SAND abstract No. 169 from the BEACH program 2010–11

Subject: Hypertension, comorbidity and blood pressure control

Organisation supporting this study: Merck Sharp & Dohme (Australia) Pty Ltd

Issues: Prevalence of diagnosed hypertension among patients attending general practice; medications taken for hypertension; comorbidities in patients with hypertension; current blood pressure (BP) and level of control; management steps if BP was not well-controlled.

Sample: 2,350 patients from 79 GPs; data collection period: 13/07/2010 – 16/08/2010


Summary of results

Sex distribution of patients was no different from the total BEACH sample in 2009–10. However, there was a significantly smaller proportion of patients aged 45–64 years (24.5%, 95% CI: 22.7–26.3) compared with the total sample (28.2%, 95% CI: 27.7–28.8).

Among the 2,350 respondents, the prevalence of diagnosed hypertension was 28.3% (95% CI: 24.5–32.0). After adjustment for annual attendance patterns by age-sex of patient, prevalence of hypertension among those attending general practice at least once was 18.9% (95% CI: 16.0–21.8). Among adults in the sample, prevalence rose significantly through the middle age groups, and was highest among patients aged 75 years and over (71.1%). More than 70% of patients with hypertension were aged 65 years or older.

Among 655 respondents with hypertension, 93.7% were on at least one medication. A total of 1,013 medications were listed: ACE inhibitors accounted for 20.4%, and angiotensin II antagonists accounted for 17.5% of these medications. At the generic level, perindopril and irbesartan were the most commonly recorded.

Comorbidity was recorded for 610 respondents with hypertension, 500 (82.0%) of whom had at least one comorbidity: 26.9% had diabetes; 26.7% had coronary heart disease; 11.5% had cerebral vascular disease; 7.4% had peripheral vascular disease; 15.1% had family history of coronary artery disease; 48.5% had dyslipidaemia; 1.8% had proteinuria; 9.2% had chronic kidney disease. There were 21.8% of patients with an other chronic disease (+/- one or more of the above), atrial fibrillation being the most common of these.

Of 638 patients with hypertension whose BP was recorded on the day of the encounter, 47.7% had BP levels in the high-normal category, 44.7% had levels that were higher than high-normal, and 7.7% had normal BP.

Level of BP control was given for 625 patients with hypertension. GPs considered 75.5% of these patients to have well-controlled BP and 24.5% to have not well-controlled BP. For 33.1% of 148 respondents, the main reason BP was not well-controlled, was current medication not efficacious, followed by patient non-compliance (14.2%).

Of 153 patients with BP not well-controlled, the next management step was recorded for 144. For 25.0% of these patients, no change was planned; for 5.6% the next step was to add a diuretic; for 6.9% to add a calcium channel blocker; for 1.4% to add a beta blocker; for 15.3% it was dose titration. Other management steps recorded were prompt review of BP, 24 hr BP monitor and compliance counselling.

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**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**
The shaded section of the following forms asks questions about **MANAGEMENT OF HYPERTENSION**.
You may tear out this page as a guide to completing the following section of forms.

**INSTRUCTIONS**
Please answer the following questions for **ALL** of the next **30 PATIENTS** in the order in which the patients are seen.
Please **DO NOT** select patients to suit the topic being investigated.

**Hypertension**
Please indicate whether this patient has been diagnosed with hypertension.
If 'no' please end questions here for this patient.

**Comorbidities**
Please use the tick boxes to advise whether the patient has any of the listed **comorbidities**. Tick all that apply.
If the patient has a **chronic disease** that is not listed please write it in the space provided.
If the patient **does not have** any chronic disease please tick the box labelled 'None'.

**Medications**
Please specify the **medication(s)** currently taken for hypertension.
Please write the name, form and regimen (dose and frequency) for each medication.
If the patient is not currently taking medication for hypertension please tick the box labelled 'no medication'.

**Current blood pressure**
Please test the patient's **blood pressure** and write the level in the space provided.

**Blood pressure control**
Please advise whether (in your clinical opinion) the patient's **blood pressure** is well controlled.

**Uncontrolled blood pressure**
For patients who have **uncontrolled blood pressure** please indicate:

1. **Main reason that BP is uncontrolled**
   Please indicate the **main reason** that you believe this patient's **blood pressure is uncontrolled**. If the reason is not listed, please tick the box labelled 'other' and write the reason in the space provided. Please tick only one option.

2. **Future management plan**
   Please indicate your **next step in managing** this patient's **blood pressure**. If your next step is not listed please write it in the space provided. Tick all that apply.