

COUNSELLING CARDS TO AID PROVISION OF MEDICINES INFORMATION IN THE DISPENSARY.

Faye Dolan, Pre-registration Pharmacy Technician and Charlotte Hay, Pharmacist Team Leader – Medicines Information.
Glan Clwyd Hospital, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
Faye.Dolan2@wales.nhs.uk



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Introduction

The dispensary in Ysbyty Glan Clwyd Pharmacy has a multi-disciplinary team that must work together in order to provide an efficient and safe pharmacy service. This service includes dispensing prescriptions and providing counselling services to patients. Counselling services are provided by the qualified members of staff in the department; these staff members are also responsible for providing all pre-registration members of staff with training on counselling. Currently training is given on a one-to-one basis; the trainee observes the trained member of staff as they counsel patients and then, when confident, they will begin to counsel under observation. This can lead to inconsistent training due to the variation in the training rota.

In order to support staff training and consistency of medicines information and advice provided to patients Medicines Information collaborated with the wider pharmacy team to develop a tool to provide key counselling points.

Aim and Objectives

To support more staff to become trained in patient counselling via:

- Development and implementation of prompt cards to support consistent delivery of the main counselling points
- Training sessions regarding drug specific counselling points

Baseline Questionnaire

Registered pharmacy staff were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding counselling within the dispensary setting. It found:

- The amount of time with a patient depended on how busy the department was at that time, causing some staff to feel rushed when counselling patients.
- That more staff needed to be trained on counselling patients.
- That it would be beneficial to have 'standard points' that must be given to patients on every handout not just the first dispensing.
- That a counselling tool (e.g. a counselling prompt card) would be beneficial.

Card Development

The 'top ten' medicines/class of medicines for outpatient prescriptions was determined by retrospective analysis (figure 1).

For practicality purposes, cards would be able to fit in the pockets of the All Wales Pharmacy tunics. Larger copies may also be kept within the patient counselling room in the dispensary.

It was decided that cards would include the basic level of counselling points as per the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's 'Counselling Patient's on Medicines' Quick Reference Guide¹:

- What the medicine is and why it should be taken
- How and when to take it
- How much to take and what to expect
- What to do if you miss a dose
- Likely side effects
- Any lifestyle/dietary changes

Counselling prompt cards were compiled with input from a pre-registration pharmacy technician, an experienced Medicines Management technician, a foundation pharmacist and the Medicines Information pharmacist.

Pilot cards were trialled with one second year pre-registration pharmacy technician and their NVQ assessor. Feedback informed the layout of the cards, figure 2 shows an example of a first draft card.

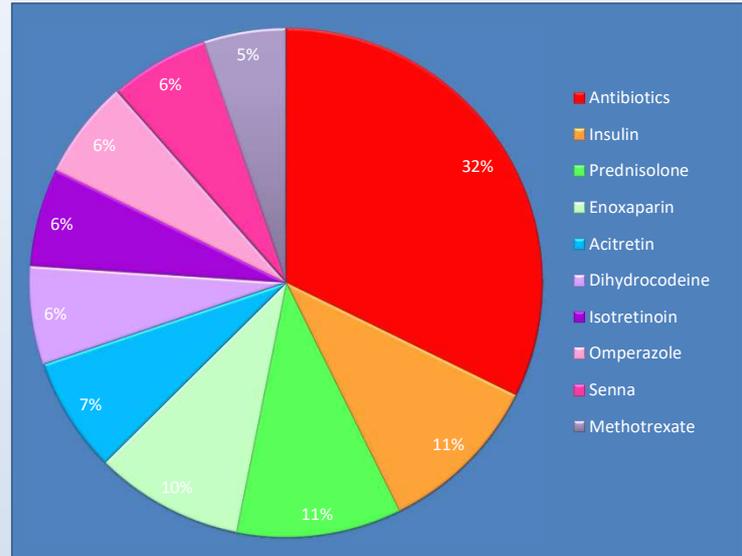


Figure 1: Top Ten Outpatient Items

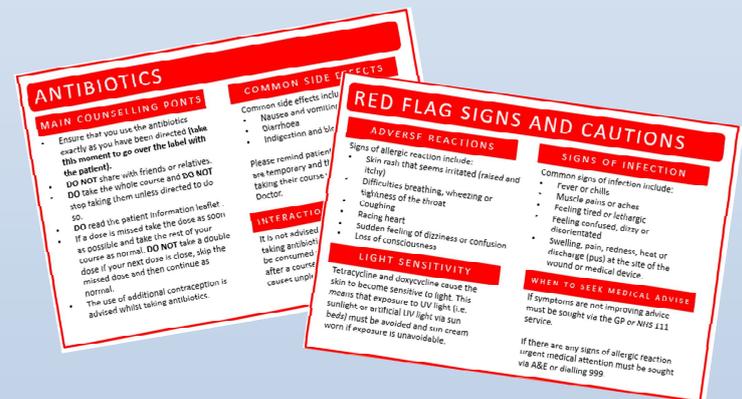


Figure 2: Counselling Card

Plan, Do, Study, Act cycles have allowed trial of the cards in the dispensary setting and feedback has been incorporated into the card content and layout.

A working group consisting of a senior pharmacist, foundation pharmacist, a medicines management pharmacy technician, pre-registration pharmacist and pre-registration pharmacy technician has been formed to develop a library of cards. This working group will also coordinate training sessions specific to a particular drug to coincide with introduction of a new card into the library.

Follow Up Questionnaire

The impact of the counselling prompt cards will be assessed with a follow up questionnaire for registered pharmacy staff. It will seek to address whether the themes which emerged from the baseline survey have benefitted from the introduction of the counselling prompt cards.

Pre-registration pharmacy staff will also be asked to complete a questionnaire to determine if they feel more prepared to be able to counsel patients effectively with the use of the counselling prompts and participation in counselling specific training sessions.

Summary

Cards to aid patient counselling on medicines have been developed within Glan Clwyd Hospital Pharmacy department to assist provision of consistent, high quality information and advice to patients at every dispensing.