



RESOURCE BULLETIN

13 JUNE 2007

Summary of this bulletin

This bulletin contains information about resources of interest to health professionals and consumers in relation to medicines and prescribing, specifically:

- Written information for patients about individual medicines; what patients find valuable and useful
- Interventions database; research evidence about the effects of strategies to affect drug use by and prescribing for consumers

A systematic review of quantitative and qualitative research on the role and effectiveness of written information available for patients about individual medicines. (Raynor et al. 2007)

This publication is in the HTA (Health Technologies Assessment programme) monograph series from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) in the UK. The review covers an important priority area in healthcare systems: authors state that it puts "information at the centre of health" - empowering patients, supporting shared decision making and enabling active participation in healthcare. The review aimed to gain patient, carer and professional perspectives on statutory information (inserted in medicine packages) and a range of other patient information. It included: an analysis of 70 studies/trials of effectiveness (interventions/comparisons included: prescriptions information leaflet versus nothing; verbal NSAID education compared to verbal and written education; comparison of two different methods of presenting risk information to patients about medicine side effects); a review of the design of information (analysis of texts selected by six key informants focusing on content, delivery and layout); and stakeholder workshops (consumers, patient organisations and collaborators).

Review authors suggest that most people do not value the information they receive and that this may be due to poor content and layout. They note a gap between leaflets currently provided with medicines and the information patients would value and find useful. Authors also note that wide use of the internet is not yet reflected in the research literature. The challenge overall is to provide information that is easily comprehensible, flexible, individualised and appropriate to the course of an illness. http://www.hta.nhsweb.nhs.uk/ProjectData/3_project_record_published.asp?PjtId=1404

Interventions database: Interventions to enhance medication adherence

The Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH), which is funded by Canadian federal, provincial and territorial governments, hosts a new Interventions Database that summarises current research evidence about the effects of strategies to improve drug prescribing practice and drug use. This database houses summaries of key findings from systematic reviews that evaluate the effects of strategies targeting professionals, the organisation of health care, and consumers. The Cochrane Consumers and Communication Review Group (CC&CRG) created the summaries for the interventions that are directed to consumers. The link below takes you to the Browse page of the CADTH database. Clicking on Consumer takes you to a list of interventions that affect drug use by and prescribing for consumers within categories such as: providing information and education; facilitating communication and decision making; and minimising risks and harms. There is an overview of the effectiveness of interventions within each category as well as links to more detailed information for each review. <http://www.cadth.ca/index.php/en/compus/optimal-ther-resources/interventions/>

This bulletin is provided by the Cochrane Consumers and Communication Review Group with funding from the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the Department of Human Services, Victoria, Consumer Participation and Information, Quality and Safety Branch. Bulletins in this series are created for the Health Knowledge Network (HKN) and in support of Evaluating effectiveness of participation (EEP) projects.

**Cochrane Consumers and
Communication Review Group**



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