**Community Pharmacist interventions and improved COPD management**

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**Outline:** Community pharmacists are well placed to help the management of patients with long-term conditions such as COPD.

**Outline of problem:** Many factors can prevent optimal care for COPD patients; some can be addressed within a pharmacy setting by improving patient understanding of how their condition can be managed.

**Assessment:** A project was undertaken by community pharmacies to support patients in managing their condition. Data collected also provided an overview of care patterns in the localities involved.

**Strategy:** The project involved 18 pharmacies, in and around NW London. Over a 4-week period, pharmacists undertook consultations in the pharmacy with consenting patients who were receiving medicines prescribed for COPD.

**Measurements:** Patients were asked questions from a semi-structured questionnaire. Information was collected and action taken to provide inhaler training, guidance and referral, where appropriate.

**Changes:** Of 135 patients, 75 were provided with inhaler training, 88 patients were offered Medicines Use Reviews, 23 patients received guidance regarding rescue packs, 38 patients were referred to GPs and 32 of 39 smokers were referred to stop smoking services. A total of 93 patients were using an inhaled corticosteroid (ICS) plus long acting beta2 agonist (LABA) Given the low rate of hospital admissions recorded (18% in the previous 12 months), LABA + ICS use is much higher than would be expected for the patient group if GOLD guidelines were followed.

**Lessons:** Participating pharmacists reported improved patient engagement in managing their condition, improved compliance and device use, and positive actions from GPs such as alteration of medication dose; and issue of rescue packs.

**Message for others:** Community pharmacists can improve care of COPD patients, potentially reducing hospital admissions.

**Conflict of interest:** None.

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