Repeat dispensing at pathfinder pilots: the general practice perspective

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Presentation outline

> Study background and overview
> Research methods
> Findings
> Summary
Study background and overview

> Repeat dispensing is now an essential service in the new community pharmacy contract
> Pathfinder sites operated in 89 PCTs in England from 2003
> Mixed method evaluation
Qualitative study

> Telephone interviews with 18 respondents
> 15 practices covering nine PCT areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Male (n=12)</th>
<th>Female (n=6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single handed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispensing clerk</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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> Six rural, nine urban areas
> Tape recorded, fully transcribed, thematic analysis
Facilitators

> Personal motivation to ‘champion’ repeat dispensing
> Influence of other systems
> Working relationships with community pharmacists

*(setting up the scheme)…required a degree of liaison and goodwill on both sides*
Inhibitors

> Concerns about continuity at some pharmacies

*I think if the chemist didn’t know the patients, didn’t know the GP, it could be a very dangerous system indeed*

> Perception of possible increase in workload

*they just find it too tedious*
Benefits

> Convenient for patients

> Improved patient monitoring at the pharmacy

  *a lot more than the receptionists do at the surgeries*

> Reduced administrative workload

  *I don’t have to sign so many god-damned prescriptions!*

> Improved relationships with community pharmacists

  *Dispensing doctors and retail pharmacists have always been arch enemies...we are certainly getting much more from the pharmacists since we went on the scheme than we had before*
Disbenefits

- Workload
  
  *I have to admit I can’t see the numbers stacking up as a being a wonderful advantage…it’s like it’s made work. It’s improving quality no end I’m sure of that, but don’t ever get the idea that this thing saves time*

- Software issues

- Lack of continuity
Key points

> Repeat dispensing is now an essential service in the community pharmacy contract

> Benefits are widely recognised, but practical challenges remain

> Wider uptake is dependent on GP enthusiasm and developing relationships with community pharmacists