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The first Danish publicly reimbursed cognitive service in community pharmacies on a national scale - why and how did it become reality?

Type of Abstract: Practice development

Aim of Project: Contracts for third party reimbursement of cognitive services in community pharmacies are becoming increasingly frequent. The aim of this study is to explore why and how. The driving forces of the two main actors negotiating on the first contract of a publicly reimbursed cognitive service on a national scale in Danish community pharmacies - "Check the inhalation" will be explored. "Check the inhalation" consists of a 20 minute check by the pharmacy staff on asthma patients' inhaler technique, when using asthma devices.

Method: An analysis of the literature describing the historic and political process leading to "Check the inhalation" will be presented. The analysis is based on two different theoretical approaches: "a) "neo-weberian" profession theory - to explain the driving forces of Danish community pharmacies and b) an approach regarding analysis of policymaking in the field of pharmacy - laid out by Traulsen/ Almarsdottir - to explain the driving forces of Danish politicians, when negotiating on "Check the inhalation".

Result(s): Since the beginning of the 1990's, Danish community pharmacies have made pharmaceutical care and provision of cognitive services a key survival strategy - as historic monopolies such as producing and dispensing medicines have been deregulated. Many within the pharmacy sector have recognized that third party payment essential in order to strengthen permanent implementation of cognitive services. Policy making in the field of medicine including pharmacy, has for the last 5 years, been dominated by a cost containment view. Danish politicians have however started recognising, that rational pharmacotherapy might be an additional solution to reduce rising costs on medicine. Danish pharmacies have been active in political work prior to "Check the inhalation", pressing forward their argument, that pharmacies could undertake tasks of rational pharmacotherapy.

Conclusion: "Check the inhalation" became a reality, as Danish politicians began recognising the economic potential, community pharmacies have in providing services of rational pharmacotherapy. Danish community pharmacies have been politically active in this process, as third party payment of cognitive services to them, is important as a survival strategy.