A Study on Telehealth Pharmacist-led Residential Medication Management Reviews

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Background

- Residents of residential aged care facilities (RACFs) are at risk of potentially inappropriate prescribing and adverse outcomes relating to medication use.

- Medication reviews are important interventions for optimising prescribing.

- Residential Medication Management Reviews (RMMRs)
  - Entry to RACF and then every 2 years.
Background

• Ideally,
  – RMMRs should be conducted and reported in a timely fashion
  – Specialists’ input should be synchronised to ensure the best results

• Current situation:
  – Lack of onsite expertise
  – The need for travel
  – Professional groups that work separately

Potentially long periods of inappropriate prescribing
Background

**Telehealth** can offer a solution
Aim

To test an existing telehealth platform to deliver pharmacist-led medication review strategies to persons living in residential aged care facilities
Proposed model

- Admission to RACF
- GP assessment
- Complex issues / polypharmacy
- Geriatrician & pharmacist review request
- Structured nurse assessment
- Online pharmacist medication review
- Geriatrician review by video-conference
- Recommendations to GP and RACF
Testing the model

- The study protocol
- A refined version of RES-e-CARE
Methods – Online reviews

- Recommendations
- Time taken to complete the review
- Commented on the adequacy of provided clinical information
- Feedback on the process
Methods – Facility visits

- Time taken to complete the review including locating and reviewing required information and reporting
- Travel time and distance
Outcome measures

• From pharmacists’ **online reviews**
  • Time taken to complete the review
  • Pharmacist feedback commentary on the process

• From pharmacists’ **facility visits**
  • Time taken to complete a review
  • Travel time and distance
Results

100 online reviews

24 facility visits
(243 reviews, mean 10 reviews/visit)

Median time

42 min
(IQR 30-60 min)

vs.

55 min
(IQR 45-71 min)

✓ Report writing
✓ Locating and reviewing required information
✓ Consulting with patients, nurses, etc.

× Median travel time/visit: 8 min (not included)

• Median travel distance: 61 km (range: 10-1774 km)
Adequacy of the provided clinical information in the online platform

- Adequate: 57%
- Uncertain: 29%
- Inadequate: 14%

Total number of reviews: 100
Pharmacists’ feedback on the online RMMR process

Accessing clinical information in online reviews

Compared with their usual practice:

More difficult

Neither difficult nor easy

Challenges

Mainly technical:
• Difficulty of the navigation of the portal
• Reporting the platform to be user-unfriendly

Overcame the challenges with

• Experience, spending extra time on the portal and adjusting to the system
Pharmacists’ feedback on the online RMMR process

Advantages

• Access to more information
• All information in one place
• Saves time and expenses of travelling

Disadvantages

• Not being able to talk with staff and talk with/observe resident

“I usually talk to the facility staff to get an up to date overview of how patients are doing working from notes and being an online system I did not have an opportunity to do this.”

“Access to more information, as some (R)ACFs do not record everything completely, or sometimes the printed file/online system is not available..”

“...the portal was a bit user-unfriendly. This would be something I would like improved before I started using it routinely.”

“Not having to visit the facility would be great – saves time and expenses.”
Pharmacists’ feedback on the online RMMR process

Would you be prepared to use this system as part of routine practice?

Yes
Discussion

- Using the telehealth platform may improve the timeliness of the current residential medication review process

- The telehealth platform has the potential of being used as a part of routine practice
Future plans

• Economic modelling (sensitivity analysis) on timeliness and cost effectiveness of telehealth RMMRs compared with usual practice
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