OPIOID MANAGEMENT IN CHRONIC PAIN BY PHARMACISTS PROVIDING CARE IN THE COMMUNITY SETTING IN ONTARIO

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AIMS

Pharmacists have a key role in providing patient-centred care to optimize drug therapy. The objectives of this study were to develop and evaluate a pharmacist training program in opioid management, and to evaluate the feasibility of a pharmacist-led clinical service for opioid management in chronic pain.

METHODS

The training program had 3 parts: an online course on safe opioid use; seminars on prescription opioid addiction, pain assessment and management, opioid stewardship, motivational interviewing; and web-based clinical mentoring. The ongoing pilot clinical study employs a case series design where pharmacists are integrating an opioid management service into their practice in patients who are initiating opioids for chronic pain, or prescribed opioids with daily doses ≤ 200 mg MEQ. Pharmacists conduct pharmacotherapy assessments and work with patients and prescribers to develop and implement opioid management care plans.

RESULTS

A total of 27 community and family health team pharmacists participated in the training. The post-training test scores were significantly improved compared to pre-training scores (p=0.01). Pharmacist self-assessments on level of skill/knowledge (ranging from beginner to expert) shifted from predominantly beginner ratings pre-training (51% of participants) to intermediate ratings (92%) post-training. The clinical service pilot study is in progress.

CONCLUSIONS

Pharmacists have an important role in optimizing the effective use of opioids

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