

Dementia Plan for Wales: The Importance of Medicines Management/ Role of the Pharmacist

Key issues for attention in Wales	Role of the pharmacist	Recommended actions
<p>Increasing public and professional awareness of dementia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With over 700 community pharmacies across Wales, pharmacists are an important point of contact for the general public, people with dementia and their families and carers. ▪ Pharmacists play an important role in providing information and advice as well as sign-posting people to appropriate services and support groups such as those provided by the voluntary sector. ▪ By utilising the community pharmacy contract, community pharmacies can play an increasing role in information provision and can help to raise public awareness of dementia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Utilise the networks of local community pharmacies to help raise awareness of dementia, provide information about the condition and available treatments, and sign-post to suitable services and support groups.
<p>Education and professional development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacists with appropriate training, knowledge and experience are well placed to provide advice and support to people with dementia and their carers in both community and hospital settings. ▪ Pharmacists with appropriate knowledge and skills can be involved in delivering training in uni-professional and multi-professional settings as well as being trained in dementia care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up-skill healthcare professionals, including pharmacists, to manage dementia as part of the general curricula for all healthcare professionals. ▪ Develop accredited training for pharmacists and other health professionals involved in directly caring for people with dementia to ensure consistent and high standards of care. ▪ Encourage community pharmacists to offer medicines usage reviews (MURs) proactively to people with dementia and their carers ▪ Provide hospital pharmacists and other staff involved in caring for older people with specific multidisciplinary training in dementia care addressing for example the key issues of communication, recognition, care pathways, nursing, feeding and nutrition, cognition, memory, appropriate treatment of delirium ▪ Provide opportunities for pharmacists to be involved in the development of educational material that could be used over the course of the illness for patients and healthcare

<p>Improving early diagnosis and intervention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Due to their regular contact with the general public, community pharmacists are well placed to help identify the early signs of illness ▪ With appropriate training and knowledge pharmacists can help signpost people and their families/carers to appropriate services for further assessment and/or treatment ▪ Community pharmacies offer an excellent base for the supply of information and advice to people and their families/carers about dementia. Pharmacists already work with patients in all sectors to provide information and support about therapy. ▪ Pharmacists that work in community hospitals, intermediate care settings and care homes have an ideal opportunity to help identify the early signs of dementia and refer patients on to appropriate services for further assessment 	<p>professionals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve knowledge of early recognition for health care professionals on the 'frontline'. This should include pharmacists. ▪ Utilise the skills of multidisciplinary teams in diagnosing dementia through appropriate training and accreditation where possible ▪ Explore the potential of community and primary care pharmacists working more closely with GPs and other community services such as memory clinics to improve knowledge, experience and contact with people with dementia. ▪ Explore the opportunities for pharmacists working in care homes, community hospitals and intermediate care settings to support earlier recognition of dementia and promote the most appropriate therapeutic approaches. ▪ Explore opportunities to formalise arrangements for providing information and advice from community pharmacies i.e. integrate pharmacies into local information prescription schemes. ▪ Medicine management input into the development of an information folder about dementia which contains information about the condition and highlights how the condition may progress over time.
<p>Ensuring prompt referral and access to appropriate assessment and treatment services for people with dementia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacists in primary care and the community can signpost patients and their families/carers to appropriate services for assessment when recognising the early signs of dementia or significant deterioration in those patients with an existing diagnosis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop care pathways for dementia care that include clear protocols for direct referral between pharmacists and other health professionals.
<p>Integrating medicines management into pathways of care for dementia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The effective management of medicines is crucial for improving health outcomes for patients with dementia. ▪ Pharmacists have a key role to play in ensuring the right medication is used at the right time. Monitoring the use of medication is also a key role for pharmacists ensuring that the long-term use of medication does not adversely affect the health of the individual and lead to increased morbidity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate the role of the pharmacist into care pathways for the treatment and management of dementia ▪ Develop locally enhanced pharmacy based services for dementia care ▪ Explore opportunities for training pharmacists interested in dementia care to undertake appropriate advanced roles in both hospital and community settings ▪ Explore opportunities for developing services that fully

