Evaluating the Impact of a Clinic Embedded Specialty Pharmacy Team on Patient-Oriented Eczema Measure (POEM) Scores in the Treatment of Atopic Dermatitis

Brandon Hardin, PharmD, MBA, CSP, Trellis Rx, Jessica Moulani, PharmD, Trellis Rx, Lauren Skove, PharmD, Trellis Rx, Heidi Luder, PharmD, MS, BCACP, Pfizer

BACKGROUND

- Atopic dermatitis, often called eczema or atopic eczema, is a chronic condition that is characterized by excessively dry skin and painful, itchy rashes that cause significant discomfort.
- The Patient-Oriented Eczema Measure (POEM) is a validated assessment tool designed specifically to measure the severity of atopic dermatitis symptoms from the patient perspective. These symptoms include itching, sleep disturbances, bleeding, weeping/oozing, cracking, and dryness/roughness of the skin. This scoring method places patients into categories of very severe, severe, moderate, mild, or clear eczema.
- Trellis Rx partners with health systems to operate locally-embedded specialty pharmacy services for their patients. Highly-trained clinical pharmacists and specialty pharmacy liaisons are integrated onsite into health system care teams. This uniquely positions them to consistently collect, assess, and report on POEM scores in this patient population, ensuring patients receive coordinated, high-touch support to improve clinical outcomes.

RESULTS

- The primary objective of this study is to assess the impact of a clinic-embedded specialty pharmacy team on POEM scores in patients receiving treatment for atopic dermatitis.

OBJECTIVE

- Single center, retrospective study of adult patients with a diagnosis of atopic dermatitis receiving care from Summa Health Specialty Pharmacy from January 2020 to May 2021. This study design was reviewed and received full IRB review exemption by the Summa Health Office of Research Administration.
- A baseline POEM assessment was administered to all patients with an atopic dermatitis diagnosis by the Summa Health Specialty Pharmacy team. A follow-up POEM assessment was administered to all patients to understand the impact of high-touch specialty pharmacy model on score improvement.
- The POEM assessment consists of 7 questions that are answered directly by the patient and are then tallied and scored. Scores range from 0 to 28, with a low number corresponding to less frequent symptoms and a higher number corresponding with more frequent symptoms.
- Trellis Rx uses a proprietary specialty pharmacy clinical management platform, Arbor®, to collect and document POEM assessments and to auto-trigger pharmacist interventions for patients with worsening scores. Arbor® also includes a secure SMS feature that allows patients to receive and complete the POEM questionnaire electronically at their convenience if desired.

METHODS

- 106 total patient cases were reviewed, resulting in 85 patients with 2 or more POEM assessment data points recorded.
- At baseline, the average POEM score was 10.47 for the entire study population.
- Following enrollment into high touch clinical monitoring by the health system specialty pharmacy team:
  - Average POEM score dropped to 4.89 across the entire study population.
  - The average POEM score improvement per patient was 5.58.
  - 48 patients moved from a more severe eczema category to a lower disease severity category.

PATIENT POPULATION

- Male
- Female
- Age Breakdown:
  - 0-18
  - 19-39
  - 40-49
  - 50-64
  - 65+
- Male: 40
- Female: 66

CONCLUSIONS

- Health system specialty pharmacists are uniquely positioned to provide a direct improvement on patient clinical outcomes. This was directly demonstrated by the positive impact on POEM scores in patients receiving treatment for atopic dermatitis. By providing prior authorization and financial assistance application support services from a specialty pharmacy liaison and patient education/clinical support services by a clinical pharmacist, the clinic-embedded specialty pharmacy team serves to set the patient up for success on his/her therapy journey and maximizes our chances of achieving the best treatment outcome possible.

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