What barriers do pharmaconomists face, when implementing the medical service of "Treatment pharmacists" prescribe prescriptions?

Since the 1 of July 2019 pharmacists in Denmark have been able to take an education to

become so-called treatment pharmacists, enabling them to issue prescriptions in case of

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Background

We see the medical service of "treatment pharmacists" having a potential to support the remaining health care system, as well as securing the patients health.

missing prescriptions for ongoing treatment.

Pharmaconomist constitute the largest part of the pharmacy staff, it is therefore very important that they take part in the implementation of medical services.

We experience pharmaconomists having barriers regarding the workflow of the medical service. Besides that, we also face technical and practical challenges.

Purpose

To investigate both the development and potential of treatment pharmacists and to identify barriers faced by pharmacy staff, when trying to implement the medical service.



Method

- Statistics over how many prescriptions were prescribed by treatment pharmacists from June 2019 to June 2022.
- An observation form gave us an overview of potential patients for the action.
- Questionnaire to the pharmaconomists.
- A dialogue was established with the wholesaler with regards to having the right medications in stock.

Conclusion

The 'treatment pharmacist' service has great potential, but because of the barriers pharmaconomists experience and no efficient tools provided to overcome these, this medical service has not currently been implemented successfully at Danish pharmacies.

Our suggestions to overcome the difficulties and to succeed in the future:

- The pharmaconomists need to be better educated and trained in the use of FMK.
- The list must be more manageable and the availability at the pharmacy needs to be increased.
- Our wholesaler must improve the delivery capacity, so that the right medicine always is in stock when demanded.
- The pharmacy must keep an everyday focus on the medical service until the medical service is implemented efficiently.

Results

Fredericia Løve pharmacy has set a goal to increase the number of prescriptions made by treatment pharmacists each year.

The graph below (fig. 1) shows that there has been no development for 3 years.

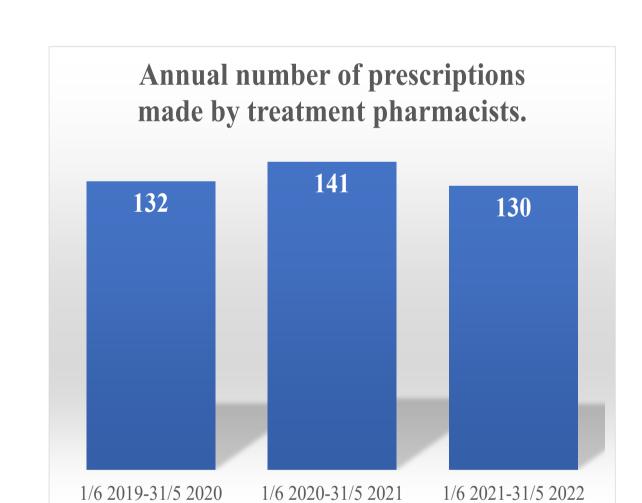


Figure 1 Number of annual presciptions by treament pharmacists.

Fredericia Løve pharmacy consists of 3 units. We wanted to find out the potential for our treatment pharmacists to prescribe prescriptions.

Therefore, we made a registration form to show the number of patients coming to the pharmacy without a valid prescription from the doctor.

The data was collected over a 4-week period and was similar in all 3 units. The data from the biggest unit is illustrated below (fig. 2).

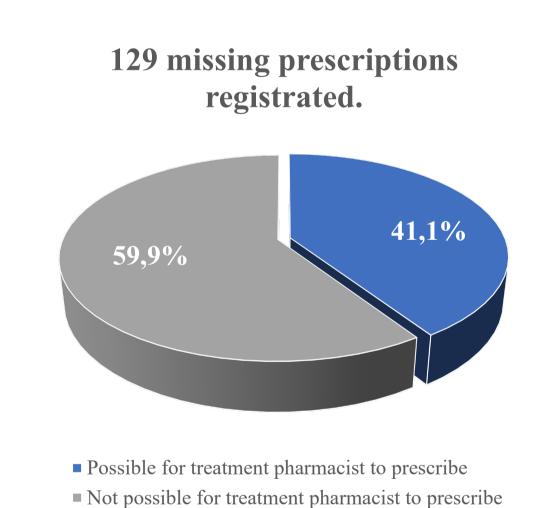


Figure 2 Percentage of missing prescribtions that is possible to prescribe.

71,4 % of the pharmaconomists answered in the questionnaire, that they found the list from the National Board of Health dysfunctional (fig. 3).

> Do you find the list provided by the Danish National Board of Health functional?