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recent changes to legislation permit pharmacists in both community and hospital settings to play an increasingly proactive role in the prescribing of medicines and their overall management. ▪ As a key part of a care pathway, pharmacist prescribing can improve the management of patient's conditions, ensure prompt access to care, and help reduce pressures on other parts of the health care system. ▪ There are an increasing number of pharmacist independent and supplementary prescribers in Wales who with appropriate support and training could help to manage the medication regime of people diagnosed with dementia as part of local care pathways. ▪ Pharmacists in both community and hospital care settings are well placed to provide relevant information and support to other health professionals involved in dementia care on issues of medicines choice and monitoring medication efficacy ▪ As experts in medicines, pharmacists can play a key role in developing local prescribing guidelines to ensure appropriate prescribing of dementia medication. ▪ Pharmacists in community and hospital settings can monitor, prescribe and implement modification or withdrawal of antipsychotics/sedatives as recommended by specialists 	<p>integrate pharmacist prescribing into models of care for dementia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure medicines management and regular medicines reviews by pharmacists are fully included in individual care plans for people with dementia ▪ Ensure the involvement of pharmacists in local strategic and planning arrangements to ensure service re-design fully incorporates medicines management into care pathways for people with dementia. ▪ To ensure continuity of care, LHBs should develop local protocols to ensure appropriate exchange of information on medicines management issues between care sectors. This must be supported by advances in electronic patient information systems.
<p>Ensuring medication concordance for people with dementia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community and hospital pharmacists play an important role in advising patients and their families/carers on the correct use of medicines. ▪ Community pharmacists provide advice to care homes on medication concordance issues and are able to advise care home staff on medication issues especially when problems arise such as when swallowing becomes problematic ▪ As experts in medicines pharmacists can monitor medication use and signpost patients to further clinical support. Independent and supplementary pharmacist prescribers can monitor, adapt and change medications if there are problems with the therapeutic regime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure medication concordance is fully included in care plans and as part of the core pathway of care for people with dementia ▪ Ensure the role of the pharmacist in supporting medication concordance is clearly articulated in care pathways and individual care plans ▪ Include the community pharmacy services of Medicines Use Reviews (MURs) in care plans to monitor patient concordance and to highlight any problems with the therapeutic regime

	<p>Pharmacists are well trained to understand and advise on the medicines management aspects of polypharmacy (using more than one drug) and co-morbidities (having more than one condition)</p>	
<p>Improving care planning across health and social care including hospital discharge planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacists have an important role to play in discharge planning and coordinating supported care through: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Transfer of information of medicines use ➢ Initiation of compliance aids or medication reminder systems if required ➢ Provision of medicines information to support patients and their carers and also staff in care homes or intermediate care facilities ▪ Pharmacists in community and hospital settings can input into individual care planning as part of multidisciplinary care arrangements to provide expertise on therapeutic regimes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pharmacists must be involved in local advisory and planning forums to support local care planning arrangements and overall service re-design for dementia care ○ Pharmacists should be integrated into multidisciplinary team arrangements for dementia care ○ Care planning arrangements should harness the expertise of pharmacists with appropriate knowledge of dementia care.
<p>Increasing support for care at home or in care homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacists are playing an increasingly important role in the management of chronic conditions in Wales. New services are emerging with visiting care homes or patient's homes, providing a wide range of services including, case finding, information provision, structured patient education, medication review, therapy initiation, management and monitoring. ▪ Community and primary care pharmacists can input into dementia care in care home settings, providing support on medicines use, coordinating education and training for staff, and serving as a conduit for communication between professionals involved in the care of people with dementia ▪ Pharmacists play an important role in helping care workers including care home staff to understand how medicines should be safely and appropriately stored, handled and administered. They also provide advice on appropriate record keeping. ▪ With appropriate training and knowledge, pharmacists can help to monitor the nutritional and hydration status of people with dementia. This is important as many 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Models of dementia care must include clear procedures for supporting patients in their own homes or in care homes. ▪ All members of the multidisciplinary team for dementia care must be clear of their role in supporting patients at home and in care homes. ▪ Opportunities should be explored for training home care staff in medication use, handling, storage and record keeping ▪ Opportunities to integrate pharmacists into specialist community mental health teams should be explored

	<p>medicines can be adversely affected by failing kidneys (as the result of dehydration).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacists visiting care homes can help to identify gaps in care and facilitate positive changes with the support the multidisciplinary team. ▪ Pharmacists can work closely with specialist mental health teams and be closely involved in the care of people living in care homes. 	
Increasing support and advice for carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacists play an important role in helping care givers understand how medicines should be safely and appropriately stored, handled and administered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunities should be explored to provide information or training to care givers on handling, administering, and storing medication for dementia to increase patient safety and help to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.



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