

Internal and external evaluation of an interdisciplinary medication management service in Germany

Christiane Eickhoff, Uta Müller, Ann Kathrin Strunz, Miriam Felberg, Martin Schulz

Background Within the project ARMIN, an interdisciplinary medication management service was implemented. Up to now, approximately 300 pharmacists, 300 physicians, and 4,000 patients are participating. In Germany, there is a legal mandate to conduct the evaluation of model projects financed by statutory health insurance funds externally, carried out by independent institutions. This external, summative evaluation of ARMIN was tendered in August 2018; results can be expected in 2021, the earliest. In order to gain knowledge on this service at an earlier date as well as to be able to further improve the service, the project partners decided to perform an internal, formative evaluation additionally.

Purpose To develop a concept to evaluate the interdisciplinary medication management service.

Method For the external, summative evaluation, a detailed specification as well as a set of criteria to select a suitable institution had to be developed. For the internal, formative evaluation, appropriate instruments had to be selected and if needed developed to evaluate the process and the potential impact of the service. It is the aim to involve approx. 20 pharmacies and to recruit altogether 100 patients.

Findings For the external, summative evaluation, a detailed specification was developed and sent to eleven academic institutions. Four of them filed a tender. Based on predefined criteria one institution was selected. For the internal, formative evaluation, up to now 22 pharmacies were trained to participate. Patient questionnaires handed out at baseline and after 6 months include: patient characteristics, quality of life (SF-12), adherence (three-item self-report measure), knowledge on the medication, hospital admissions, satisfaction, perceived benefit. Pharmacists will additionally assess over a period of six month: (1) Patient's expectations, potential for improvement, medication use, adherence, adverse drug events. (2) Drug-related problems and impact of the pharmaceutical interventions (CLEO tool). (3) Changes in medication complexity (medication complexity regimen index) and potential inappropriate medications (PRISCUS, FORTA).

Conclusion The internal, formative evaluation is ongoing and will provide short-time results that will be used to further improve the medication management service. The external, summative evaluation will provide an overall assessment of the service. These results will have a crucial influence on the chance to introduce the service in routine care in Germany.