

Pilot Study on Digital Communication Between Community Pharmacists and General Practitioners

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Introduction:

Efficient communication between pharmacists and general practitioners (GPs) is crucial for optimal patient care and medical outcomes. Currently, all queries that need to be addressed to the GP regarding a patient's prescriptions or medications must be done by phone. This process is very time-consuming and sometimes not feasible. Although a national digital communication system about patients exists, it has not been implemented between community pharmacists and GPs. A collaborative project involving the Norwegian Pharmacy and Pharmacist associations, along with two GP associations, was established to test this system on a small scale.

Purpose:

To assess and gain experience in using digital communication when pharmacists have questions for GPs about prescriptions or patient medications, and to compare this with the current use of telephone.

Method:

The study will describe the extent, communication themes, practical implementation, benefits, and experiences of telephone calls versus digital communication between GPs and pharmacists. Data is collected through electronic reporting by the recruited pharmacists for each telephone and digital message sent or received. Additionally, data is gathered from electronic questionnaires completed by all participants. Statistics will also be extracted from the pharmacy systems on the number of dispensed prescriptions during the project period.

Results:

A total of ten pharmacies and 22 GPs were recruited to test the system. The study is in progress, and some results will be presented at the upcoming conference.

Conclusion:

A pilot study is currently running with the purpose of gaining experience in using digital communication between pharmacists and GPs about prescriptions or patient medications. The results will guide future decisions on implementing a national digital communication system.