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Pharmacist in the ICU

Pharmacists play a crucial role in the ICU, where patients often require complex medication regimens, including multiple medications and intravenous therapies. The role of a critical care pharmacist is multifaceted and vital to ensuring optimal patient care in the critical care setting.

Critical care pharmacists ensure patients receive safe, effective, and appropriate medication therapy. They work with the critical care team to select the most appropriate medications for patients, considering diagnosis, comorbidities, allergies, and potential drug interactions. Critical care pharmacists play a crucial role in dosage optimisation to ensure therapeutic effectiveness while minimising adverse effects. They are involved in monitoring patient response to medications and collaborating with the ICU team to adjust medication regimens as needed. In addition, pharmacists play a key role in antimicrobial stewardship programmes within the ICU, ensuring that antibiotics are prescribed appropriately and with minimal risk. Parenteral nutrition also requires the expertise of critical care pharmacists, as does intravenous fluid therapy.

Pharmacists educate ICU staff on medication use, safety, and best practices. They serve as drug information resources, answering questions and recommending medication-related issues. At the same time, they can educate patients and their families about their medications, including administration, side effects, and medication adherence. They can reconcile medications when patients are admitted to or discharged from the ICU, ensuring continuity of care and minimising the risk of medication errors. They are also a valuable resource because of their expertise in medication-related issues, drug interactions, adverse effects, and alternative therapies. They can advance critical care pharmacy practice by participating in research projects and literature reviews and disseminating evidence-based recommendations. Overall, pharmacists in the ICU play a vital role in optimising medication therapy, promoting patient safety, and improving clinical outcomes.

In this issue, our contributors explore the role of **pharmacists in the ICU** and discuss their responsibilities related to various aspects of pharmaceutical care.

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