

AN EVALUATION OF HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION KNOWLEDGE IN PATIENTS ATTENDING A HOSPITAL OUTPATIENT PHARMACY

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BACKGROUND

Health Promotion improves the health status of individuals, families, communities, and the nation. It enhances the quality of life for all people and reduces premature deaths. Hospital outpatient pharmacies are well placed to allow easy access, have long opening hours, having highly trained professionals on site with expertise, staff that reflect the diversity of their communities and opportunity to reach out to the public with support and advice.

At Trust Pharmacy, there was limited information about the demographics of the patients attending, their health status and how knowledgeable they already were about certain health topics. In order to ascertain how to optimise future health promotion campaigns a survey was undertaken in July 2019 in the Trust Pharmacy waiting area.

METHOD

Face to face interviews were conducted on 100 patients waiting for their prescriptions at TRUST Pharmacy, Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham. Each patient who presented a prescription to the Pharmacy was approached for interview in order of their arrival to the department and asked about their health status and how knowledgeable they were about certain health promotion topics.

RESULTS

53% of patients surveyed were female and 47% were male. The ages ranged evenly from 18 to over 70.

Health Status

The survey found that only a quarter of patients exercise regularly with 10% never exercising. 35% of patients occasionally exercised and 30% of patients rarely.

Only 35% of patients had had their cholesterol tested.

Around 25% of patients had a family history of diabetes.

Of all the smokers surveyed (28%), all had previously tried to stop smoking but had returned to the habit.

30% of patients had never had their blood pressure monitored and half of patients surveyed had never had their blood glucose tested.

Knowledge of Health Promotion Topics

28% of patients did not know the maximum recommended units of alcohol permitted in a week for men/women.

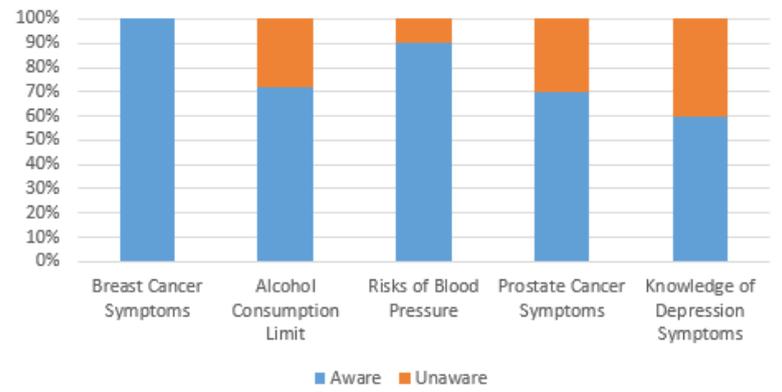
Approximately 10% of patients were not aware of the risks of high blood pressure..

All patients were aware of the correct signs of breast cancer. 17% of patients did not know or were unsure of what the signs of prostate cancer are.

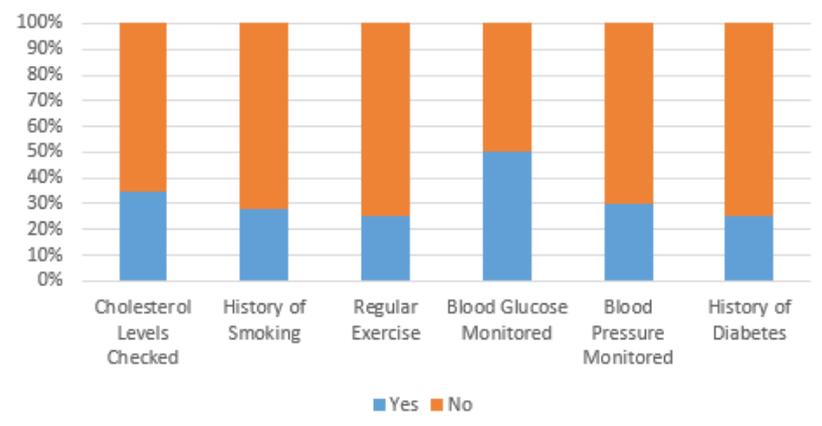
30% of patients were not aware of what 'Stoptober' (National Smoking cessation campaign).

40% of patients were unable to give two symptoms of depression; some patients listing inaccurate symptoms.

Knowledge of health promotion topics



Health Status of Patients



DISCUSSION

Of note was that many patients were unaware of their own health status and only a minority of patients had had their blood glucose tested, blood pressure monitored or had their cholesterol checked. Trust Pharmacy is well placed to provide these testing services and investment could be made towards providing a drop in service for patients and staff to have these clinical assessments made.

Patients were informed about most health promotion topics but there were some knowledge gaps i.e. prostate cancer and mental health which need to be targeted for future campaigns. Interestingly a high number of patients thought that watching videos to gain knowledge was a good idea and although consultations with Pharmacy staff are the preferred method of receiving information, less labour intensive methods of disseminating information need to be considered. The mass availability, and use of mobile health technology (mhealth) as demonstrated by this study, provides a significant potential for such technologies to be integrated into improving health promotion. A limitation of the study was not identifying how many of the devices patients used were 'android phones' as these have the most potential for benefit. Patients could receive health promotion information regularly on their phones and in addition could download various software applications that could help them track their health and disease status.

CONCLUSION

Although patients are informed to some extent about health promotion and disease prevention more work needs to be done to make them fully informed and investment needs to be made to get more clinical testing done on patients so that they are aware of and can track their own health status. Patients attending hospital pharmacies do have access to technology so mhealth is a possible solution to improving this.