

Contrast media shortage member impact survey

January 2023



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Purpose and summary

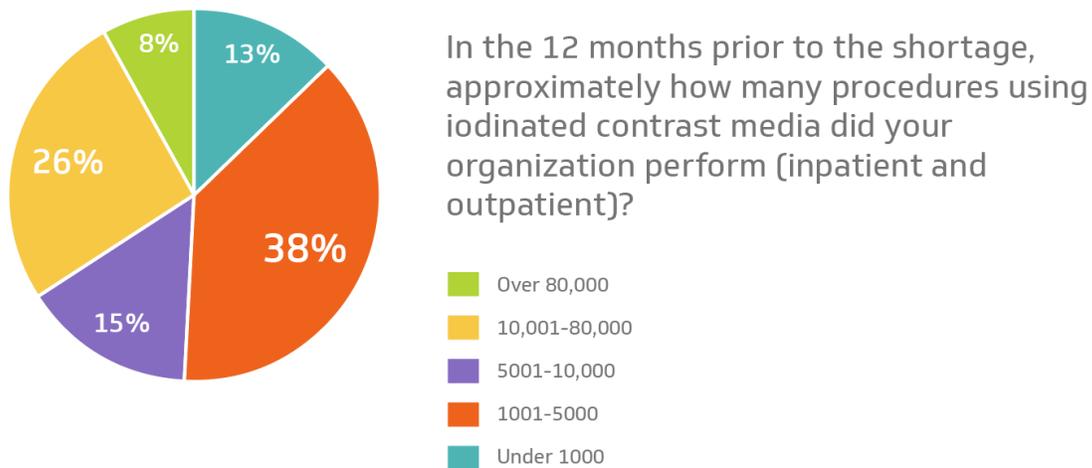
During Q3 2022, Vizient's Center for Pharmacy Practice Excellence distributed an anonymous survey to assess the financial and operational impacts of the iodinated contrast media shortage. The survey was distributed to Vizient pharmacy, radiology and supply chain leaders and received 40 complete and partial responses, which were included.

Detailed survey findings

Respondents were asked to share their experiences on the six questions listed below. It is notable that some survey respondents were not directly impacted by the shortage because of a relationship with an alternative supplier with adequate contrast media supply during the survey time period.

In the 12 months prior to the shortage, approximately how many procedures using iodinated contrast media did your organization perform (inpatient and outpatient)?

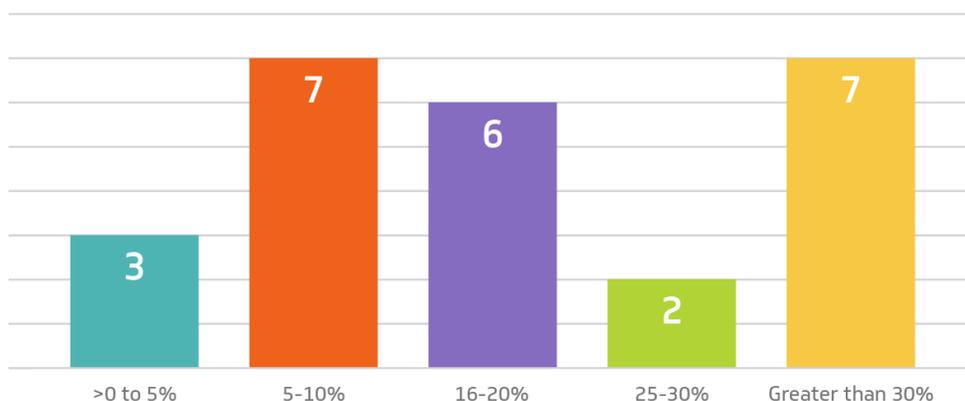
More than 1M total procedures were reported to have been performed by the 40 respondents in the 12 months prior to the shortage. The average was approximately 29,000 procedures per responding organization.



What percentage of your procedures needed to be deferred or cancelled due to the shortage?

Sixty-two percent of respondents reported an impact on performing procedures ranging from 0.5% to 75% (average: 24%) procedures canceled or deferred as a result of the shortage. Roughly two-thirds of those who reported any impact shared that they had to cancel or defer 15% or more of their procedures. This pool of respondents is more likely to have been impacted by the iodinated contrast shortage.

