



The Role of Primary Care Pharmacist in the Management of Chronic Illnesses in Young People: A Qualitative Study

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INTRODUCTION

Recent evidence has shown that the incidence of long-term illnesses in young people is increasing⁽¹⁾. Pharmacists, as medicine experts, are in a unique position to promote young people's health.

AIM

The aim of this study was to explore the role of primary care pharmacists in the management of chronic illnesses in young people aged 18-24 years.

METHOD

- A qualitative study was undertaken.
- 23 primary care pharmacists in the UK were recruited through purposeful sampling.
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted and audio recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis.
- The main focus was on primary care pharmacists' roles in caring of young people with chronic illness.
- Pharmacists' perceptions about young people medication-related experiences, and views on pharmaceutical care services provided to young people and suggestions for improvement were also explored.

RESULTS

Four themes emerged from the data:

- Pharmacists roles
- Prescribing issues
- Pharmaceutical services
- Young people medication-related experiences

Figure 1. Key themes

Participants identified several roles for primary care pharmacists in caring for young people with chronic illness. These roles included ensuring the appropriateness of medicines for young people, understanding their conditions and helping young people to organise their medicines. Other important roles illustrated in Figure 2. However, many pharmacists perceive a fundamental communication barrier that hinders the provision of this support, i.e., lack of access to the patient. Participants identified a lack of support from other health care providers as one of the associated challenges for pharmacists in supporting young people with chronic illness.



Figure 2. The roles that identified by primary care pharmacists when dealing with young people with long-term illnesses

CONCLUSIONS

Primary care pharmacists feel that they have an important role in supporting young people with chronic illness. This study identified many ways in which pharmacists provide services and support to young people. Collaboration between healthcare providers is needed to delivering good quality medical care for young people with chronic illness. Future research is necessary to provide more evidence of the benefit of primary care pharmacists in supporting young people with chronic illness in the optimal use of their medication.

REFERENCES

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