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KITTIYA KATTIVIRIYAPINYO: ASSESSMENT OF DRUG  
PROCUREMENT SYSTEM OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS IN THAILAND IN 1998.  
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The drug procurement system of private hospitals in Thailand in 1998 was studied in two aspects: procedures and costs. The objectives were to survey procurement practices, to compare procurement outcomes, and to determine unit cost of purchasing and inventory carrying cost. The study was conducted in two parts. In the first part, procurement procedures, all 422 private hospitals and clinics with beds for admission in Thailand were surveyed by mailed questionnaire. The response data were handled by a visual method and the boxplot method in SPSS 7.0. The normality of distribution of the included data was tested. Then, the data were analyzed by chi-square and non-parametric statistics (Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test). In the second part, procurement costs, procurement cost data were collected using cost collecting forms at two Bangkok and vicinity private hospitals subscribing group purchasing. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze procurement cost data.

The results of the first part revealed that the larger hospitals and hospitals in the Hospital Accreditation (HA) project could be classified as the standardized hospitals about procurement practices because they had high percentages of good practices. The results also indicated that hospitals with good procurement practices would have good procurement outcomes. For the second part, labor cost was the largest proportion of both purchasing and inventory carrying cost. When comparing the cost of two target hospitals, almost all types of cost in the larger hospital were higher than the smaller one. In the larger hospital, the unit cost of purchasing and inventory carrying cost were less. The results indicated that there were not constant optimal procurement costs for all hospitals, but that they depended on the hospital's management.

The results of this study can be used as basic information for executive administrators of health care providers in both public and private sectors to construct more effective policy about drug procurement systems in hospitals.