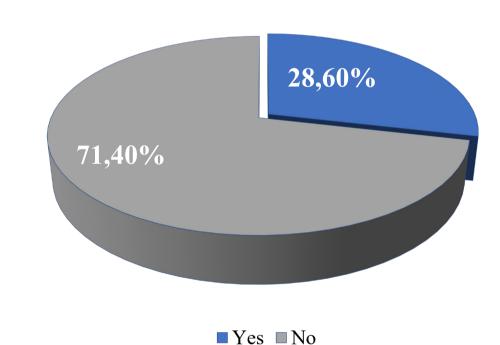


Figure 3 Answers regarding functionality of the list from the Danish National Board of Health.

The Danish National Board of Health have provided a list to help the treatment pharmacists. The list determines the criteria they have to follow to issue prescriptions and also which it is possible to prescribe.

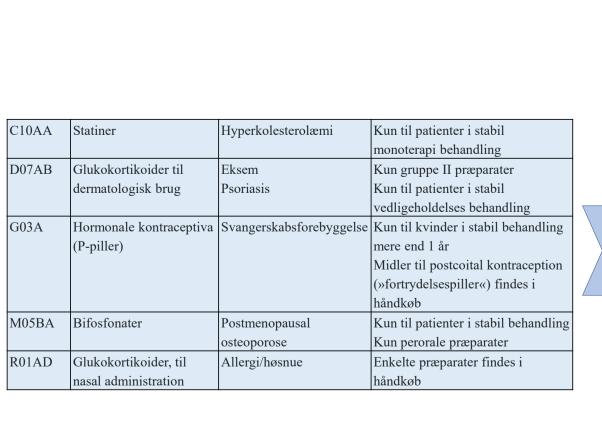
This list is also used by the pharmaconomists at Fredericia Løve pharmacy.

FMK, directly translated Common Medicine Card, gives citizens and health professionals online access to information about citizens medicines and vaccinations. The purpose of the medication card is to prevent incorrect medication. FMK is used by general practitioners, pharmacies, hospitals, nurses, home care staff etc.

To identify the barriers for the pharmaconomists we did a questionnaire. Below we have selected the most important points from the questionnaire:

- 50 % feel insufficiently qualified to offer the medical service.
- 42,9 % find it difficult to offer the medical service to certain patients such as the deaf, blind and non-native speakers.
- 28,6 % answered that they experience not having the right medication in stock.
- 71,4 % find the list from The Danish National Board of Health dysfunctional.
- 28,6 % answers that the medication is rarely in stock when needed.
- 57,1 % answers that a pharmacist present at the pharmacy unit, is essential for them to offer the medical service.
- 62,5 % elaborates that they face difficulties getting in touch with the pharmacist at other pharmacy units, when they need them to prescribe.

Because of the answers in fig. 3 we have made a new version for our colleagues. The lists are in Danish, but you can have a visual overview of the differences between the 2 lists below.





In the questionnaire, we also asked the pharmaconomists, which factors would make them more confident offering the medical service to the patient (fig. 4).

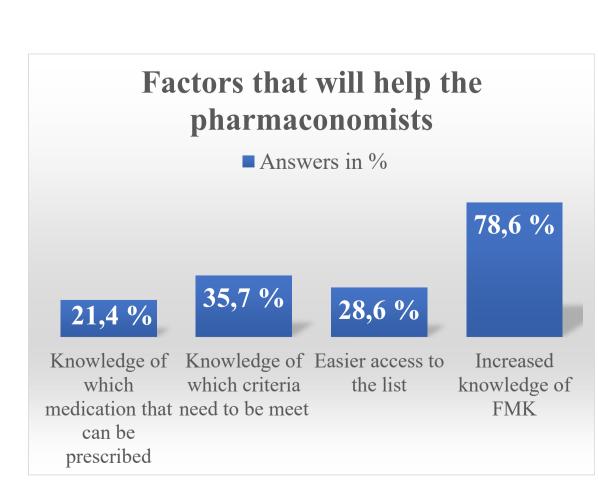


Figure 4 Factors that will increase pharmaconomists confidence in offering the medical service.

The dialogue with our wholesaler revealed that there was no system to ensure that the pharmacy had the right medicine in stock to support the medical service. This confirms our experience of not having the right medicine when the treatment pharmacist prescribes prescriptions.

A new system is however under development, and going to be implemented autumn 2022, which will hopefully improve the stock issue.



Acknowledgements

Many thanks to:

- Our pharmacy owner Lene Landsgrav, Fredericia Løve Apotek, for giving us the opportunity to complete this project.
- Our colleagues for helping with the questionnaire.
- TMJ, Dorrit Lang for helping us regarding wholesaler and stock questions.
- Pharmakon, Charlotte Verner Rossing and Kristin R. Primdahl for helping us with the poster.
- Anton Pottegaard for helping us with our abstract.
- Farmakonomforeningen, President Ann-Mari Grønbæk and Ann Moon Raagard for support and giving us the opportunity to participate in the FIP congress.
- A-Apoteket for financial support.