

Key takeaways for pharmacy buyers and technicians

Drug shortages and labor costs:

Measuring a hidden cost of drug shortages on U.S. hospitals

The cost of labor to manage drug shortages

\$359 million

Cost of labor needed to manage drug shortages **per year**.

8.6 million

Additional personnel hours needed to manage drug shortages per year

Average number of hours spent weekly managing drug shortages

Buyers/purchasing agents	12.0
Pharmacists	9.3
Pharmacy technicians	7.6
Informatics pharmacists	3.8
Nurses	1.7
Physicians	1.4
Financial/business office	1.3



Summary

Between March 6 and April 4, 2019, the Vizient® Drug Shortages Task Force conducted its inaugural member survey, “2019 Drug Shortages and Labor Costs: Measuring a Hidden Cost of Drug Shortages on U.S. Hospitals.”

These responses confirmed that drug shortages are taking a significant toll on pharmacy staffing and on the additional costs related to personnel that manage the impact of these shortages.

Number of drug shortages reported in a six-month period



Download the full report for additional insights:
<http://enddrugshortages.com>

As the nation’s largest member-driven health care performance improvement company, Vizient provides network-powered insights in the critical areas of clinical, operational, and supply chain performance and empowers members to deliver exceptional, cost-effective care.

Top 5 categories of drug shortages

1. Controlled substances
2. Local anesthetics
3. Crash cart drugs
4. Antibiotics
5. Electrolytes

Did you know? Of the respondents that have a critical drug list, more than 2/3 are dedicating daily or weekly resources to manage the list.

Vizient Pharmacy Solutions

The Vizient® member-focused Pharmacy Solutions support health systems and hospitals in transforming pharmacy from a cost center to a central point of integrated care through solutions that manage cost, improve quality outcomes and drive organizational performance. With an expansive portfolio of more than 12,000 contracted pharmaceutical products accessible across acute and non-acute care settings, Vizient leverages supply chain and clinical insights, experienced pharmacy consultants and therapeutic class-specific expertise to help members manage spend, optimize savings and prepare for market shifts. Serving as one united voice for members through both advocacy and action, Vizient is elevating the strategic role of pharmacy, from point of procurement to point of care.



To learn more, please contact pharmacyquestions@vizientinc.com

Top 5 most helpful mitigation strategies used by Vizient® members

- Implement processes to restrict therapy duration (e.g. antibiotics)
- Create a task force/committee dedicated to addressing drug shortages
- Adjust electrolyte replacement guidelines (e.g. raised threshold for ordering)
- Purchase alternative presentations (e.g. syringe vs vial; alternate concentration)
- Increase stock of medications that are anticipated to be limited in supply

Resources that facilities rely on the most to help manage drug shortages

- Wholesaler
- ASHP Drug shortage website
- Manufacturer
- FDA website
- Vizient member resources
- Pharmacy professional organization list serv/forum

Key Takeaways

- A significant amount of additional cost and additional labor is required across U.S. hospitals to manage drug shortages.
- Buyers and technicians are among the top roles impacted by the management of drug shortages.
- Controlled substances and anesthetics continue to be top categories impacted by drug shortages.
- Mitigation strategies related to managing drug shortages varies by facility.

Action steps and mitigation strategies:

- Seek out resources that can save time, such as Vizient mitigation perls that provide peer-reviewed recommendations for alternative therapies and Vizient daily drug shortage alerts.
- Look for Vizient Novaplus® products when ordering through your distributor's portal. Please note that Novaplus provides access to some of the drugs currently on the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) drug shortage list.

Learn specific mitigation strategies, top classes of therapies impacted and additional key insights in the complete report.

[Download the complete report](#) →

¹Ref: U.S. hospital as defined by the American Hospital Association (<https://www.aha.org/statistics/fast-facts-ushospitals>).

Ref: Definitive Healthcare "Hospitals and IDNs" database.

Ref: Vizient pharmacy program participants; data on file.

Ref: Hourly pay based on U.S. labor statistics (<https://www.bls.gov>); Vizient data on file.