

Assessing Pediatric Medication Use Experiences and Patient Counseling in Community Pharmacies: Perspectives of Children

Mara Rubin, Pharm D Candidate 2018; Amanda Brothers, BA; Olufunmilola Abraham, PhD, MS, BPharm

University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy, Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics

Email: olufunmilola.abraham@pitt.edu



INTRODUCTION

Children manage medicines despite little medication knowledge¹

- Over six million children use medications to treat chronic conditions²
- Children with chronic disease have a higher risk of drug therapy problems³⁻⁵
- Safe and effective use of medications by children is a growing patient safety concern

Little is known about the child-pharmacist relationship

- Children with chronic conditions have expressed an interest in being more involved in the management of their diseases⁶⁻⁹
- Children's views of pediatric-pharmacist communication can help pharmacists understand how to educate children on medicines

OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to explore children's perspectives regarding:

- Pediatric patients' knowledge and medication use experiences for chronic conditions
- How they want to learn about medicines
- Perceptions of community pharmacist-provided counseling

METHODS

Recruitment

- Children aged 7 to 17 taking at least one medication for a chronic condition were recruited from three community pharmacies in two Eastern states

Study Design

- A semi-structured interview guide elicited children's perceptions of medication use and counseling in the pharmacy

Data Collection and Analysis

- 20 interviews were conducted lasting approximately 20 minutes
- All interviews were audio-recorded and professionally transcribed
- Transcripts were reviewed for accuracy and a codebook was developed
- NVivo 10 software was used for content analysis and identifying prevalent themes

RESULTS

Essential Medication Information and Sources

Information

Manufacturing Process

"Well, how it's made or where it's made, at first?"

Research Studies

"It would be cool and interesting to see how other people react to it. Like test studies for how other people react to it. And sort of more about how it affects the body."

History

"Where it comes from, how it's made, who invented it."

Sources

Parent

"My mom, if I have a question, I mean I go to my mom usually."

Physician

"He's been my doctor since I was a baby. So I knew him since I was little, so I'm used to how he talks, what he talks about. If he says something people wouldn't understand, I understand it."

Internet

"Sometimes, when I first start taking something, like when I first started taking the Mononessa I think that I had a question, a side effect question, so I went online and looked it up."

Use of Interactive Technologies



"I don't think I would read that because there's always those pamphlets around and they never really look interesting, so I guess if it looked cool I might take a look at it."



"I would use the iPad because I think it's kind of interesting. It would be—instead of the sheet of paper, capture my mind more."



"Because whenever I'm just standing around waiting for my mom to get something I would watch the TV in the mall, so I feel like that would work, too."

Other Relevant Themes



Patient counseling needs and recommendations

"You could just talk to them [the pharmacist] and ask them all the questions you wanted, and they could give you all the information. They would ask you questions, like if you want to learn this or learn that."



Children are frequently absent from the pharmacy upon pick-up

"I don't pick up my medicine, so I've never really see my pharmacist."



Perceptions of community pharmacists

"If I was introduced to him [the pharmacist] I'd be pretty comfortable."

Medication Knowledge and Experiences



"I know what it's made and used for. I wouldn't mind if I knew more about it."



"I am used to it now. I just get up in the morning, eat breakfast, take the medicine, and then go to school."



"I usually don't forget anymore. I used to, two or three years ago I think I would forget every now and again. And she [parent] would make sure I took it. But now I pretty much have it down."



"At first I wasn't used to the pill, so it was kind of hard to swallow, but it was fine after a while."

CONCLUSIONS

- Pharmacists are accessible healthcare professionals who are able to counsel children on the use of medications¹⁰
- Study findings revealed that children rarely interact with pharmacists largely due to their absence at pick-up
- Pharmacists should use interactive educational tools such as an iPad or a TV to counsel children on medicines to improve their knowledge and self-management practices

FUTURE RESEARCH

Further research is warranted to:

- Develop developmentally appropriate interactive technologies for children that can be implemented by community pharmacists
- Assess acceptability of using interactive technologies and other tailored approaches to increase community pharmacists' provision of pediatric medication counseling

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