Background and importance The health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the hospital pharmacy services (HPS). Our HPS, which belongs to the region’s referral hospital, had to adapt quickly to the new circumstances to ensure adequate pharmaceutical care (PC) and drug distribution.

Aim and objectives To avoid interruption or lack of persistence of chronic outpatient treatment during the pandemic and to improve adherence and avoid treatment discontinuation, as well as to reduce the spread of the virus and protect patients.

Material and methods A descriptive, observational, retrospective study was conducted from 25 March to 22 April 2020. We detected less patients in the hospital’s outpatient area (OA), and the waiting room did not allow the recommended social distancing. In addition, other findings were the need to avoid discontinuation of treatment, widening, new infections and spread of the virus. A circuit based on telephone PC was designed to guarantee therapeutic adherence and clinical follow-up, with free home delivery of medication for all patients who gave their consent, ensuring confidentiality. This initiative had the collaboration of the computer service, which made the necessary modifications to the computer system to facilitate patient detection.

Results As a result of the health crisis, the number of patients attending the hospital’s OA daily decreased by 56%, as the usual average number of patients before the pandemic was 215±25 while the average during the pandemic was 95±29. Over 8 weeks, the daily average of 70.2 (25–109) medication shipments were made in the city and 11.4 (4–26) in the towns of the province. In total, 3116 shipments were made, 88% to the city and 12% to towns. There were no incidents in the dispensing or delivery of the medication.

Conclusion and relevance HPS demonstrated its ability to react and adapt to a health crisis pandemic by urgent adaptation of their procedures. The new implemented circuit has guaranteed an adequate telephone PC to the outpatient, ensuring continuation of treatment. In addition, correct and safe distribution of medicines has been achieved.

REFERENCES AND/OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Conflict of interest No conflict of interest