

The use of Goal Attainment Scaling during clinical medication review in older persons with polypharmacy

Verdoorn Sanne, Kwint Henk Frans, Blom Jeanet, Gussekloo Jacobijn, Bouvy Marcel.

Background Studies have shown that a clinical medication review (CMR) reduces drug-related problems (DRPs), but the effects on clinical outcomes are less clear. Perhaps, CMRs in older persons could be more effective when they focus on patients' personal goals and health-related complaints.

Purpose The aim of this study was to investigate whether goal attainment scaling (GAS) is a useful tool for determining goals and monitoring their attainment during CMR.

Method This study was an analysis based on data of the intervention group of the DREAMeR study; a randomized controlled trial investigating the effects of CMR in primary care. 315 persons aged ≥ 70 years using ≥ 7 drugs were randomised to the intervention: a CMR focused on personal goals using GAS. Outcome measures were: percentage of persons with health-related goals, attainment of goals measured with GAS-scores after three and six months, type of health-related goals and implementation rates of recommendations for GAS-related DRPs and other DRPs.

Findings A total of 406 health-related goals were set for 283 of 315 included persons (90%). Of the 350 evaluated goals (86%), 37% was attained after three months and 43% after six months. The goals 'reduce pain' (n=66, 16%), 'improve mobility' (n=57, 14%) and 'reduce number of pills' (n=37, 9.1%) were most prevalent. The implementation rate of recommendations for GAS-related DRPs was 81% compared to 62% for not GAS-related DRPs ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion Goal setting is important for prioritizing the most important problems during clinical medication review and Goal Attainment Scaling seems to be a useful tool for monitoring the attainment of these goals.