

Medication Reconciliation: An Important Source to Help Propagate the Waves of Patient Diagnosis

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OBJECTIVE

To investigate the importance of a best possible medication history (BPMH) and medication reconciliation in assisting patients' diagnoses using a case study.

CLINICAL FEATURES

PM is a 53-year-old male who presented from a high level care nursing home (NH) with confusion on a background of decompensated liver disease and schizophrenia. PM was afebrile and his observations were unremarkable. A diagnosis of hepatic encephalopathy was made and regular lactulose was commenced.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is estimated up to 650 000 hospital admissions each year in Australia are a result of medication-related problems, with at least half of these deemed avoidable. 50% of medication errors at points of transition of care are attributed to poor communication. Medication reconciliation on admission allows medication-related issues to be identified and addressed, and can assist medical officers in pinpointing patients' reasons for presentation and potentially their diagnoses.

PHARMACIST INTERVENTIONS, CASE PROGRESS, OUTCOMES

A pharmacist completed a BPMH for PM within 24 hours of admission. PM was prescribed a number of medications including a monthly paliperidone depot for schizophrenia. Further investigation revealed the NH and community pharmacy had no record of the paliperidone depot being administered in the previous six months. This information was handed over to the medical team who used this information coupled with other investigations to change the diagnosis from hepatic encephalopathy to signs and symptoms of uncontrolled schizophrenia. This resulted in PM being taken over care by Psychiatry and having his antipsychotic medications optimised.

CONCLUSION

As medication-related errors cause a significant amount of ED presentations each year, completing a BPMH and medication reconciliation on admission is essential. This case highlights the impact pharmacists can have in propagating the wave of patient diagnosis.

