



What OTC products are patients using at home?

Aim

Understand the types of OTC products used by patients referred for Home Medicines Reviews (HMRs).

Methods

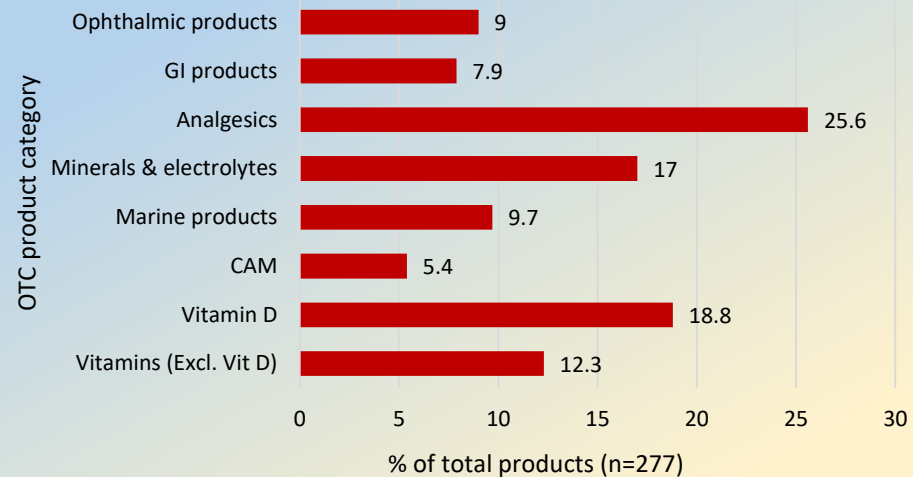
HMR medication lists completed by pharmacists during Jan 2013 - June 2015 were retrospectively analysed. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the types of OTC products patients were using at the time of HMR visits.

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Results

HMRs were offered to 114 patients, referred by 4 GPs from 3 medical centres, geographically spread around metropolitan Melbourne. 97 patients (85%) were using a total of 277 OTC products, averaging **2.9 products per patient**. These products contained 425 active ingredients, averaging 4.4 active ingredients per patient. **Analgesics accounted for 26%** of the products used, and 62% of patients were using OTC analgesics. **Vitamins/electrolytes accounted for 48%** of OTC products and were used by 40% of patients.

Significance to allied health

Allied health clinicians have the opportunity to ask patients about their use of OTC products, and to refer them for further management by their GP/pharmacist. The current model of HMRs needs significant refinement. It should enable allied health professionals to make direct referrals to consultant pharmacists, when they suspect patients need support on the use of OTC products to treat their ailments. This expands the role of allied health clinicians, and makes the existing HMR service more effective and sustainable.

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