Impact of Better Breathers Club Support Group on Disease State Management, Inhaler Technique, and Exacerbations in Patients with Respiratory Disease

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BACKGROUND

- According to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) statistics from 2015 and 2016, approximately 7.8% of the population has asthma and 6.4% reportedly have COPD.
- According to 2014 CDC data, Georgia specifically has an 8.3% prevalence of asthma patients. A prevalence range of 6.5 to 7.5% was reported in 2014 for patients with COPD in Georgia.
- The CDC reported in 2015 that 46.9% of people with asthma encountered an exacerbation, or “asthma attack”.
- Common reasons patients do not manage their COPD or asthma include non-adherence to medication regimen, poor inhaler techniques, and frequent exacerbations.
- Pharmacists are at the front-line of the community and can have an impact on this population of patients.
- Asthma control reflects the level of minimizing the frequency and intensity of symptoms and functional limitations. Uncontrolled asthma can be costly to families and society, since it leads to an increase in emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and work and school absences.

METHODS

- A monthly support group that lasted 1-2 hours was hosted at the pharmacy.
- The meetings focused on anatomy and physiology of respiratory diseases, inhaler technique, medication management, disease state management, and open discussions.
- Participants were given an entrance survey to assess general knowledge and comfort level with their disease state, inhaler technique, and exacerbation history at their first meeting.
- An exit survey was administered to participants after attending 3 meetings or at the end of the study.
- The results from the second survey were compared to the results from the initial survey for changes in the measured outcomes.

RESULTS

Entrance and Exit Survey Answers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginning of the Study (Entrance)</th>
<th>End of the Study (Exit)</th>
<th>Change from Baseline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disease State Knowledge and Comfort Level* (average)</td>
<td>• Understand disease state and medications: majority AGREE</td>
<td>• To Be Determined</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
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<td>• Difficult to exercise due to disease state: majority AGREE</td>
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<td>• Comfortable discussing disease states with healthcare professionals: majority AGREE</td>
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<td>Inhaler Technique Ranking¹ (average score)</td>
<td>Medium (10)</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Attacks and Exacerbations reported in the last 6 months (average)</td>
<td>1 (7 participants)</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
<td>To Be Determined</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Results based on a Likert Scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree)
¹Results based on multi-question assessment and ranked based on a scale of low (1-5), medium (5-10), or high (11-10) understanding of inhaler technique

GROUP ATTENDANCE

- November 2017 = 7 participants
- December 2017 = 2 participants
- January 2018 = 0 participants
- February 2018 = 2 participants

CONCLUSIONS

- Support from a pharmacist and/or others in the community setting can increase disease-state knowledge and comfort level with disease-state management.
- Some patients may require one-on-one time to achieve a higher impact.
- Incentives may be needed to increase participation from patients in educational groups or classes about their disease states.
- Additional Results Pending

LIMITATIONS

- Short duration of study
- Small number of participants for data collection
- Lack of motivation or incentives to entice community to participate in group

REFERENCES


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