Care Team Perspectives on the Value of Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services

Authors: Fay A, Ferreri S, Lundeen K, Pfeiffenberger T, Tong G

Practice Site: UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy and Community Care of North Carolina/AccessCare – Raleigh, NC

Background: Over 275 community pharmacies in North Carolina offer enhanced services such as medication synchronization, adherence packaging, care plan development, and home delivery to patients as part of the Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services Network (CPESN), a network of pharmacies integrated with Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC). While one of the goals of CPESN pharmacies is integration with the medical home care team, little is known about primary care practices’ and care managers’ awareness and utilization of these enhanced services.

Objective: The primary objective of this study was to determine to what degree primary care practices and their patient-centered medical home support teams, including care managers, were aware of enhanced pharmacy services.

Methods: A cross-sectional analysis was conducted via electronic questionnaire using the modified Dillman method. The questionnaire was sent to 1,648 CCNC adult and pediatric primary care practices and 600 CCNC care managers that work in the 76 North Carolina counties containing a CPESN pharmacy. The target survey audience in primary care practices includes both physicians and support staff. Questionnaires were distributed for a total of seven weeks from January 23rd through March 10th, 2017. The survey included approximately 15 questions on the awareness and perceived value of enhanced pharmacy services, preferred method and level of communication for referral of services, and barriers to utilizing enhanced services. Data was gathered using Likert-scales, rank order, dichotomous, and multiple choice type questions.

Results: Data analysis was completed in March 2017 using descriptive statistics. Response rates were 5.4% (n=89) from practices and 45% (n=270) from care managers. Of responses received, 35% (n=27) of practices and 88% (n=230) of care managers were familiar with CPESN pharmacies. A majority of respondents believe that enhanced pharmacy services are valuable, with over 85% of practices either agreeing or strongly agreeing that partnering with a CPESN pharmacy can help improve overall patient health outcomes, and care managers identifying that patient need for enhanced pharmacy services was the most common reason for collaboration with a CPESN pharmacy. Lack of knowledge of CPESN pharmacies, enhanced services offered, and the patient referral process were identified as the most frequently encountered barriers by primary care practices to utilizing a CPESN pharmacy.

Conclusion: Community pharmacies have an opportunity to collaborate with primary care practices and their patient-centered medical home support teams to provide enhanced pharmacy services, however provider outreach and education on enhanced services offered is necessary to maximize this collaboration. Looking ahead, trends identified from county-level responses will be provided to CPESN pharmacies and CCNC network facilitators to highlight opportunities to maximize enhanced services offered, marketing of services, and practice collaboration.