Perspectives of community pharmacy staff on caring for people living with dementia and their caregivers – findings from a participatory research project with community pharmacies in Austria

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"Dementia-friendly Community Pharmacy" – An Overview

18 Pharmacies

Projects

Counselling services
Local shops
People with dementia
caregivers

Steering Committee
Alzheimer Austria, Chamber of Pharmacists, researchers at IFF

Evaluation Team

Project Team: researchers at IFF

Advisory Board:
caregivers, pharmacists, experts (HP, PC), sponsors

Questionnaire
Workshops

Sponsors
Principles of Participatory Research

- Equal collaboration between research and practice
- Participation of (representatives of) people with dementia, informal caregivers and community pharmacy employees in all processes and in knowledge generation
- Valuing different kinds of knowledge and experience
- Realizing the project in repetitive loops of action, reflection and evaluation
Researching the Perspective of Community Pharmacy Staff

- Staff from 18 (9+9) pharmacies from Vienna and Lower Austria

- Narrative accounts on contacts w. people with dementia and/or caregivers collected during kick-off workshop (appr. 40 staff participated)

- Self administered mailed questionnaires for evaluation/baseline (148 staff from 16 pharmacies participated)
“A client whom I have not seen before enters the pharmacy to get a prescription filled, and there were no medicines on this prescription indicating dementia. Finally, when it came to paying, he opened his wallet and all of a sudden he did not know what to do. He was unable to cope with this situation.

Which made me think: The double helplessness – the client was helpless because he did not know what to do and we were helpless because we did not know how to react. ..and time-pressure is an issue: How long should we wait? I don’t want to put him under pressure... and I knew it may take some time. ...

So first I tried to relax, and I went through everything with him again: First I asked: Do you need anything else? .. Then I repeated the amount of money.... Then I asked him “May I help you with the wallet?’ and together we gathered the money and then I try to make sure that this person receives a receipt in any case....”
Complements and expands analysis of narratives

Preliminary analysis shows...

- High relevance of project on dementia-care with community pharmacy
- High frequency of contacts w. people with dementia or caregivers in community pharmacies
- Need for networking with local partners
- Critical self-assessment of knowledge & skills (although various courses of action reported)
- Potential barriers: stigma and work organisation
Community pharmacy staff report frequent encounters with people with dementia and/or caregivers in community pharmacies.

... and describe various caring interactions.

Community pharmacy staff rated their knowledge and skills rather critical and expressed need for training in communication skills, networking & Pharmaceutical Care.

Pharmacy setting opens up specific opportunities (und challenges!) for community-based dementia care.
Acknowledgements

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