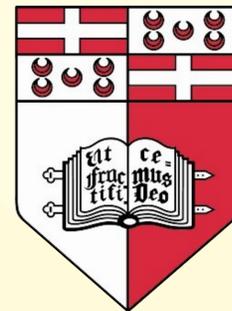


Compliance with Protocols for Eye Conditions

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Background

Protocols are guidelines which serve to establish standards and assist professionals in determining a course of action¹. The information used to compile protocols should be of an evidence-based nature. Evidence-based medicine is a combination of evidence-based guidelines² and evidence-based individual decision-making³. The ideal protocol should be simple, acceptable and workable⁴.

Aims

To design flow-chart protocols to guide community pharmacists in diagnosing and managing external segment and eyelid conditions, conjunctivitis and dry eye disease and to assess percentage compliance with the protocols.

Method

1. Identification of conditions via preliminary literature review and discussion with ophthalmologists and pharmacists.
2. Literature review focusing on diagnosis and management options of the identified conditions.
3. Development of flow-chart protocols, explanatory text, case studies and result sheet.
4. Validation by 6 healthcare professionals, including 2 ophthalmologists, 2 general practitioners and 2 pharmacists.
5. Compilation of protocols in an A5 booklet and explanatory text as an A4 online document. This is available at URL http://www.um.edu.mt/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/132618/HandbookFinal2.pdf
6. Distribution of material to all community pharmacies in the Maltese Islands (n=211).
7. Assessment of percentage compliance with each protocol using the result sheet which was completed after one week.

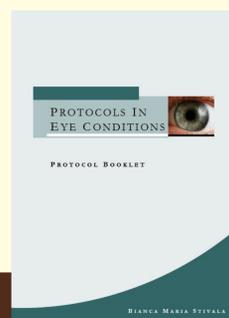


Figure 1: Front cover of the protocols booklet prepared

Results

3 flow-chart protocols were designed. These consisted of 34 steps each for the external segment and eyelid conditions and conjunctivitis protocols, and 28 steps for the dry eye disease protocol. Out of 211 pharmacies, 113 completed the result sheet, giving a response rate of 63%.

Full compliance was shown by 65, 63 and 88 pharmacists for the external segment and eyelid conditions, conjunctivitis and dry eye disease protocols respectively.

Average Percentage Compliance with all Protocols

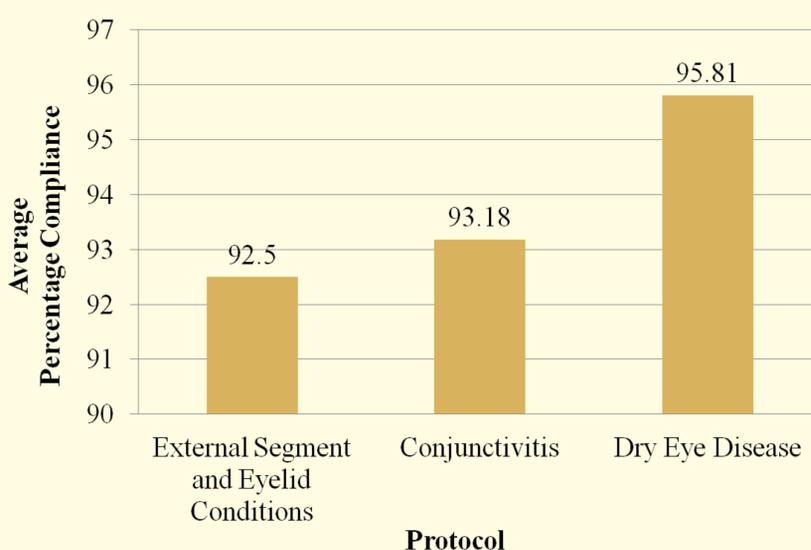


Figure 2: Bar chart showing average percentage compliance with all the protocols

Conclusion

The high compliance rates achieved indicate that pharmacists could follow the steps in the protocols when dealing with eye conditions in the community pharmacy and that the protocols apply to the practical setting.

References

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