

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Medicine Science 2020;9(1):205-6

Patient involvement in disease management: A holistic approach in clinical pharmacy

Aygin Bayraktar-Ekincioglu

Hacettepe University, Faculty of Pharmacy, Department of Clinical Pharmacy, Ankara, Turkey

Received 30 September 2019; Accepted 05 November 2019
Available online 03.03.2020 with doi:10.5455/medscience.2019.08.9169

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Abstract

Clinical pharmacy is one of the specialized areas of pharmacy profession which demands scientific and comprehensive therapeutic knowledge, extensive clinical experience and skills, and collaboration with other healthcare professionals as well as the patients in disease management. The concepts of patient involvement and patient empowerment, patient self-management and patient engagement in health care settings are explored in many studies. The PubMed search undertaken in March 2019 by using the keywords of 'patient involvement,' 'disease management,' and 'clinical pharmacy' revealed 581 publications, of those 268 were published in the last five years and 95 were review articles. Another search made by using the words of 'patient empowerment' and 'clinical pharmacy,' and the results were even increased to 735 articles. A patient-centered approach is the cornerstone of the provision of clinical pharmacy services in chronic disease management. The patient's ability in problem-solving can be enhanced through teaching general skills and providing access to appropriate counseling or supervision. Therefore, patients become responsible for many issues, such as describing their symptoms and expressing their concerns properly, using specific self-management practices, and applying preventative approaches in their disease management. During the disease management process, roles and responsibilities of healthcare professionals and patients should be specified, and patients become less severely incapacitated by disease consequences, well-informed about their condition and medications, and have higher self-esteem to improve their condition or prevent their condition becoming worse.

Keywords: Clinical pharmacy, patient empowerment, disease management

Introduction

Clinical pharmacy is one of the specialized areas of pharmacy profession among health disciplines that demands scientific and comprehensive therapeutic knowledge, extensive clinical experience and skills, and collaboration with other healthcare professionals as well as the patients in disease management. The principles of clinical pharmacy rely on the philosophy of pharmaceutical care and focus on taking responsibility in the provision of care to the patients to improve health-related outcomes. The aims of clinical pharmacy activities to develop and promote the rational and appropriate use of drugs and medicinal products and devices and to improve patient's quality of life. By the provision of pharmaceutical care, a clinical pharmacist performs individual patient's needs assessment by planning clinical activities (Plan), implementing the activities for identified problems (Do), acting according to the pharmaceutical care plan (Act), and assessing the

outcomes of activities (Check). To identify individual drug-related problems for a patient and to find appropriate solutions to solve the problems, it is inevitable to involve the patients in the care process [1-4].

It is appreciated that a concept of 'health' consists of the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social well-being of a person, which can be maintained through a multidisciplinary and holistic approach in the provision of care for the patients.

Material and Methods

There have been many studies in the literature that explored the concept of the involvement of the patient and patient empowerment, patient self-management and patient engagement in health care settings. The PubMed search was undertaken in March 2019 by using the keywords of 'patient involvement,' 'disease management,' and 'clinical pharmacy' revealed 581 results, of those 268 were published in the last five years, and 95 were review articles. Once the words of 'patient empowerment' and 'clinical pharmacy' used, the results were even increased to 735 articles. The search can be expanded by using the keywords as 'self-care,' 'self-management,' and 'patient participation.'

*Corresponding Author: Aygin Bayraktar-Ekincioglu, Hacettepe University, Faculty of Pharmacy, Department of Clinical Pharmacy, Ankara, Turkey
E-mail: aygin@hacettepe.edu.tr

Results

A patient-centered approach is the cornerstone of the provision of clinical pharmacy services in chronic disease management, which demands responsibilities from the patients in shared decision making, monitoring of drug therapy, and adherence to the therapy to achieve definite outcomes.

The studies showed that health-related outcomes such as control of diabetes, better physical functioning in rheumatic disease, pain control, correct use of inhalers, enhanced adherence, or any preventive activities had been achieved by the involvement of patients in various chronic disease management.

Discussion

Patient involvement has been interpreted as a holistic approach to individuals taking more control over their health independently through their experience of health and illness and it begins with an understanding of the process where a patient can function by his/herself in the maintenance and promotion of health, disease prevention, awareness, treatment, and care of illness and adaptation to limited daily living activities. It originates from a need for a better understanding of their symptoms and builds on patient's self-enablement, their relationships with health care professionals, and the availability of resources in the community. Therefore, the patient's role in this process is to engage him/herself with the maximum feasible amount of self-management through the provision of knowledge and facilitation by health care professionals [5].

As the disease progresses, management strategies change according to patients' needs, their understanding of their therapy, their ability to engage in the partnership, and the availability of financial resources. Effective chronic disease management can be achieved by the establishment of a partnership process based on shared understandings and taken actions, which requires inquiry, interpretation, learning, and negotiation. Provision of information regarding self-care, disease management, and drug therapy is crucial to ensure patient's involvement, which is pre-requisite for participation. Long term experiences with diseases ground expertise in self-care and require commitments to be actively involved in disease management. Therefore, engaging patients with self-care activities would achieve successful outcomes (such as sustaining symptoms or positive physiological indicators) in disease management in chronic illness.

As a part of disease management, drug treatment is intended to alleviate symptoms rather than cure disease in chronic conditions. It is, therefore, an important issue for patients to use their medication as prescribed. Patients sometimes require self-management skills in the use of medicines, which enable them to comply with a regimen, interpret the effects of medication, recognize side effects,

seek medical advice, and prompt a change in a treatment program when necessary.

The patient's ability in problem-solving can be enhanced through teaching general skills and providing access to appropriate counseling or supervision. Therefore, patients become responsible in seeking advice at the right time, describing their symptoms and expressing their concerns properly, differentiating different stages of disease-while acquiring an understanding and interpreting disease patterns, using specific self-management practices, and applying preventative approaches in their disease management.

It becomes crucial for health care professionals to understand the patient's willingness to involve in disease management and how to overcome any barriers.

There is a challenge for the health systems which initiate a shift in chronic disease management towards the encouragement of patients to enable them to take an increasingly more active role in their care and a need for training of health care professionals to maintain and foster patients' self-management abilities in clinical settings. Therefore, it is assumed that definition of roles and responsibilities would achieve improved disease management where patients are expected to manage specific aspects of their disease effectively; become less severely incapacitated by disease consequences; able to access health and social care services, well-informed about their condition and medications and have higher self-esteem in order to improve their condition or prevent their condition becoming worse.

Financial Disclosure

All authors declare no financial support.

Ethical approval

No ethic approval is needed to this research.

Aygin Bayraktar-Ekincioglu ORCID: 0000-0002-3481-0074

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