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#### Título

Assessment of the equity of the distribution of community pharmacies in Portugal

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#### Palabras Clave

community pharmacy; equity

#### Objetivos

Community pharmacies play a pivotal role in the Portuguese health care system by ensuring the access to prescribed medicines and other pharmaceutical services. Entry market regulations are in practice according to distances between pharmacies and population ratios. This study was carried out in order to assess inequities in the access to community pharmacies in Portugal.

#### Métodos

The populational distribution of community pharmacies (supply) was evaluated according to health administration areas. The total number of medical prescriptions issued by the National Health Service (NHS) over the year 2005 (demand) and filled out by pharmacies was also evaluated by pharmacy within each area. Coefficients of Gini and Lorenz Curves were calculated for both supply and demand. Supply and demand were further compared.

#### Resultados

Lorenz curves for the supply were found to be near the equality diagonal. Gini Coefficients for all health administration areas were close to zero (from 0.018 to 0.101) and correlations reveal that linear models explain between 81% and 92% of the variance.

Similar results were found to demand. Gini Coefficients for all health administration areas vary among 0.001 and 0.043 and linear models explain between 97% and 99% of the variance.

#### Conclusiones

Iniquities in both supply and demand were not found. Community pharmacies distribution strongly correlates to population and supplied medical prescriptions. Access to medicines, in its form of distance does not seem to be a problem within the Portuguese health system.