

Case Study 16: Primary Care Pharmacist



Elizabeth

Elizabeth is a 36-year-old pharmacist who lives with her husband and two children. She is a senior Medicines Management pharmacist in her local PCT. Her main role is to co-ordinate all the practice support pharmacists, she is also the liaison for the prison service in the county, leads on the palliative care out-of-hours service and works for two GP practices as a practice pharmacist.

Elizabeth has had a varied career; training in hospital, working many years in retail and working as both a practice and PCT pharmacist.

Her CPD entry arose following a conversation with the specialist PCT heart failure nurse. She had told Elizabeth about a new drug recently licensed for the treatment of heart failure. Elizabeth decided that she ought to find out more about the drug and the cost implications associated with its use.

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Record Sheets

reflection

Name of entry:

The potential impact in primary care of eplerenone being granted a UK licence in heart failure

Date Identified:

22/03/2004

What do you want to learn to be able to do?

Establish the impact on the prescribing budget that eplerenone may have now it has been granted a UK license in the treatment of heart failure

How have you identified this learning objective?

I was talking to the PCT Heart Failure nurse who was telling me about the license

What methods did you use to identify this objective?

Choose...

Audit
Feedback from users of services/products
Reading Journals
Talking to colleagues/peers/peer review

Who is driving this?

What skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours will you need to develop?

Choose...

To which areas of competence does this learning objective relate?

Choose...

Using expert knowledge and skills to benefit patients
Using a variety of information sources

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planning

Urgency: By when will you need to meet this learning objective?

1/11/2004

Importance: What will be the impact of your learning on you, users of your services, colleagues and organisations to whom you are contracted?

It will allow Medicines Management to advise colleagues about use of eplerenone and be aware of the potential impact on the pct prescribing budget

Impact on you:

1 2 3 4 5

 Low

Impact on the users of your services/products:

1 2 3 4 5

 Very high

Impact on colleagues:

1 2 3 4 5

 Moderate

Impact on organisation

1 2 3 4 5

 Very high

What activities could you undertake to meet this objective?

Description	Action Category	Advantages/Disadvantages	Selected
Contact the manufacturer		They should be able to tell me about the licenced indications etc and maybe likely costs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Call specialist nurse in local hospital		She may be able to tell me if its likely to be prescribed in secondary care and if so in what circumstances	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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action

Description	Date completed	Time taken	Add to CE record
Contact the manufacturer		30mins	<input type="checkbox"/>
Call specialist nurse in local hospital		30mins	<input type="checkbox"/>

What have you learnt as a result?

I now know enough about the drug to be able to pass the info onto others in the PCT

evaluation

Has your learning objective been met?

Fully

Partly

Not at all

Please describe an example of how you have applied what you have learnt

Please describe any feedback you have had from those on whom your learning was to have an impact or those who have been able to observe your performance

Mark entry as completed

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Reflection

On talking with Elizabeth it was clear that the learning objective she had written described only part of what she had wanted to learn. She had not spent much time thinking about the detail and therefore had later found it difficult to plan appropriate learning activities. Her objective was also described as more of a job task than the personal learning that she would need in order to achieve this task.

After talking with Elizabeth, it is apparent that a more suitable entry may have been:

I would like to be able to give all the PCT practice pharmacists the initial information they require about the new drug eplerenone. In order to do this I need to know about:

- its licensed indication(s) and role in therapy
- recommended dosages
- contraindications
- side-effects
- cost implications

She could have used the optional question in the online version of Plan & Record which asks which knowledge, skills, behaviours or attitudes she needs to develop. This would have helped her be more specific about her learning needs.

Planning

The activities that Elizabeth has listed are limited and could have been more extensive, if she had started out with a more thorough objective.

Action

In describing what she had learnt, Elizabeth simply said she had learnt what she had needed to. By writing something specific in this section Elizabeth would have been able to:

- describe the key things she wanted to remember
- review her learning
- reflect on what hadn't been achieved
- keep information for future reference
- demonstrate understanding of her learning

When your record is being reviewed the reviewer needs to be reassured that this is happening – so some specific detail needs to be provided. This does not mean that it has to be wordy. A sentence or two is usually sufficient. For example Elizabeth may have written:

I now know the dosage, indications and contraindications of this drug but I still need to find out about the likely cost.

Or even better may be:

Eplerenone is used for..., the usual dose is... The major side effects are...etc.

This way the information that Elizabeth has learnt is available for her to refer back to at a later date. Some people use this section to specify where the information is to be filed so that they are able to retrieve it later if required.

Evaluation

Elizabeth hasn't filled in the evaluation section because she has yet to see a prescription for this drug and apply the learning directly. However she produced a newsletter for all the practice pharmacists detailing what she had learnt. This is a way of applying learning and very suitable evidence that you have done something with your learning, even if you haven't contributed directly to a patient's care.

It's also suitable for the feedback to come from colleagues. Positive or negative feedback is relevant. You won't be marked down for receiving negative feedback – any feedback shows that what you have applied your learning to has been commented upon. Feedback is an important part of the CPD cycle. It allows you to measure the success of your learning and identify any future learning needs.

Summary

This was a very appropriate CPD entry for a PCT pharmacist. Elizabeth had found that engaging with the CPD cycle had helped her, especially in planning her learning. To improve her entry she just needed to be more specific about what she had wanted to learn, what she had learnt and how she had applied it.

Remember

- **Make your learning objective as specific as possible, including all that you want to learn about. This will make planning easier and more relevant. If you have too much to realistically achieve, break it down into two or more manageable objectives.**
- **When asked “what have you learnt?” be as specific as possible. It's good to reflect about what you now know and how that relates to what you wanted to know.**
- **Applying your learning doesn't have to be direct to patients. Telling other people is a good way of ensuring practices change.**