Impact of a Community pharmacy intervention on medicine use and Adherence Rates in patients with Osteoporosis: ICAROS-study

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Background The introduction of pharmaceutical care services is not without problems. The implementation and adoption of the first reimbursed advanced pharmaceutical care in Belgian community pharmacies was low. Pharmacists experienced primarily practical barriers and also lack of training in performing counseling sessions. Also, patients reported to experience it as slightly uncomfortable.

Purpose This study aims to evaluate the feasibility of a community pharmacy intervention for patients with osteoporosis, focusing on the quality of the pharmacotherapy and adherence.

Method A 3-month study in 105 community pharmacies was set up. The target group were ambulatory patients who used at least 1 osteoporosis drug (bisphosphonate, strontium ranelate, denosumab, SERM, teriparatide) in the last 12 months. After analyzing the adherence, pharmacists discussed with their patients the use of their drug and the use of calcium and vitamin D. Pharmacists recorded the observed DRP's and interventions in a webtool. 4 ? 8 weeks after the interview, pharmacists evaluated if the interventions were implemented and if the DRP?s were solved. Before the study, pharmacists received a communication skills training. They also received an information package and access to the webtool. The acceptability by patients was measured by a paper-based questionnaire. The acceptability by pharmacists was evaluated by telephone interviews and a websurvey.

Findings 80 pharmacies completed the study. The webtool includes data of 1,619 patients: 948 (58.55%) documented conversations, 436 (26.93%) documented refusals and 235 (14.52%) missing data. Of the 948 documented conversations, slightly more than half took place on appointment (477). Reasons mentioned by patients were: more opportunity to ask questions about both the drug and the disease, and more privacy. 643 patients filled in the questionnaire. 94% of them were satisfied or very satisfied with the additional support. More than 90% felt it was important or very important to get information from their pharmacist about the disease (92.4%) and the drug (93.6%). In addition to information on the correct use of medicines (431), patients indicated the wish to be informed about the effect of the drug (382) and possible side effects (327). Analysis of acceptability by pharmacists is on-going. Telephone interviews revealed that pharmacists found it motivating to help patients to optimize their pharmacotherapy.

Conclusion Both pharmacists and patients were satisfied about the counseling session. Patients find that counseling sessions gives them the opportunity and necessary time to ask questions about their condition and treatment. Approximately 1 on 2 patients is willing to make an appointment in the pharmacy.