BACKGROUND

Medication errors continue to cause harm, especially at transitions of care. The evidence reveals a need to empower patients and correct the imbalance of knowledge between patients and their healthcare providers.

A National Medication Safety Summit in Canada identified the need to create a communication tool used to increase patient engagement in medication safety and to prevent harm from medication errors.

OBJECTIVES

Develop, test, evaluate and disseminate a communication tool for use by patients and healthcare providers at care transitions.

METHODS

An environmental scan and review of analyses of medication errors leading to harm at transitions formed the basis of the development of an intervention to empower patients.

A communication tool called the ‘5 Questions’ was developed and tested by patients and healthcare providers using PDSA cycles and small tests of change to improve content and design.

The ‘5 Questions’ were derived from evidence-informed medication safety practices including medication reconciliation and medication management.

RESULTS

A national online survey of patients and healthcare providers (n=291):

- 85% of patients would feel comfortable asking their healthcare provider the ‘5 Questions’.
- 75% of patients responded that the answers to these ‘5 Questions’ would be very useful to help them understand their medications.
- 84% of healthcare providers would be willing to answer their patient’s ‘5 Questions’.

RESULTS (cont.)

Over 180 organizations across all sectors of care at local, provincial, national and international levels have formally endorsed ‘5 Questions’.

30,000 downloads of the poster since launch in March 2016.

4500 YouTube views. Scan to watch the video.

Translated into 22 languages with support from partners.

CONCLUSION

“This poster helps patients identify which questions to ask to help improve their own medication safety. This one simple tool is effective, and it’s use will reduce medication harm.”

Member Patients for Patient Safety Canada

The ‘5 Questions’, with visible organization endorsements and translation in 22 languages, has demonstrated a shared interest in empowering patients to improve safe medication use.

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Disclosures: Authors of this poster have nothing to disclose concerning possible personal or financial relationships with commercial entities that may have a direct or indirect interest in the subject matter of this presentation. Questions? alice.watt@ismpcanada.ca