Cardiovascular Risk Assessment Campaigns in Community Pharmacies: contributing to CVD prevention

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Background We have seen an overall improvement in Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) indicators in Portugal. However, it remains at the top of the causes of death. This is connected to the high prevalence of hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, diabetes and obesity. Prevention is the best strategy for reduction of CV morbidity and mortality. It is crucial to approach the community through awareness-raising initiatives to promote the early detection of risk factors and implement strategies for effective control.

Purpose To assess CV risk assessment and awareness campaigns conducted in May (Heart month) in two consecutive years (2017/2018) on the detection of people at risk, in a group of 4 community pharmacies; characterize participants with regards to CV risk factors.

Method Campaigns were carried out in May 2017/2018, to sensitize the population to CV risk factors and identify people at risk. Support materials were developed and made available by the pharmacy group to which the 4 pharmacies belong to. The identification of people at risk of developing CV disease was performed using a questionnaire developed for this purpose and the SCORE (Systematic COronary Risk Evaluation) Table. Data were collected through Google Forms® and analyzed using Excel®.

Findings A total of 132 valid questionnaires were applied to people with no history of cardiovascular events; of these, 68.18% (n = 90) were female; 11.36% (n = 15) were smokers; 11.36% (n = 15) and 6.82% (n = 9) presented high systolic blood pressure (SBP) and high diastolic blood pressure (DBP) values (SBP> 140 mmHg; DBP> 90 mmHg); and 34.85% (n = 46) presented high Total Cholesterol (TC) (TC> 190 mg / dl). The SCORE table was applied to individuals between 40 and 65 years of age, which amounted to 113 individuals; of these, 36.28% (n = 41) presented moderate risk; 10.62% (n = 12) high risk; and 23.89% (n = 27) a very high risk of developing a fatal cardiovascular event in 10 years. The most frequent interventions were physical activity promotion (n = 70, 53.03%), nutrition advice (n = 48, 36.36%) and medication adherence (n = 35, 26.52%). Service generated 36 referrals: the most frequent for medical consultation (n = 16, 12.12%), nutrition service (n = 9, 6.82%) and smoking cessation (n = 4, 3.03%).

Conclusion Pharmacists play an important role in raising awareness about CV risk factors. Risk assessments allow pharmacists to identify people at greater risk and direct them to interventions most appropriate to meet their individual needs.