



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Opening dialogue between patients and healthcare team – Pharmacist-led Neurology Refill Service at Tseung Kwan O Hospital

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Introduction

People living with neurological conditions have special needs for information and support to help them comply with their medications, especially during initial phase of therapeutic trial. However, it is difficult for patients to discuss their concerns at the dispensing window. Long periods in-between specialized outpatient appointments and lack of feedback channels for patients to promptly report drug related problems could easily lead to non-compliance, resulting in treatment failure and wastage of drugs. Refill service allows pharmacists to assist patients in medication adherence, disease control and reduce drug wastage.

Objectives

To improve effectiveness of pharmacotherapy by facilitating the communication between patients and healthcare team, aiming to improve medication adherence, reduce drug wastage and empower patients to be in control of their diseases through Pharmacist-led Neurology Refill Service.

Methodology

Since February 2011, pharmacist-led neurology refill service at Tseung Kwan O Hospital expanded its scope to cover patients suffering from Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, neuropathic pain, dementia and migraine. Neurologist referred patients who were initiated on new medication to pharmacist for detailed drug counseling. Recruited patients would receive 3-4 weeks of the new drug as trial together with a refill coupon. Drug information leaflets and support telephone-line would also be provided to patient. Prior to refill, pharmacist would call patient to ensure he/she was complied with the medication. If intervention was needed, pharmacist would provide additional follow-ups and consult neurologist.

Result

A total of 84 cases were referred. 59 cases (70%) reported drug related problems and pharmacist provided additional follow-ups. 16 cases had earlier medical follow-up, 10 cases had dosage adjustment and 12 cases needed amendment in regimen after consultation with neurologist. Overall, 62 cases (74%) were successfully initiated on new medication regimen. Refill was withheld in 19 cases (23%) resulting in savings

over \$20000. The results in this study indicate that this program can offer substantial benefits to patients newly started on neurological medications. By opening the communication channel between patient and healthcare team in-between specialized outpatient appointments, pharmacist helps strengthen trusting relationship, allay patients' fears and improve effectiveness of medical treatment. Pharmacists make valuable contributions in medication education, reinforcing drug compliance while freeing up providers for other responsibilities, ultimately reducing drug wastage and alleviating hospital admissions due to drug-related problems.