JOINT WORKING
Strategic partnerships • Measurable solutions

Abstract title
Improving care in Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT) for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

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Context
Emergency admissions for COPD impose a considerable resource burden on the NHS and impact on patients' quality of life[1,2].

Outline of the problem
There were 702 non-elective COPD-related admissions to hospital in Gloucestershire PCT, in 2010 compared with 8,758 COPD patients registered in the area under the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF). These 702 patients accounted for 1,000 COPD hospital spells, costing a total of £2.61m[3].

Assessment of the problem/ analysis of its causes
Primary care practices were identifying patients with COPD and in some instances were struggling to manage and engage with them effectively[3].

Strategy for change
Through Joint Working arrangements with GSK, to identify and target practices with high rates of non-elective COPD-related admissions to improve healthcare professional education, data recording and hence provide better quality of patient engagement and care.

Measurements of improvement
The Patient Outcome and Information Service** (POINTS) was used to measure changes in key COPD parameters over 12 months in line with NICE guidelines.[4]

Effects of changes
Adherence to NICE standards, as a composite measure of 5 key parameters, increased by 21% from 52% to 73% in 1333 patients across 12 practices. This was primarily driven by an increase of 53.1% in the recording of exacerbations (12.5% to 65.6%)[5,6]. There was no observed difference in the number of non-elective COPD-related hospital admissions between practices engaged in the projects vs. non participating practices[7].

Lessons learnt
Quality of care can be improved for COPD patients; however, this may have little impact on levels of hospital admissions over the shorter term.

Message for others
Improving skills and capabilities of healthcare professionals can lead to enhanced care for patents and benefit the NHS and GSK.

References

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**The Patient Outcomes and Information Service (POINTS) is provided by GlaxoSmithKline UK Ltd (GSK) as a service to medicine and is delivered on behalf of GSK by Quintiles