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Long-Term Maintenance of Pharmacists' Inhaler Technique with a Novel Educational Tool

Abstract:

Purpose: We have previously shown that a simple inhaler technique intervention, delivered by community pharmacists, leads to improved inhaler technique and asthma control in patients with asthma¹. The objective of this study was to assess the impact of participation in the intervention project, on the inhaler technique skills of the pharmacists themselves.

Methodology: Thirty-one pharmacists attended an evening workshop and were randomly assigned to Active or Control groups. All pharmacists were assessed on their Turbuhaler (TH) and Accuhaler (ACC) technique using validated checklists. Active group pharmacists were trained to assess and teach correct TH and ACC technique, and were provided with patient-centered educational tools, including novel Inhaler Technique Labels, to educate patients in their pharmacies during a 6-month study. All pharmacists were reassessed one year later (2 years after initial training).

Results: At entry, few pharmacists had correct technique (TH: 13%, ACC: 6%), with no significant differences between groups. All Active group pharmacists demonstrated correct technique following training and before patient recruitment commenced. Two years later, correct technique was demonstrated on TH by 83% Active and 11% Control pharmacists ($p=0.001$), and on ACC by 75% Active and 11% Control pharmacists ($p=0.004$). Qualitative responses indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Inhaler Technique Labels.

Conclusions: This study highlights poor inhaler technique among community pharmacists, and demonstrates that providing community pharmacists with a patient-centered educational tool, incorporating novel Inhaler Technique Labels, can significantly maintain their competence to demonstrate correct inhaler technique.