-demographic variability.

METHOD:
A retrospective observational study was conducted using the dispensing of medicines for ADHD treatment by means of prescription in the Region of Murcia from 2010 to 2014. The consumption rates were determined as defined daily doses (DDD) per thousand inhabitants/day (DHD), stratified by gender and age. The reasons for prevalence of treatment by gender were also determined by comparing male and female consumption rates.

RESULTS:
The consumption of medicines for ADHD treatment had almost doubled in the period studied, from 5.58 DHD and 3.39 DHD in 2010 to 9.34 DHD and 6.71 DHD in 2014, for the age range of 10-14 and 15-19, respectively. Boys from 10-14 showed the highest consumption rates, showing a high geographical variability with less consumption in rural areas.

CONCLUSION:
The results showed a large increase in the use of medicines for ADHD treatment in the Region of Murcia, although the consumption rates are still lower than in other Autonomous Communities or neighbouring countries. A wide geographical variability was found, with a higher consumption in adolescents from urban areas.