Community pharmacy personnel experiences of providing pharmaceutical care for older people with sensory impairment on polypharmacy
The Team

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Sensory Impairment

- one of the most common chronic conditions of later life
- increases with age
- hearing loss disorders projected to be in top 10 causes of disease burden in high/middle income countries
- age-related vision disorders and cataracts projected to move up ≥3 places in WHO disease burden rankings.
• To explore community pharmacy personnel experience and awareness of pharmaceutical care needs of older people with SI who were receiving polypharmacy.

• To identify the barriers/facilitators in providing pharmaceutical care to this patient population?
Methods

Semi-structured telephone interview with community pharmacy personnel (Scotland only)
Recruitment via email from Community Pharmacy Scotland, then stratified targeted recruitment
Audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim
Thematic analysis
• Barriers and facilitators to providing pharmaceutical care for this patient population

• Perceived role in the care of individuals from this population

• Perceived training needs
Participants (n=30)

- 17 pharmacists, 5 pre-registration pharmacists, 4 medicines counter assistants, 4 “others” (retail manager, dispense, technicians)

- Mean years of practice 17.7 (SD 4.75)

- Type of pharmacy: independent (17), small chain (3), multiple (7), supermarket (1), other (1)

- Location: Tayside (8), Grampian (7), Edinburgh & Lothian (4), GGC (2), H&I (2), Fife & Kinross (2), Dumfries & Galloway (1), other (4).
Emergent Themes

- Perception of Supportive Role
- Patient Safety
- Pharmaceutical Care Provision
- Training
Perception of Supportive Role: Facilitators

- Helping people understand their medications and why they should be taken as prescribed
- Anticipating concerns/Encouraging people to raise concerns
- Supporting independent living
Perception of Supportive Role: Barriers

- Support staff training
- Lack of continuity of care
- Regimen Complexity
- Delivery services = point of contact
Interviewer: “And what role do you play in supporting these patients to manage their medicines?”

Participant: “None at all, I just hand them out”

P9, Counter assistant, Independent
Patient Safety: Facilitators

- Compliance aids
- Medicine reviews
- Communication
  - changes in writing, “talking through” the label, provision of written information, being available for telephone contact
Patient Safety: Barriers

- Compliance aids
- Communicating change effectively
- Getting instructions across
- Labelling
Another lady was on tablets for constipation so had her tablets in her bedtime venalink box all of the time...low and behold the lady couldn’t get out in the morning because she had diarrhoea every morning because she had taken this tablet every night because it was in her tray...

P12, Pharmacist, independent
Pharmaceutical Care Provision: Facilitators

- Building a relationship with people
- Experience in assessment of need
- Use of consulting room
- Time
- Individual attention
- Accessible for contact and inquiries
Pharmaceutical Care Provision: Barriers

- Patients not disclosing sensory impairment
- Time
- Changing appearance of medicines and packaging
- Pharmacy environment
- Peoples’ awareness of pharmacy staff capabilities
- Resource constraints
“maybe if they have got some sort of hearing loss they might not want to ask more questions because they know they won’t be able to hear the answer properly...we have one patient that doesn’t really like asking too much questions because he knows that maybe we have to put in the extra effort...His wife came in and had to ask all the same...questions again...”

P3; Pre-reg pharmacist
Training

• Variation in training:
  • undergraduate (pharmacist), CPD, as well as lack of skills training, awareness of learning support, opportunities to maintain and refresh skills

• Learning from service users’ stories
“I did go to a course a while ago that gave you the sensation of either being hearing impaired or sight impaired and it gave you a good idea of what it was like for them, made it a bit more easier to understand the situation they were in but it didn’t give you much insight into any extra things you could do to communicate with them...”

P3, Pre-reg pharmacist
Older patients with polypharmacy and SI = vulnerable population.

Communication difficulties in relation to medication has considerable safety implications.

Pharmacy personnel have unmet training needs regarding the pharmaceutical care of this patient population.
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