Access to the patient medical record among the top challenges for European hospital pharmacy

Richard Price

The European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) has today published new research revealing the common difficulty faced by hospital pharmacists across Europe in being able to enter medicines used on to the patient's medical record on admission. The profession also faces systemic problems in being able to contribute to the transfer of information about medicines when patients move between and within healthcare settings.

The findings are published in the results of a pan-European survey of hospital pharmacies that sought to gain a better understanding of perceptions, and the status of implementation, of the 44 European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy. The Statements were created in May 2014 in a unique collaboration between 34 national hospital pharmacy associations and a wide range of European patient, doctor and nursing associations. Together, they form the shared vision of what hospital pharmacy should be achieving in every European country to optimise patient outcomes.

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Seeking to understand which of the 44 statements pose the greatest implementation challenges across Europe, the five statements that rated highest in this respect are:

- ▶ Statement 4.4: The pharmacists in our hospital enter all medicines used on to the patient's medical record on admission.
- ▶ Statement 4.5: The pharmacists in our hospital contribute to the transfer of information about medicines when patients move between and within healthcare settings.
- ▶ Statement 6.4: The pharmacists in our hospital routinely publish hospital pharmacy practice research.
- ▶ Statement 5.3: Our hospital uses an external quality assessment accreditation programme to assure our medicines use processes.
- ▶ Statement 1.1: The pharmacists in our hospital work routinely as part of a multidisciplinary team.

Meanwhile, the results of the survey also revealed a positive picture in respect to the environment for achieving many other statements, including in relation to:

- ▶ having clear processes within the hospital for the procurement of medicines (statement 2.1);

- ▶ hospital pharmacists engaging in educational opportunities (statement 6.3);
- ▶ hospital pharmacies taking responsibility for medicine logistics (statement 2.6).

Commenting on the findings, EAHP President Joan Peppard said:

When hospital pharmacists, patients, nurses and doctors created the European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy, we knew these were challenging, but much needed, targets. These survey results now show which statements are most challenging. Achieving improvement in respect to hospital pharmacist access to the patient medical record, and the pharmacist's ability to contribute to transfer of patient information between settings, requires system improvement.

Health system managers and policy makers at the national and international level need to fully utilise the resource that is the hospital pharmacist: use the hospital pharmacist's skillset to help patients by opening up patient information systems to the pharmacist contribution.

Competing interests None declared.

Provenance and peer review Commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

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To cite Price R. *Eur J Hosp Pharm* 2016;**23**:62.

Eur J Hosp Pharm 2016;**23**:62.
doi:10.1136/ejhp-2015-000852