



Practice sting Importance of derived contraindications in medication monitoring

Medication monitoring using the derived contraindication (CI) makes sense because in practice relevant CIs are not always known. The following notification makes this evident.

Notification

A medical consultant prescribes ofloxacin to a patient taking lacosamide (Vimpat®) for epilepsy. The pharmacy assistant dispenses ofloxacin but does not inform the patient that he has an increased risk of epileptic seizures. The patient starts taking ofloxacin and has an epileptic seizure.

Analysis

In the community pharmacy, after processing the prescription for ofloxacin, no CI signal 'epilepsy quinolones' appeared, despite the fact that lacosamide only has the indication epilepsy. This signal did not appear because the pharmacist had turned off the generation of the derived CI for the whole group of 'other antiepileptic drugs' due to the large numbers of false positive monitoring signals. The pharmacist assumed that most medicines in this group are indicated for indications other than epilepsy, or that the patient also receives an anti-epileptic drug from another group. During the daily prescription check, the pharmacist did not notice that a patient taking lacosamide had been given ofloxacin.

Recommendations

For pharmacists:

- To avoid irrelevant signals, keep the CIs to be recorded per patient up to date. In Pharmacotherapy Meetings of general practitioners and pharmacists, healthcare providers can make agreements on how to deal with subjects where medicines with a derived CI are the first choice.
- Do not suppress the display of a derived CI.

For general practitioners:

- Make sure that a medical history does not just follow from the episode list. For the sake of systematic medication monitoring, also record the diagnoses as CIs.

For software suppliers:

- Ensure for drugs with a derived CI that the healthcare professional is asked if the derived CI should be recorded for that specific patient. If the derived CI is recorded, it must be recognizable as derived CI.
- Provide the possibility to record when a potentially derived CI in a specific patient is not a CI.