

Re-audit on the prescribing and monitoring of antipsychotic medications in patients with behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD)

Dr Cara Webb—ST4 dual General Adult Old Age Trainee – cara.webb@nhs.net—Birch Hill Hospital, Rochdale, OL12 9QB

Aim

To re-audit the prescribing and monitoring of patients on antipsychotic medications with a diagnosis of vascular, Alzheimer's or mixed dementia that are experiencing behavioural or psychological symptoms of dementia to identify compliance with key standards.

Background

The prescribing and monitoring of antipsychotic medications in patients with behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia is a local and national concern. This is due to the increased risks of cognitive decline, increase in cerebrovascular events and increased mortality. The service being audited is older people's psychiatric outpatient services provided by consultants and their teams in Rochdale and Heywood from Birch Hill hospital. The first audit carried out in April 2019 highlighted key areas of concern and as a result a re-audit has been deemed necessary to monitor progress following the recommendations made.

Audit Standards

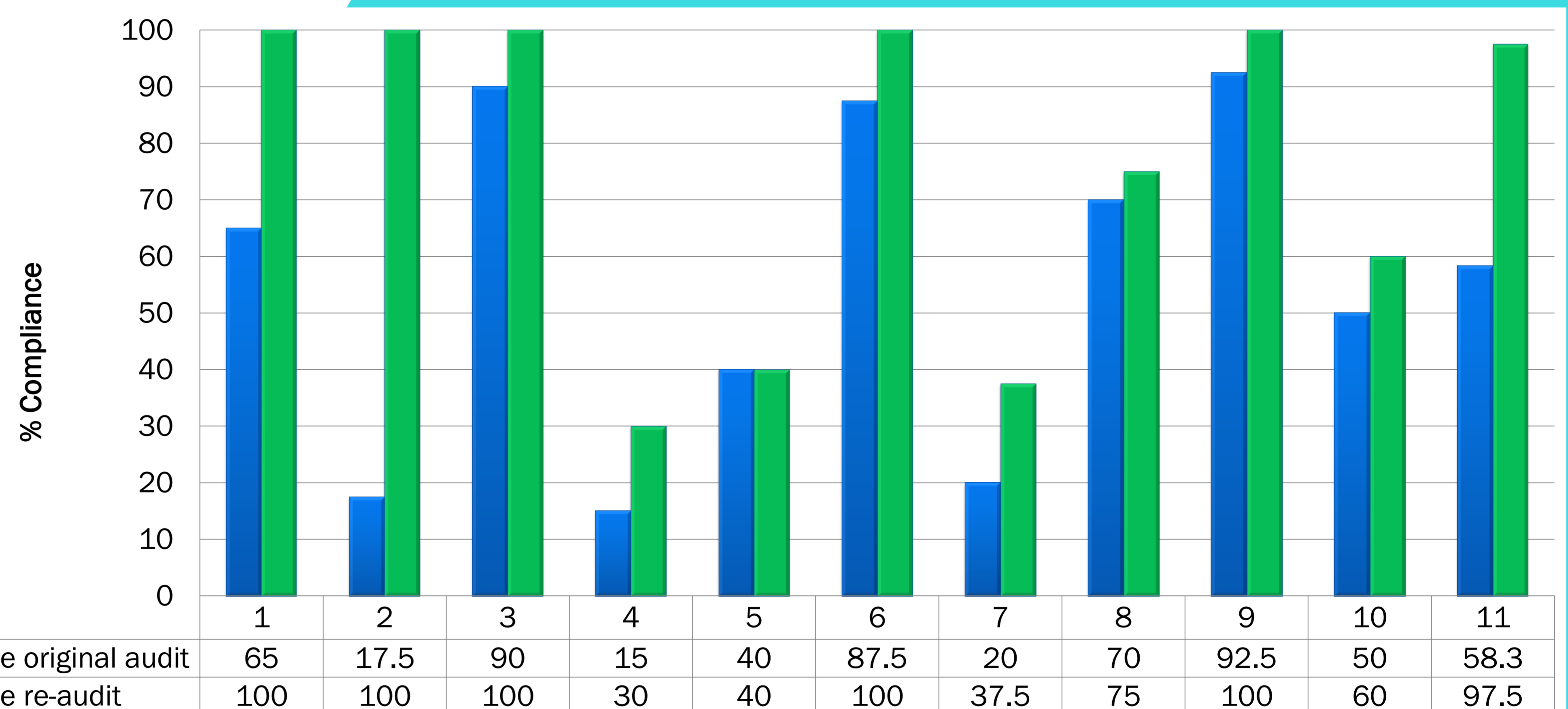
The standards audited are as follows (Target compliance 100%):

1. Have clinical and environmental causes for the symptoms displayed been explored?
2. Have non pharmacological approaches been tried? (e.g distraction, aromatherapy, carer support)
3. Is there documented evidence that antipsychotic treatment is indicated?
4. Have the harms and benefits of medication been discussed with the patient and/or carer?
5. Have cerebrovascular risk factors been assessed?
6. Have target symptoms been identified and documented?
7. Have baseline measurements been carried out?
8. Has the appropriate first line treatment been prescribed?
9. Has a date for review of treatment been set?
10. Has discontinuation been attempted after 6-12 weeks?
11. Is the need for treatment reviewed 3 monthly?

Methodology

- The population audited were under older people's psychiatric services provided by consultants and their teams in Rochdale and Heywood from Birch Hill hospital
- The sample size used was 40
- Data was collected retrospectively. The time period audited was 1/05/19 to the 01/01/2020

Results



Discussion

- Following the initial audit, all doctors were given a presentation regarding the expected standards.
- The re-audit shows that this has resulted in some improvement in compliance with the standards, however there is still room for further improvement
- 100% compliance was achieved in five areas
- There are three standards that continue to require urgent improvement:
 - Have the harms and benefits of medication been discussed with the patient and/or carer?
 - Have cerebrovascular risk factors been assessed?
 - Have baseline measurements been carried out?

Conclusion

- In conclusion, improvements have been made however further work is needed to ensure compliance with standards in prescribing for patients with behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia
- One suggested approach for further improvement could be creating a pro-forma based on the guidelines that could be used to assist clinicians in their documentation
- A future quality improvement project could also look at whether placing warnings on the notes of patients prescribed an antipsychotic to manage behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia would help with follow up