



Standardisation of pharmacy technician working practice in primary care

Winthorpe J, Davies P, O'Connell S

Background

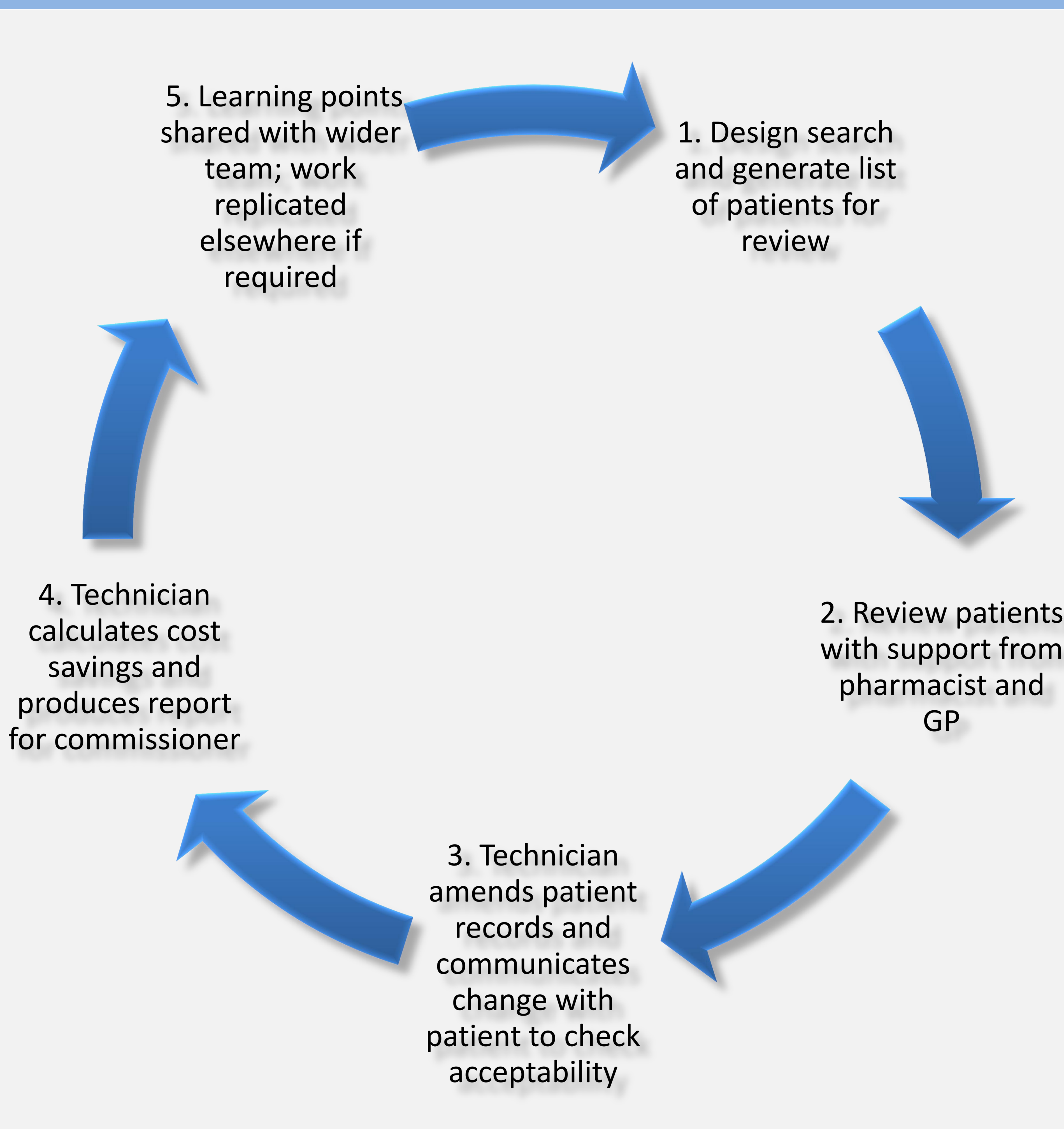
The primary care pharmacy team in Newcastle and North Tyneside has historically consisted mainly of pharmacists. Following a decision by local CCGs to adopt a greater skill mix, a model to standardise the role of the practice technician was developed.

Aim

To develop a working model that allows more cost-effective working practices to be adopted by the pharmacy team without compromising quality or patient care

Benefits to the practice team

A standardised approach for Medicines Optimisation work streams is now easier to deliver across many GP practices, resulting in more efficient working practices. More pharmacist time is now available to deliver patient-facing roles. A continuous improvement approach is adopted.



Benefits to the pharmacy technician

This is a greater use of the education, training and skills of the technician. A great degree of autonomy and responsibility is required to work as part of the primary care team. Excellent communication with GPs, pharmacists and nurses is essential.

Discussion

The Medicines Optimisation agenda requires a patient-focussed approach. The career path for pharmacy technicians is already established in secondary care. Future roles for pharmacy technicians in primary care will expand similarly, and could include inhaler technique counselling, warfarin dose management and counselling, management of discharge medicines, medicines reconciliation, and general medicines queries to practices and patients.

Conclusion

A pharmacy technician can deliver Medicines Optimisation Initiatives at practice level in Primary Care. The model outlined above has already become embedded as usual process across three CCGs.