



equip
Education Experience Excellence

Minimizing Trimethoprim Usage In Patients Prescribed Methotrexate

Dr Peter Doherty

Rosehall Medical Practice, Dr M McCleery
Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency



Background

- Methotrexate is an Amber List DMARD and should be stopped in the presence of concurrent infection – can be difficult as administered weekly
- Trimethoprim first line treatment for UTIs in patients <65yrs
- Potentially fatal interaction between Methotrexate and Trimethoprim
 - Both folate antagonists
 - Can precipitate rapid myelosuppression
 - BNF states can increase risk of nephrotoxicity

Aim

To review how many patients currently on Methotrexate had been prescribed Trimethoprim in the past 6 months

To raise awareness of the interaction between the two medications

To reduce co-prescribing events to zero and adhere to NI Medicines Governance “Medication Safety Today” Alert 2015*

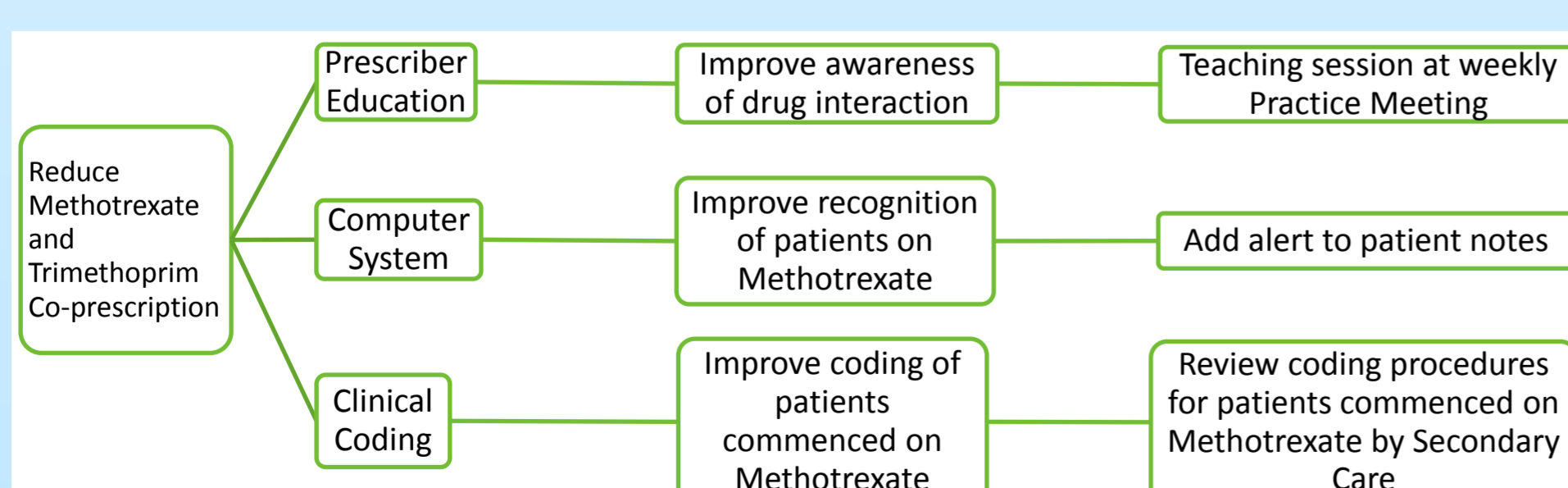
Improvement Methodology

Plan: Review Methotrexate and Trimethoprim co-prescription events within the previous 6 months

Do: Present findings to Partners at weekly Practice Meeting including teaching session on dangers of co-prescription

Study: Review co-prescription events in following 3 months

Action: Add alerts to patient records and consider protocol for clinical coding



Results

- 2 Co-prescription events between August 2018 and February 2019
 - Review of patient records and ECR showed patients came to no harm
- No co-prescription events noted from February 2019 to May 2019

Outcome Measure

Number of patients co-prescribed Methotrexate and Trimethoprim

Process Measure

Ensure we are aware of when patients are on Methotrexate

Ensure all prescribers are aware of the interaction between Methotrexate and Trimethoprim

Balancing Measure

Potential for “Alert Overload”

Outcome

- No co-prescription events in the following 3 months does show some improvement but further follow up will be necessary to ensure sustained improvement
- Prescribers more aware of interaction between medications and potential severity of this
- Alerts do slow initial consultation process as can be slow to load but useful reminder that patient on Methotrexate and not to prescribe Trimethoprim
- Responsibility for coding of Methotrexate currently with everyone creating inter-patient variability of alerts

Next Steps

- Review coding procedure when patients commenced on Methotrexate to ensure alert added to all patient records – Could this be delegated to Practice pharmacist?
- Regular audit of co-prescription events to ensure ongoing compliance