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A nested qualitative study of medication reviews within a multicenter cluster-randomised crossover trial (MedBridge)

Introduction

The MedBridge study is a multicentre cluster-randomised crossover trial to study the effects of hospital-initiated comprehensive medication reviews, including active follow-up, on elderly patients' health care utilization compared to usual care and solely hospital based reviews. Pragmatic trials of complex interventions, such as in the MedBridge study, are often criticised, because of a lack of understanding of the context and the degree of implementation of the interventions in daily practice. The performance of process evaluations alongside such trials, using qualitative approaches, are therefore highly recommended. As a first step in such an evaluation process, we present this nested qualitative study to evaluate the implementation process and the performance of the interventions of the MedBridge study.

Aim

The aim of this study was to promote the understanding of the effects of the interventions within the MedBridge study.

Materials & methods

Semi-structured interviews

- 4 pharmacists
- 8 physicians

Transcription

Analysis

- 2 researchers independently
- Coding using CFIR

Results & discussion

Several important factors that could lead to positive and negative effects were identified, see table I.

Table I. Summary of results

Key facilitating factors

- Universal belief about the importance of the medication reviews
- Perceivment of the pharmacists being part of the healthcare team
- Positive attitude towards interprofessional collaboration

Key impeding factors

- Lack of time (both physicians and pharmacists)

Conclusion

The findings in this study provide valuable understanding of the effects of the interventions within the MedBridge study. Although the interventions seem to be generally well implemented, further steps in the evaluation process need to be taken in order to triangulate these findings with data from other stakeholders and study sites as well.