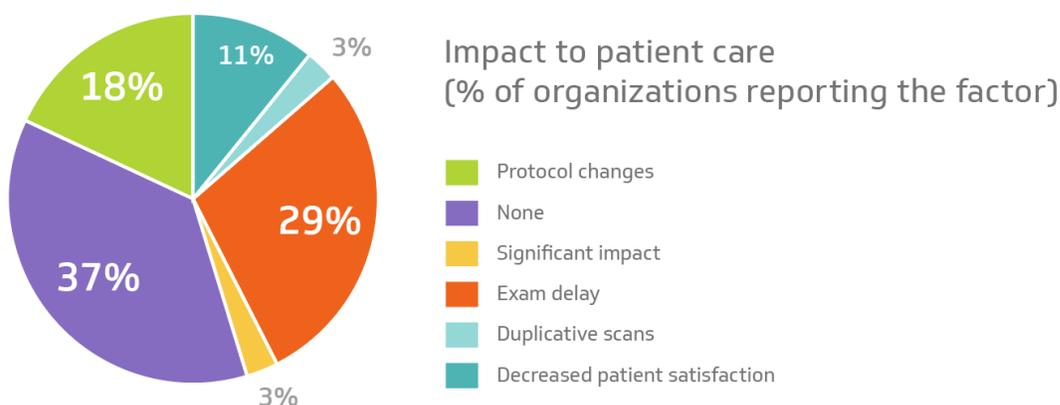
Responders who reported deferring or cancelling procedures due to the shortage by % of impacted procedures



What has been the impact of this shortage on patient care (e.g. quality)?

Sixty-five percent of the respondents noted an impact of the shortage on patient care. Responses were grouped into the following categories:

- Exam delay (~29% percent reported)
- Decreased patient satisfaction
- Repeat scans when visualization without contrast was not optimal
- Protocol changes including non-contrast studies or dose modifications
- No impact as contrast was readily available from another supplier
- Exam cancellation and loss to another facility who had contrast available



The largest impact to the members was a delay in exams possibly resulting in treatment postponement. This impacts many facets of patient care including decreased patient satisfaction and/or loss to other facilities who had access to product.

What is your estimate for annualized loss of revenue due to these lost procedures?

Sixty-seven percent experienced a loss of revenue with an expected loss of over \$26M for all the respondents collectively (average: approximately \$650,000 per respondent). Thirty-nine percent reported an impact of \$1M and under.

The shortage has prompted many members to address contrast usage and waste. How has your contrast media usage and operationalization changed since the onset of the shortage?

Respondents to this question noted the following changes to their usage of contrast media and operations since the start of the shortage:

- Minimize waste
 - Purchase smaller vial size
 - Pharmacy aliquots
- Adjust dosing
 - Use of fixed or reduced doses
 - Age/weight-based doses
- Limit exams utilizing oral or injectable contrast
- Optimize injector protocols
- Discontinue outpatient scans
- No impact/change

Members adjusted how they utilized and operationalized contrast media since the start of the shortage with 45% reporting an adjustment in fixed or reduced dosages and 15% reporting limiting the number of contrast exams. Members are finding ways to work with available supplies, reserving contrast imaging for critical patient exams and modifying treatment protocols.

What else would you like to share about this issue?

For this inquiry, respondents noted the following experiences:

- Caregiver job dissatisfaction
- Patient care was lost to other health systems with contrast available
- Large lift for pharmacy
 - More resources required to compound aliquot doses
 - Technician shortages made this more challenging
- Limited vendors have highlighted vulnerabilities in acquiring additional product
- Highlights single source vulnerability and national security risk of international
- Improve access to multidose vials
- Smaller hospitals disadvantaged as unable to diversify brands or sizes to cushion impact
- Halted other progressive programs (i.e., pain management)

- Appreciated Vizient hosted vendor calls; these were helpful in keeping our facility informed

The iodinated shortage resulted in a high level of stress for caregivers, who continued to provide ways to conduct contrast media exams. In these findings, other financial and operational impacts of utilizing pharmacy resources during times of technologist shortages were uncovered. Additionally, respondents highlighted supply assurance vulnerabilities with limited vendors and the relative impact on healthcare by not being able to acquire products outside of the contracted vendor.

Key takeaways

1. The contrast media shortage resulted in revenue loss to responding members of over \$26M with an average of \$650,000 per respondent.
2. Sixty-two percent of the respondents noting a deferral or cancellation in procedures.
3. Forty-five percent of respondents reported using adjusted dosages in order to continue to provide critical contrast exams.
4. Resource challenges included:
 - Protocol changes in the imaging departments
 - Pharmacy operations in aliquoting larger volumes to patient specific doses

Variations and/or limitations of the study results

This study likely represents organizations that were not impacted and those who were impacted leading to potential variations in the averages presented. Overall, respondents reported \$26M in total lost revenue impact (~\$650,000 per respondent) but there is a high likelihood that the average may be much greater due to the inclusion of reports with no impact.

Additional resources

The following resources may help you navigate and learn more about drug shortages

[Pharmacy program](#)

[Drug monitoring through pharmacy analytics](#)



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