

Developing Tools to Support Patient Safety in a Transitional Care Service for Methotrexate Patients

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Jonathan Vella¹, Louise Grech^{1,2}, Marilyn Rogers^{3,4}, Kathlene Cassar^{1,2}, Dustin Balzan^{1,2}, Paul J. Cassar^{3,4}, Anthony Serracino Inglott¹, Lilian M. Azzopardi¹

¹Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta, Msida, Malta, ²Department of Pharmacy, Mater Dei Hospital, Msida, Malta, ³Department of Medicine, Mater Dei Hospital, Msida, Malta, ⁴Department of Medicine, University of Malta, Msida, Malta.

BACKGROUND

- An intercollaborative team work approach based on an efficient monitoring process is essential to ensure drug efficacy and safety as patients move across primary and secondary care settings.
- The aim of the study was to develop a *Methotrexate Monitoring Booklet* which documents monitoring of patients as they move across the primary and secondary care interface and to develop a tool to assess patients' compliance towards monitoring needs and laboratory investigations ordered by clinicians.

METHODS

- A literature review on methotrexate monitoring booklets available internationally was carried out in order to design an optimum template. The developed *Methotrexate Monitoring Booklet* was validated through a questionnaire by an expert panel consisting of seven healthcare professionals. The recommendations put forward by the expert panel were incorporated into the final version of the booklet.
- A questionnaire, entitled: "*Patient compliance to laboratory investigations*" was developed to assess patients' compliance towards blood investigations ordered in relation to methotrexate. The questionnaire was validated by the same expert panel.

RESULTS

- The expert panel suggested that the format of the booklet is updated to reflect a more patient friendly version.

RESULTS cont.

- The final version of the *Methotrexate Monitoring Booklet* consists of 4 sections.
- The first section documents patient details, details of the clinicians and pharmacists at primary and secondary care settings. The second section lists important information on methotrexate use, administration and side-effects. The third section is the **Methotrexate Dosing Record** which documents the weekly dose prescribed, the date and the identity of the prescriber and specifically highlights any changes in the doses prescribed. The fourth section documents the dates for laboratory monitoring.
- All members of the panel agreed that the booklet would help healthcare professionals at different interfaces ensure a better safe seamless monitoring and prescribing service to patients.
- No change was made to the "*Patient compliance to laboratory investigations*" questionnaire which was documented to be user friendly and self-explanatory.
- The questionnaire takes 5 minutes for the patient to complete and can be used in a busy setting.

CONCLUSION

Following the expert panel review, the tools developed are relevant to the clinical setting of application to support transition of patients between secondary and primary care settings. The developed tools are now being implemented in the clinical setting.