

Transforming medicines administration for people with Parkinson's: An interprofessional collaboration

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Background

People with Parkinson's are at high risk of medication error due to their dependency on timely and accurate medication use, the large volume of daily medicines and their high incidence of dysphagia. Late or missed doses can reduce medication effectiveness and impact their quality of life¹

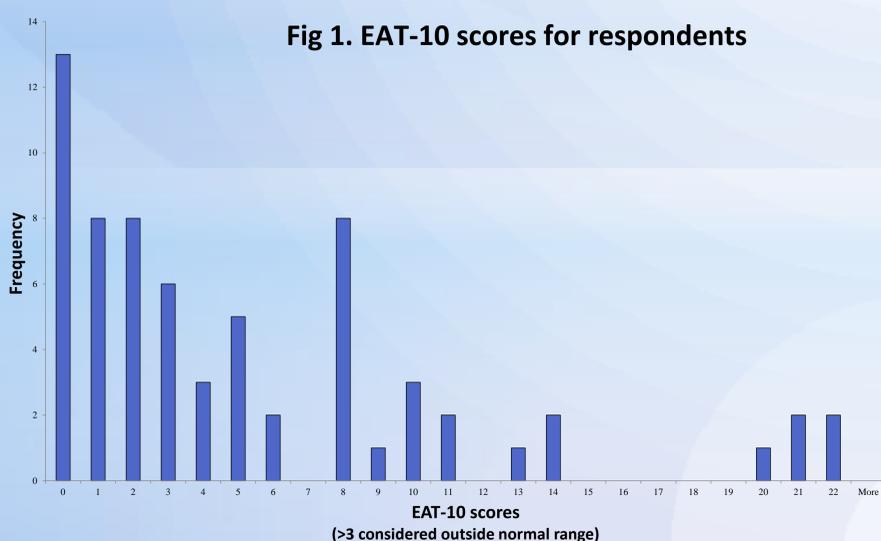
- How do people with Parkinson's manage their medicines?
- Are their strategies safe and effective?
- Do they need resources to guide them?

Aims

To work together with speech language therapists at University of Auckland, pharmacists at Waitemata District Health Board and People with Parkinson's Inc to discover how people living with Parkinson's actually take their medicines, and co-design a support package containing resources to ensure safe and effective medicines use.

Methods

A cross-sectional, self-administered web-based survey² was completed by people living with Parkinson's. Data analysis used a quantitative method approach through descriptive statistics. Respondents were asked about self-reported swallowing difficulties [Eating Assessment Tool (EAT-10)], medicine regimes and strategies used to swallow medicines.



Results

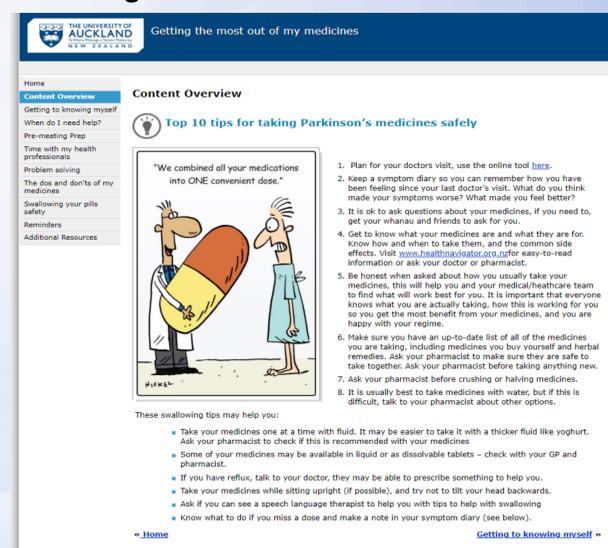
Seventy-one people responded; they reported complex daily multi-medicine use (mean daily tablets/capsules 11, range 2-25). Analyses showed 57% scored outside the normal range for EAT-10 with a 57% prevalence of difficulty with medicines. Many people missed medicines and required reminders. Strategies for swallowing included crushing tablets, using yoghurt or fruit juice, swallowing exercises and medicine placement in the mouth.

Discussion

Survey results are now guiding the development of a co-designed resource for people living with Parkinson's, their families and health professionals in Primary Care. This online resource is being developed, assessed and refined collaboratively with People with Parkinson's Inc and health professionals to ensure the content is fit-for-purpose.

This patient-led initiative will help support health professionals, patients and carers to optimise medicines administration and reduce errors for people living with Parkinson's. It demonstrates the potential for positive research, clinical and educational relationships between professions.

Fig 2. Screenshot of draft resource



References

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Acknowledgments

Thank you to all of the people living with Parkinson's and their whanau who participated in this study and helped with recruitment. Many thanks to The University of Auckland, department of Speech Science, The Quality Use of Medicines Team, Auckland and Waitemata District Health Board, and the Pharmacy Department, Waitemata District Health Board. Thanks to the Health, Quality & Safety Commission for permission to use their 'Let's Plan' resources.