Evolution of US Pharmacist’s Role in Drug Adherence

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Outline:

- evolving role of pharmacist in the U.S.
- pharmacist’s role in medication adherence
- MaineCare 15-day limit on first prescription
- Safe Medicine Disposal for Maine program
- pharmacist’s role in reducing pharmaceutical waste
Evolution of U.S. Pharmacist’s Role in Patient Care

- **pre-1980**
  - dispensing & compounding (made-to-order medications)
  - discouraged from talking to patients about their medications

- **1980 - 1990**
  - encouraged to provide patient counseling
  - shift from community pharmacies to chain drug stores
Evolution of U.S. Pharmacist’s Role in Patient Care

- 1990 - 2000
  - OBRA 90
    - patient profile, DUR, patient counseling
  - providing pharmaceutical care
  - disease state management
    - focus on medication adherence
  - shift towards service based profession

Evolution of U.S. Pharmacist’s Role in Patient Care

- 2000 - present
  - medication therapy management (MTM)
    - individualized therapy for optimal outcome
  - health assessments
  - providing immunizations

2. American Pharmacists Association, 2005
Medication Adherence

- medication adherence is the extent to which a patient's behavior in taking medication corresponds with agreed recommendations from a health-care provider.\(^3\)
- medication non-adherence leads to:
  - over 125,000 deaths per year
  - $250-$290 billion in direct & indirect costs per year

Medication Non-Adherence

- NCPIE defined medication non-adherence as: 4
  - not having a prescription filled (refilled)
  - forgetting to take medication
  - stopping therapy too soon
  - taking incorrect dose (intentional and unintentional)
  - taking at wrong time (intentional and unintentional)

Medication Non-Adherence

- reasons for medication nonadherence
  - forgetfulness
  - unpleasant side effects
  - poor health literacy / misunderstanding
  - too expensive / no health insurance
Pharmacist’s Role in Medication Adherence

- the patient is forgetful
  - “take your medication at the same time every day – before your brush your teeth”
  - use a pill box
Pharmacist’s Role in Medication Adherence

- the patient misunderstanding / poor health literacy
  - pharmacist is the last health care professional a patient sees before beginning medication therapy – final step in a system of checks and balances designed to ensure that medications are used safely and correctly
  - proper patient counseling is the key to patient’s understanding of his/her medications
  - a pharmacist is trained to assess patient’s knowledge of medication and health condition
    - look at non-verbal cues
Pharmacist’s Role in Medication Adherence

- patient does not like medication side-effects
  - pharmacist can educate patient on importance of medication adherence
  - warn patient of possible side-effects
  - work with physicians and other providers on choice of medication therapy
Pharmacist’s Role in Medication Adherence

• patient has no health insurance, medication is too expensive
Pharmacist’s Role in Medication Adherence

- patient has no health insurance, medication is too expensive
  - pharmacist can work with physicians and other providers on providing cheaper medication options for the patients
  - provide information on low-cost medication programs
  - numerous pharmaceutical companies for low-income patients
Efforts to Reduce Pharmaceutical Waste in Maine

- MaineCare 15-day supply on 1st prescription
  - medications with high side-effect profiles, discontinuation rates or frequent dose adjustments
  - rationale for program:
    ♦ ensure cost-effectiveness of medication therapy
    ♦ reduce waste or “discarding” of unused medicines
    ♦ control cost of health care
Efforts to Reduce Pharmaceutical Waste in Maine

- Safe Medicine Disposal for Maine Program
  - UMO Center on Aging + Maine Benzodiazepine Group
  - medicine disposal kits (envelops) available at local pharmacies, medical centers & hospitals, police departments and other locations throughout Maine

- DEA National Drug Take-Back Day
  - Sept 25, 2010
Pharmacist’s Role in Reducing Pharmaceutical Waste

• Drug Utilization Review (DUR)
  ▪ reduce inappropriate medications given to patients

• Patient Counseling + Patient Education
  ▪ improve medication adherence

• work with physicians and other providers
  ▪ provide patients with the best therapeutic options
Pharmacist’s Role in Reducing Pharmaceutical Waste

- challenges faced by pharmacist
  - little control over prescribing patterns of MDs
  - focus on profits by corporate office
    - pharmacist is not paid for cognitive services
    - sales volume is the primarily source of revenue
    - enhanced profits from 90-day prescriptions and prescription rebates
Summary

- the role of pharmacist has evolved over the last three decades and it is still evolving
- pharmacist plays an important and critical role in medication adherence through proper patient counseling and patient education
- pharmacist has a role in reducing unnecessary and inappropriate medications from entering the system
Questions?