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Evaluating the implementation of a warfarin specific medication chart in residential aged care facilities

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Abstract

The possibility of a warfarin-specific medication chart that could serve as a prescription, monitoring and administration record for residents in aged care facilities evolved from a previous study conducted by the research team. The aim of this pilot study was to develop and trial the implementation of a warfarin specific medication chart in residential aged care facilities (RACFs).

Keywords

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TITLE

A pilot study exploring the effectiveness of a Warfarin-Specific Medication Chart in Residential Aged Care Facilities

AIM

The possibility of a warfarin-specific medication chart that could serve as a prescription, monitoring and administration record for residents in aged care facilities evolved from a previous study conducted by the research team. The aim of this pilot study was to develop and trial the implementation of a warfarin specific medication chart in residential aged care facilities (RACFs).

METHODS

An action research study using a qualitative approach was adopted to evaluate the implementation of a warfarin-specific medication chart. Data were generated from interviews with both General Practitioners (GPs) and Registered Nurses (RNs) involved in trialing the chart.

Following approval from the University of Wollongong Human Research Ethics Committee the study was conducted in three phases: (1) using a multidisciplinary approach to develop the chart; (2) implementation of the chart; and (3) evaluation of the chart.

FINDINGS

The warfarin specific medication chart was successfully developed and trialed in three Illawarra based RACFs managing 23 older residents receiving warfarin therapy. Prior to the implementation of the chart, 11 education sessions about warfarin therapy and the use of the chart were presented to 56 RACF staff members.

Ten GPs and 12 RNs were interviewed about their perceptions of the new chart at the completion of the 3 month trial. They unanimously agreed that the chart improved communication about warfarin; was easy to use; was time-saving; and enhanced warfarin prescription and administration times. They all highly recommended the use of the new chart as usual practice in all RACFs.

Relevance to the Conference Themes

A warfarin specific medication chart can therefore be effectively used to improve clinical practice and the health of residents receiving warfarin therapy. Potentially because of the improved management and communication about warfarin, the new chart can also reduce the incidence of warfarin related adverse events.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS (50 words maximum)

1. Margaret Jordan has 25 years experience as a pharmacist including teaching roles at the University of Sydney and University of Wollongong. Margaret is the NPS Facilitator for Illawarra Division of General Practice and is the final year of her Master of Science by Research studies.

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2. Dr Judy Mullan has been a Senior Lecturer in the Graduate School of Medicine at the University of Wollongong since 2008. Judy has 25 years experience as a pharmacist. Her teaching spans undergraduate and postgraduate subjects and her research interests are Medication Compliance; Aged Care; Patient Education; Professional/Patient Partnerships.
3. Associate Professor Traynor has been with the University of Wollongong for five years. Her background combines research, education, and clinical experience in aged care. The focus of her work has been on improving dementia care services through practice development and education projects in health care. Previous positions were held in the UK.