

Inhaler reminder for parents of children with asthma – protocol AIM-05

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

- Parents of children with asthma 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.

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:

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

5 Cost effectiveness:

- Reduction in costs of secondary care use (i.e. avoidable admissions or 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 child's breathing control
- 50% feel that Flo helps them to use their child's inhaler regularly

Protocol

In summary:

- Twice daily reminders for parent to give their child their preventer inhaler for three months.
- Monthly text enquiry of parent experience
- Evaluation (optional) – capture of healthcare usage, parent experience

Patient:

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

Clinician:

- enrolls patient on Flo by using the parent's current mobile phone number and NHS number, then selecting the appropriate service for them.
- checks with parent if the Flo programme can be terminated at eg three 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, who receive three months of messaging.

Message content

- Twice daily reminders for parents of children with asthma for the child to take their preventer inhaler for 3 months (8am and 7pm default)
- Can be used in conjunction with protocol 4 for age appropriate children who wish to receive message prompts to their own mobile phone (the child receives the messages in protocol 4, and the parent from protocol 5)
- Reliever inhaler use check at the start (day 0) and at the end of the protocol (day 85)
- Monthly text enquiry of patient experience

Preventer inhaler reminder

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

8.00am: *"Hi, this is just a reminder to give your child their preventer inhaler today."*

7.00pm: *"Hi. Just wanted to make sure you gave your child their preventer inhaler today. Thanks, Flo."*

Reliever inhaler usage question

Day 0 (start) and day 85 (end) at 6pm (service message)

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

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

PARENT REPLIES:

If the patient replies that their child has used their reliever inhaler:

- **Less than 3 times in the last 3 days:** *"That's good; your child's breathing seems well controlled."*
- **Between 3 and 10 times in the last 3 days:** *"Using your preventer inhaler is key to keeping your child's breathing as well controlled as possible."*
- **More than 10 times in the last 3 days:** *"Using the preventer inhaler helps to control your child's breathing so they 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”

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.”

ANS2 “Thank you. Now please tell us if you are confident you understand how your child's inhaler controls breathing. Please text #1 if you are, or #2 if you are not. Thanks, Flo”

ANS3 “Thank you. Now please text #1 if you agree that Flo has helped you to remember to give your child their 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