Bringing the Clinical Mindset to the Retail Pharmacist

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Objectives

• Describe challenging situations faced by pharmacists due to a dynamic clinical mindset
• Investigate barriers to understanding the clinical mindset
• Analyzing fears surrounding difficult decision making and patient safety
• Provide navigation tips and available resources

Clinical Pharmacy and a Different Frame of Mind

• Clinical pharmacy entails somewhat different responsibilities
• Clinical pharmacists can more easily answer drug questions, counsel patients and provide medication reconciliation
• Sometimes they can actually obtain information that other healthcare providers cannot

What is a Clinical Pharmacist?

• A pharmacist who is decentralized from the inpatient pharmacy and provides pharmacy services and closer follow-up for patients in a particular area of patient care
• May or may not require additional training
  • Residency Training
  • Extra Work Experience

Different Clinical Pharmacy Models

• Hospital
  • Cover particular floors or units
  • Consulted from the Inpatient Pharmacy
• Outpatient Clinics
  • Diabetes Education
  • Anticoagulation Clinics
  • HIV clinics

Benefits of a Clinical Pharmacist

• Provides a face for pharmacy and can become a member of the multidisciplinary team
• Able to solve problems before they get to the community pharmacy
• Improve patient outcomes
• Potentially influence prescribing habits in the hospital by performing drug use evaluations
Clinical Pharmacist

- Participates in the decision making process of what drug(s) should be chosen
- Manage patient’s medications in a clinic setting
- This responsibility brings with it challenges
- These challenges may vary based on the location and dynamics of a particular hospital or clinic
- Some challenges are similar across the country

Changing the Profession

- Currently moving toward a more integrated pharmacy model
- Change has been in the works since 1985
- Optimizing pharmacists in the role of patient care
- Mostly been implemented in the hospital setting
- Extending to the ambulatory care setting

Definition

- Clinical Mindset “Thinking Clinically”
- Knowledge, Perspective and Resources
- Keeping abreast of the efficacy and safety information for drugs
- Having a bigger impact upon patient care

More than just “Thinking”

- There is a need to think clinically
- “Thinking Clinically” is more than just brushing up on clinical knowledge
- To think is to analyze new ideas, to change your perspective is to develop a new mindset
- Having a Clinical Mindset refers to changing your perspective toward incorporating resources of a clinical model

How is the Clinical Mindset Different?

- Often clinical pharmacists have a more complete picture of the patient being treated
- More opportunities for educating nurses and physicians about the role of pharmacists
- In a better position to advocate for medication safety and compliance

Dynamic Clinical Mindset

- Mindset shaped by multiple healthcare professionals
- Constantly being bombarded with new concepts in medicine
- Appropriate medical treatment may be viewed differently by various health professionals depending on their specialty
- This difference of training can lead to differing opinions about patient care and lead
How do we obtain and maintain this Mindset?

- Collaboration
- Other health professionals
- Clinical pharmacists
- Educating ourselves through clinically focused continuing education
- Take pharmacy students on rotations

With Change Comes Uncertainty

- What is the most appropriate treatment for patients with certain disease states?
- Afraid to step out of our comfort zone
- How will other health professionals respond?
- What are clinical pharmacy services suppose to look like?

Service Model

- Offering additional assistance with monitoring patients in the hospital or clinic
- Humble approach should be taken
- Activities will vary based on the need of the hospital or clinic
- Can grow to become an integral part of the patient care setting

Overcoming Uncertainty

- Educate yourself about the opportunities and resources available
- Understand how clinicians approach optimizing patient care
  - Look at another’s point of view
  - Patient care should continue to be the focus
- Better understanding will further optimize patient care

Why is this important to Pharmacists?

