

Exploring patient and carer perspectives on asthma self-management: a qualitative study from the IMP2ART programme

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IMP2ART

Background

Supported self-management for asthma reduces use of healthcare resources, improves asthma control and quality of life.

Pinnock H, et al, for the PRISMS group *BMC Medicine* 2017;15:64

Methods

5 focus groups and 32 interviews

with **49** patients (14 male) from **10** UK general practices

- 65% had never received an action plan
- 41% had asthma symptoms less than monthly
- 31% had had an asthma attack in the previous year



The topic guide addressed how their strategies for managing asthma evolved, their experiences of healthcare and views on supported self-management

Analysis was informed by Leventhal's 'common sense' theory of self-regulation and theories of habit formation



Learning to manage asthma occurred over time

"As I've become older I've become more aware of the triggers that might cause an attack. Through the help from doctors and asthma nurses and things I became a bit more aware" P040

"It's taken a long time through trial and error and talking and ringing and being ill and getting better and having different people give you information at different times. And you've just got to gradually build up this font of knowledge" P028. Female; 46-65yrs

Implementation requires understanding of patients beliefs

Aim

- To explore how patients and carers learn to manage their asthma,
- To explore perspectives on the support they need for successful self-management

Results

Personal experience of asthma over time is influenced by patient and healthcare factors.

"I've managed it myself, with the support of my practice nurse and that, over the years and I know now when I'm going into sort of deterioration..." P014. female 46-65yrs

Patient centred care was highly valued and desired

"We're not ill so we make time to go the asthma clinic and it's the same as the one before and the one before that. They could be different, they could be more personalised." P023

"I've had asthma too long that I've got my own habits already and I don't need this [asthma action plan] to tell me when I'm going to struggle" P 026



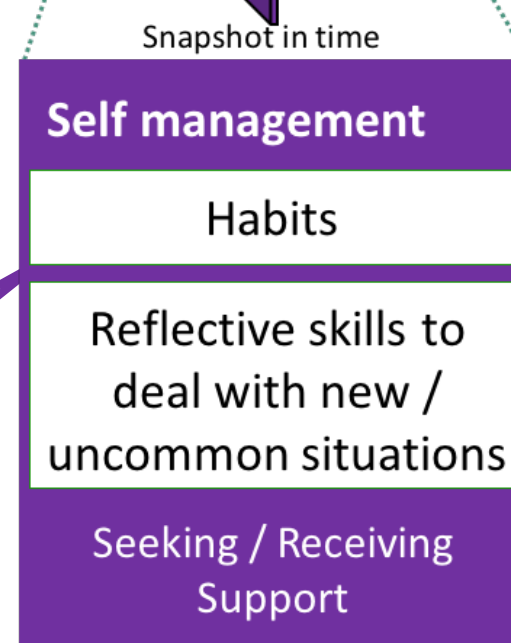
- Asthma Education
- Accessibility
- Routine asthma review
- Prescriptions
- Relationship with Healthcare provider
- Continuity of care, Trust, Variation in HCP knowledge / advice
- Emergency care

- Patient factors**
- Age of onset
 - Severity of asthma
 - Co-morbidities
 - Family relationships
 - Social relationships
 - Locus of control
 - Perception of self efficacy



- Personal Experience of asthma over time-----
- Using medication
 - Trigger awareness
 - Receiving knowledge
 - Action plan
 - Gaining empirical knowledge

Schema of the key themes and their relationships



Reflective skills

New or uncommon situations (like a deterioration in asthma symptoms) required learned abilities that could be put into action when needed; an action plan could form a key component.

[Describing an action plan] You would be in a panic but I think to have something in front of you to say "this is what's happening to me, I need to do it now." P012, >65 years

Habits

At any one time, an individual may have self-management behaviours which have become habits; for instance taking an inhaler.

"The preventer's not really an issue because you do it in conjunction with her brushing her teeth so it's one of those things, they go hand-in-hand" P048, Age <16

Summary of findings



- Participants described how they learned to deal with asthma over time, gaining empirical knowledge over years, often by trial and error.
- Their experience was also influenced by knowledge received from health care professionals, and lay sources such as friends or the internet.
- As a result of the multiple factors influencing an individual's personal experience of asthma, different strategies of self-management were reported.

Implications

- To successfully implement optimal asthma self-management the routines provided by general practice need to be sufficiently flexible and personal to synchronise with patient's self management behaviours
- Self-management education (with an action plan) has particular value early after diagnosis as habits and coping strategies are being developed
- Action plans may support decision making in unusual or unexpected situations.
- Recognising – and addressing - the role of habit is an important challenge for achieving behaviour change
- Findings from this qualitative study will inform the development of a whole systems approach to embedding optimal asthma self-management in routine care

