

Managing COPD

Approximately 900,000 people in the UK have diagnosed chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). COPD is a disabling condition and symptoms include cough and breathlessness and repeated exacerbations, which are one of the most common reasons for hospital admission.

Mucolytics had been removed from FP10 prescribing for 18 years. In February 2003, following a Cochrane meta analysis review, they were reinstated to the NHS list of prescription products. GPs were unaware of this, and of when to use mucolytics.

In February 2004, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued guidance on the management of COPD, which featured mucolytics positively for patients with chronic productive cough.

Objectives

1. To develop an evidence-based consensus guideline on the use of mucolytics to complement the NICE COPD guideline
2. To deliver a series of workshops to disseminate the guideline in target areas
3. To achieve a relevance rating for the workshop of four out of five from 80 per cent of responders
4. To develop and promote an educational website introducing the guideline to GPs, including those not receiving face-to-face sales calls from representatives.

Tactics

The project plan had four key phases:

1. Development of an evidence-based consensus guideline, 'Mucolytic therapy in patients with diagnosed COPD'
2. Publication of the guideline
3. Dissemination of the consensus guideline via workshops
4. Development and promotion of an educational website, for inclusion as part of the eGuidelines.co.uk website.

A multidisciplinary meeting involving key specialities who were involved in managing patients with COPD was held to generate the consensus guideline during 2004.

In 2005 and 2006, a series of educational workshops took place to promote the guideline to key healthcare professionals in primary and secondary care.

One consultant respiratory physician chaired all of the workshops to ensure



The Guidelines and educational website were developed for GPs and COPD nurses

consistency of message. The agenda was developed with the chair and included:

- NICE COPD guideline
- nGMS contract
- Mucolytic consensus guideline.

Speakers were specifically chosen for their knowledge of COPD; their involvement in guideline development and implementation; and their appreciation of the nGMS contract and what can be achieved in primary care.

To emphasise the educational nature of the workshops all materials carried the Guidelines branding. The workshops were promoted to GPs, asthma/COPD nurses in primary and secondary care, key PCO personnel and consultant respiratory physicians via targeted mailings and emails, journal advertisements and invitations delivered by representatives.

The content of the website was developed using the guideline, background material from its development, and information from the Mucodyne™ product detail. The design of the site was based on existing eGuidelines.co.uk educational sub-sites and included elements of the Mucodyne branding. The site was promoted to the eGuidelines.co.uk audience via emails and journal advertising.

Results

The guideline was launched in the June 2004 issue of Guidelines and on eGuidelines.co.uk. An annual supplement containing the guideline was produced for representative distribution.

The workshops were attended by GPs, practice nurses, hospital clinicians,

respiratory nurses, PCO clinical governance leads and prescribing advisors.

Over 92 per cent of delegates gave the workshops a rating of four or more out of five and 84.3 per cent said the most significant change anticipated was an increase in the use of mucolytics.

When answering the question 'how will you use the information gained today?' comments included:

- Sharing the information with colleagues
- Improving patient care.

To gauge the educational nature of the workshops, the following were assessed:

- Relevance to educational needs
- Quality of education
- Effectiveness for COPD.

Evaluation

The consensus guideline was well received as it provided additional information on the use of mucolytics to support the NICE COPD Guideline.

Success of the 2005 series of workshops led to the client decision to support further series in 2006 and 2007.

Feedback emphasised that the workshops were enjoyed and appreciated by the delegates. Comments included: "I now feel more confident dealing with COPD and using mucolytic drugs" and "this will help me improve the efficiency of a practice-based COPD clinic". The client is impressed with the design of the website and anticipates a successful launch.



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Client: IVAX Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd (a division of Teva)

Agency: Connectmedical

Campaign: COPD and the use of mucolytics

Timescale: 2004-2006