- Miscommunication or misconceptions potentiate drug errors
- Understanding perspectives help mitigate frustrating situations, improve communication and help keep us up-to-date on new concepts
- Healthcare is changing and more than ever we need to work as a team to provide better patient care and safety

Double Check

- We are all human and we make mistakes
- Extra reviews are never a bad idea especially with complex patients or disease states
- A different perspective can be a good thing and helps to improve logistics of a process
Different Challenges

- Challenges in pharmacy vary based on setting
  - Community
  - Hospital
  - Clinical
- Different perspectives among health professionals may lead to challenges that impede patient care in all of these areas

Challenges Faced by the Clinical Pharmacist

- Healthcare professionals may not understand your role in the multidisciplinary team
- Drug therapy recommendations may not be accepted by some practitioners
- What is recommended today may not be recommended tomorrow

Challenges Faced by the Clinical Pharmacists

- Unlabeled Indications
  - “How do I really know if this is appropriate?”
- Drug/Drug Interactions
  - “Which ones are most clinically significant?”
- New drugs on the Market
  - “Why is the provider writing for the newest, most expensive drug on the market?”

A Deeper Look

- Requires understanding in-depth drug knowledge as well as knowledge about disease states
- Keeping up with the newest and latest research in the primary literature
- Understanding the hospital/staff reimbursement and financial outcomes
- Perhaps understanding bias and how these can be overcome

Examples

- Adjusting an adult dose for a child where there are no guidelines available
- Using drugs together where data is controversial
- High dose initiated for a particular drug
- Exceptions to the rule for drug/drug interaction
- Abbreviations in documentation or written prescription

Clinical Pharmacist Responsibilities

- Keeping cost down by “enforcing” the hospital formulary
- Reconciling all medications and discontinuing any that are unneeded to help both hospital cost and patient compliance
- Educating patients, nurses, and physicians on appropriateness of medication recommendations, etc.
Challenge Extends Beyond the Hospital

- Patients are often switched to “equivalent” drugs during their hospital stay
- The medication may or may not be needed upon discharge
- New drugs prescribed upon discharge based on the formulary may not be covered by the patient’s insurance
- Physician accustomed to the formulary and may not have good knowledge of insurance issues, etc.

Clinical Pharmacist Responsibilities

- Work with a social worker to determine need for extra assistance and to ensure that the patient is able get their medications
- This is where clinical meets community
- There can be a disconnect at this point which leads to frustration for the community pharmacist
- Clinical pharmacists can play a big role in bridging this gap through education

Barriers to Solving these Challenges

- Differences in goals and responsibilities
- Misperceptions of pharmacists goals and responsibilities (community vs. clinical)
- Perception that we, as pharmacists, are not integrated
- Resistance to change from the Status Quo
  - “This is how we have always done it”

Understanding Our Role

- “Dr. said it, therefore it must be correct?”
- Pharmacists are well educated and have a great responsibility in patient safety
- Pharmacists are patient advocates
- Educate all patients and health professionals

Tools We Need

- How can we overcome these barriers?
- Communication is the Key
- Education is just as important
- Patience is a must
- We should have the courage to stand together and take on new challenges

Get Involved with Patient Care

- Optimizing pharmacist’s ability to bridge the gap in healthcare
- You may be the only health professional some of your patients see for an extended period of time
- Use MTM services to keep more than just a record of a patient’s medication list
Integration

- To work together we must understand and respect what all parties bring to the table
- “Never judge someone until you have walked a mile in their shoes”
- We start to see some of the perspective of other health professionals and they begin to understand and respect pharmacists

Help Each Other Find Answers

- Providing Medication Therapy Management puts you more in tune with your patients and expands your ability to assess and become more clinically minded
- Sometimes there may be questions that are difficult to answer
- Other questions can be explained with a little help from a friend

A Better Model?

- Collaborative Practice Agreements
- More freedom for the pharmacist
- Alternative method: working with a clinical pharmacist
- Investigate clinical opportunities when they come available and see what works for you

Fears arising from new opportunities

- Decisions may arise that require you to make a clinical decision as a community pharmacist
- May not be able to contact the patients provider
- This may lead to fear and apprehension
- Deter you from offering more services

Know Your Resources

- Publications
- Guidelines
- Access to resources as preceptor
- Network in state and out of state
- Take advantage of technology
- Know the state laws

In this Together

- As healthcare becomes more integrated, we as pharmacist need to become more integrated
- In today’s society we can never assume someone else is taking care of the problem
- Empower each other and your patients through education
Resources