Abstract

Objective: 1) To evaluate the participation rate and identify the practical barriers to implementing a community pharmacist-led medication review service in francophone Switzerland and, 2) To assess the effectiveness of external support. Methods: A qualitative survey was undertaken to identify barriers to patient inclusion and medication review delivery in daily practice among all contactable independent pharmacists working in francophone Switzerland (n=78) who were members of a virtual chain (pharmacieplus), regardless of their participation in a simultaneous cross-sectional study. This study analyzed the dissemination of a medication review service including a prescription and drug utilization review with access to clinical data, a patient interview and a pharmaceutical report to the physicians. In addition, we observed an exploratory and external coaching for pharmacists that we launched seven months after the beginning of the cross-sectional study. Results: Poor motivation on the part of pharmacists and difficulties communicating with physicians and patients were the primary obstacles identified. Lack of time and lack of self-confidence in administering the medication review process were the most commonly perceived practical barriers to the implementation of the new service. The main facilitators to overcome these issues may be well-planned workflow organization techniques, strengthened by an adequate remuneration scheme and a comprehensive and practice-based training course that includes skill-building in pharmacotherapy and communication. External support may partially compensate for a weak organizational framework. Conclusions: To facilitate the implementation of a medication review service, a strong local networking with physicians, an effective workflow management and a practice- and communications-focused training for pharmacists and their teams seem key elements required. External support can be useful to help some pharmacists improve their service management skills. Adequate remuneration seems necessary to encourage initial investments to provide such a service. Future research in this area may help improve the process and design of training programs, as well as the monitoring of implementation for each new pharmaceutical service.

Keywords

Community Pharmacy Services, Qualitative Research, Switzerland.