

5.13 How “green” is our practice: metered dose inhaler prescribing and knowledge of their environmental impact

¹Eve Stanley, ¹Orla Threadgold, ¹Danielle Moynihan, ¹Kate Condell, ¹Caoimhe Tierney, ^{1,2}Kenneth Bolger

¹Chronic Disease Management Hub Carlow/Kilkenny

²St. Luke’s General Hospital Carlow/Kilkenny

Background: Due to the propellants they contain, metered dose inhalers (MDIs) have a higher carbon footprint than dry powder inhalers (DPIs) and soft mist inhalers (SMIs), which are proven to be as effective as MDIs in suitable patients [1]. We aimed to determine MDI prescribing prevalence and knowledge of their environmental impact among our respiratory team.

Methods:

- 1) A chart audit of inhalers prescribed for COPD and Asthma patients (n=50) seen by the respiratory team
- 2) An online survey of the respiratory team (n=10) on the environmental impact of MDIs

Results:

- 1) 29% of patients prescribed an MDI by their GP were switched to a DPI or SMI by the team. 40% of patients were commenced on a DPI or SMI and 2% on an MDI.
- 2) 50% of team members correctly identified the carbon footprint of MDIs and only one team member felt confident to and had previously discussed lower carbon inhaler choices with patients.

Conclusion: Although the team preferentially commenced patients on inhalers with a lower carbon footprint, less than one third of patients were switched from an MDI to a DPI or SMI. Additionally, the team’s knowledge of and advice provided to patients on the environmental impact of inhalers could be improved.

Keywords: inhalers, carbon footprint, sustainability

Disclosures: None.

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References:

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Corresponding Author: Eve Stanley, Chronic Disease Management Hub Carlow/Kilkenny, South East Community Healthcare, James’ Green, Kilkenny