

Inhaler reminder for adults and teenagers – protocol AIM-04

Purpose

- To establish better habits and patient compliance with inhaler use.
- To support the shared management plan agreed with the GP practice, empowering the patient to take responsibility for their adherence to agreed inhaler treatment.

Setting

General practice or any other health care setting where a clinician takes responsibility for enrolling patient and provides oversight.

Selection of patients

- Patients with asthma or COPD who tend to forget to take their preventer inhalers, thus experiencing exacerbations of their condition which would be unlikely to have occurred if they had taken their preventer inhaler regularly.
- Adult or teenager aged 13 years or older.

Expected outcomes

1 Changes in healthcare usage:

- Fewer unnecessary admissions to hospital or attendances at A&E; less contacts at GP surgery for emergency consultations
- Increased use of preventer inhalers and reduction in reliever inhaler usage

2 Patient empowerment:

- Greater confidence about their condition
- Willingness to change their lifestyle to remember to take their inhalers regularly (right inhaler, right time)

3 Improved clinical outcomes:

- Adherence to best practice guidelines concerning use of inhalers

4 Popularity of Flo:

- Patients find Flo messages helpful
- Clinicians find Flo reinforces clinical management without excessive clinical time

5 Cost effectiveness:

- Reduction in costs of secondary care use (ie avoidable admissions, out-patient referrals)
- Reduction in costs of wasted medication eg requested but unused inhalers

Success criteria (see patient texted responses below for specific wording)

- 50% of participants feel more confident in managing their breathing control
- 50% feel that Flo helps them to use their inhaler regularly

Protocol

In summary:

- Twice daily reminders for patient to take their preventer inhaler for 3 months.
- Monthly text enquiry of patient experience

Patient:

- receives twice daily reminder messages, and complies by using inhalers regularly.
- responds to monthly texts from Flo about their experience.

Clinician:

- enrolls patient on Flo by using the patient's current mobile phone number and NHS number, then selecting the appropriate service for them.
- checks with patient if the Flo programme can be terminated at e.g. 3 months if reminders no longer required.
- completes an online questionnaire three monthly about the use of Flo.

Practice administrator:

- keeps a note of patients enrolled on telehealth project.

Message content

- Twice daily reminders for patients to take their preventer inhaler for 13 weeks (8.00am and 7.00pm default)
- If used for teenagers < 16 years, parent should sign consent form and either be enrolled on Protocol 5, to receive reminders twice daily, or on separate protocol 'Parent alert child using Flo', which reminds them every three weeks that their child is receiving text reminders.
- Reliever inhaler use check at the start (day 0) and the end (day 85)
- Monthly text enquiry of patient experience

Preventer inhaler reminder

Daily reminder at 8.00am and 7.00pm (service message)

8am: *"Hi. Just wanted to make sure you take your preventer inhaler today. Thanks, Flo."*

7pm: *"Hi. Just wanted to make sure you've taken your preventer inhaler today. Thanks, Flo."*

Reliever inhaler usage question

Day 0 and day 85 (beginning and end of protocol) at 6pm (service message)

6.00pm: *"How many times have you needed your blue inhaler in the last 3 days? Please reply REL followed by the number of times, eg.REL 6. Thanks, Flo"*

If the patient hasn't replied within 2 hours: *"Hi. You haven't said how many times you needed your blue inhaler in the last 3 days. Please reply REL, then the number of times, eg. rel 5. Thanks, Flo"*

PATIENT REPLIES:

If the patient replies that they have used their reliever inhaler **0 - 2 times in the last 3 days:** *"That's good, your breathing seems well controlled."*

If the patient replies that they have used their reliever inhaler **3 - 10 times in the last 3 days:** *"Using your preventer inhaler is key to keeping your breathing as well controlled as possible".*

If the patient replies that they have used their reliever inhaler **> 10 times in the last 3 days:**

"Using the preventer inhaler helps to control your breathing so you shouldn't get so breathless".

**Patient experience questions
(monthly)**

“Hi, Shortly I'll ask three questions to see how you liked the Flo system. Your answer will be either #1 if you agree with what's said, or #2 if not. Thanks, Flo”

1. ANS1 Please text #1 if you agree with the statement "I would recommend this service to my family and friends", or #2 if you disagree.
2. ANS2 Thank you. Now are you confident you understand how your inhaler controls your breathing? Please text #1 if you are, or #2 if you are not. Thanks, Flo.
3. ANS3 Thank you. Now please text #1 if you agree that Flo has helped you to remember to use your inhaler regularly, or text #2, if you disagree. Thanks.

“Thank you for answering these questions. Knowing how useful you find the texting service helps us to improve it for future patients”

Evaluation – (optional for practice team)

Date when started using Flo.....

Medication taken in 12 months before starting Flo (steroids, inhalers)

Medication taken since commencing with Flo (steroids, inhalers)

Healthcare usage - previous history

Healthcare usage -during project