

The Feasibility of Student-Clinical Pharmacist Teams in Community Health Centers to Promote and Administer Herpes Zoster Vaccinations

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Background

- ❖ Approximately one million cases of herpes zoster are reported every year in the United States
- ❖ Despite the availability of the herpes zoster vaccine (since May 2006), vaccination rates remain low
- ❖ Reported vaccination rates were 10% in 2009 and 14.4% in 2010, well below the Healthy People 2020 target of 30%
- ❖ Barriers to vaccination:
 - Vaccine must be stored in the freezer until reconstitution then administered within 30 minutes
 - Vaccine is reimbursed through Medicare Part D
 - Most expensive vaccine routinely recommended for older adults

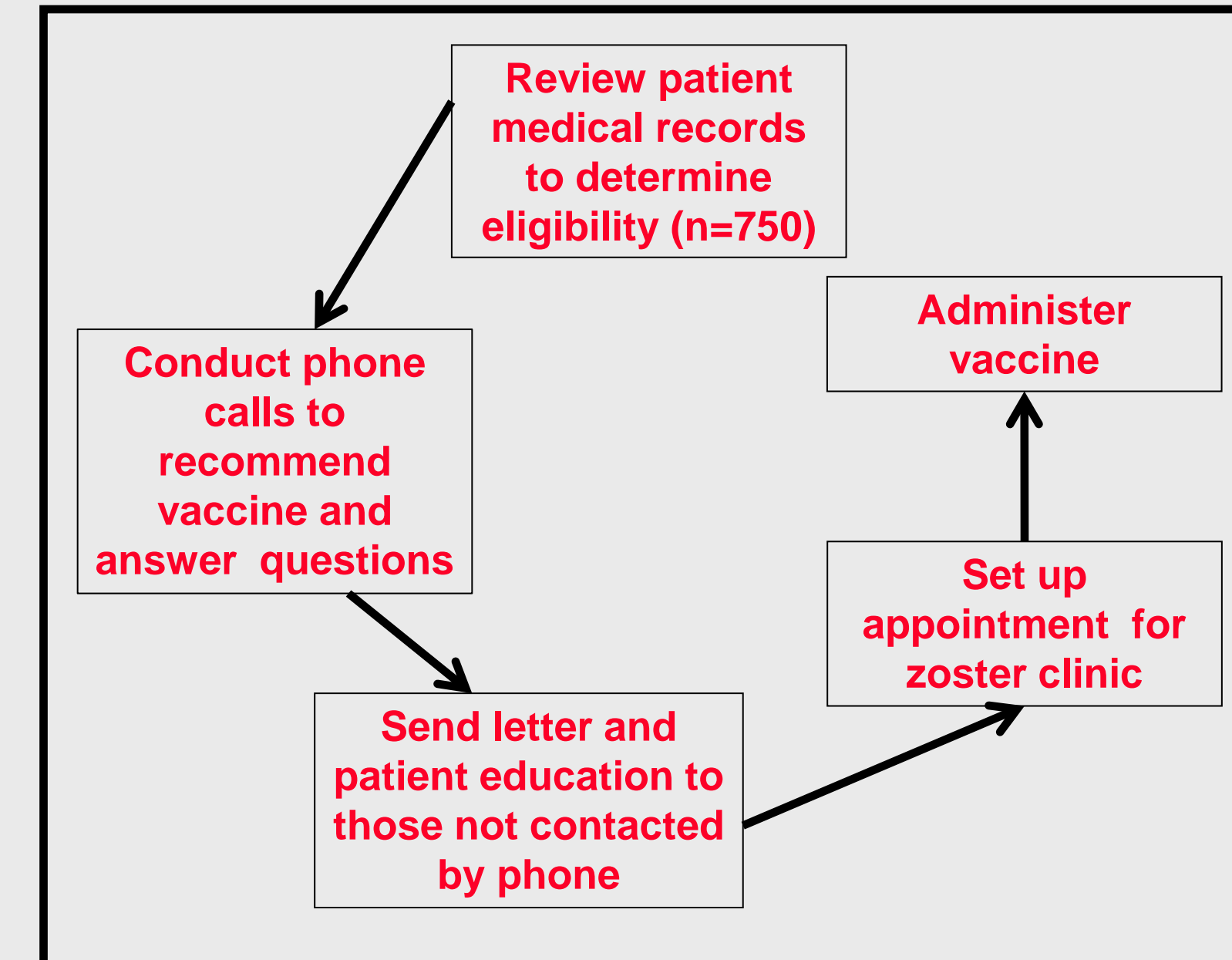
Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the feasibility of a student-clinical pharmacist team in a community health center setting to screen, perform telephone outreach, make recommendations, and administer herpes zoster vaccine.

Methods

- ❖ Health center patients ≥ 60 years old were identified through the electronic medical record
- ❖ The pharmacy student reviewed each patient's profile individually and screened for contraindications to the vaccine
- ❖ Reasons for exclusion:
 - Patient did not have a working phone
 - Non-English speaking
 - Primary or acquired immunodeficiency
 - Current immunosuppressive therapy
 - No clinic visit within the past year
- ❖ Patients eligible to receive the vaccine were sent a letter with patient education material and/or received a phone call from the pharmacy student recommending the vaccine, answering questions, and setting up an appointment at the monthly pharmacist-run zoster clinic
- ❖ Primary care providers also recommended the vaccine during their regularly scheduled patient visits where the vaccine was administered by a nurse
- ❖ Billing of the vaccine and administration was processed either by the in-house 340B pharmacy or the health center, depending on the insurance benefit

Workflow



Results

- ❖ Between March and July 2012, 750 patients ≥ 60 years old were screened
- ❖ A total of 48 herpes zoster vaccines were given
- ❖ Of the vaccinations given, 26 (54%) were administered by the pharmacist, 20 (42%) by a nurse and 2 (4%) by an outside provider. The average age of the vaccinated patients was 66, and the majority of patients (65%) were female

Conclusion

- ❖ It appears feasible for a pharmacy student-clinical pharmacist team to screen, perform telephone outreach, recommend, and administer the herpes zoster vaccine
- ❖ More research is needed to determine ways to optimize the screening, outreach, and administration of the herpes zoster vaccine and evaluate the impact of such teams on vaccination rates

References

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