



Audit of Proton Pump Inhibitor Prescribing: Are Guidelines Being Followed

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Letter

We want to present our study on the use of Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs). As we all know PPIs are an efficient therapy. Although validated indications of PPIs are well known, numerous studies consistently show that PPIs are being overprescribed and this is associated with possible side effects [1,2]. Previous reports have estimated that over 60% of all PPI prescriptions in Ireland are generated from within the hospital setting [3], and multiple studies have documented wide spread in appropriate use of PPIs within hospitals [4]. The aim of this study was to evaluate PPI use on medical patients and to determine whether this use was appropriate.

We performed a one day snapshot assessment of charts of patients admitted on medical wards receiving PPI therapy in a regional Irish hospital. Patients admitted on oncology wards and intensive care units were excluded. Missing Information was corroborated with patient interview and a phone call to GPs. Data was collected using a structured pro forma, with regards to: PPIs' nature and regimen, PPIs' indications as well as duration of therapy. This was compared with prescription guidelines which we took as standards. These standards were obtained from website of Irish medicines board accessed on 07/10/2015 [5].

There were a total of 111 in patients with a mean age of 61.3 years and 60(54%) females. The commonest indication for PPI use was GORD 26% (14/53) followed by ulcer prophylaxis protocol 19% (10/53) and 13% (7/53) gastritis. Duration of therapy was over one year in 60% of cases. Prescription of PPI was as per the guidelines in 19% of cases but was for an unapproved or unknown indication in 81% cases. Prescribing had been initiated in hospital in 58% patients but only 43% of patients on PPI therapy had undergone endoscopy.

Our results suggest that PPIs are overprescribed in hospital practice. As use of PPIs is costly and is associated with side effects, doctors should be better educated in guidelines for its use. This has in other jurisdictions been associated with in significant monetary savings [6].

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