ODPRN ONTARIO DRUG POLICY RESEARCH NETWORK

Low Molecular Weight Heparins

FINAL COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH PLAN

September 2015

Study Team: Qualitative

Objectives

- To explore factors related to the experience of prescription and use of low molecular weight heparins.
- To determine the social acceptability of reimbursement policy recommendations for low molecular weight heparins.

Study Questions

1. What is the perceived effectiveness of low molecular weight heparins?
2. What is the impact of low molecular weight heparins on perceived quality of life?
3. What is the experience of prescribing low molecular weight heparins?
4. To what extent are the policy recommendations feasible and acceptable?

Note that the qualitative component will be conducted in two phases.

Phase 1

The purpose of this phase is to explore of factors affecting the dispensing and utilization of drugs within the drug class of interest.

Study Design:

This phase will utilize qualitative methods in a framework approach, which is an accepted practice in applied health studies. The framework approach will guide the data collection and analysis processes. The primary sources of data for this study will be one-on-one interviews. Field notes from interviews will also be made by the interviewer, and will be used a secondary source of data to incorporate into analysis.

Study Population:

Identified stakeholders for the low molecular weight heparins review include primary care practitioner (PCP), pharmacists, hematologists, internal medicine, emergency medicine, and oncologists who are involved in the prescription and dispensing of low molecular weight heparins.

Methods:

A purposive sampling approach will be used in order to elicit the specific perceptions and opinions of those who will be involved in or affected by drug policy decisions.

Clinicians will be recruited through circles of contact, professional networks and snowball recruitment. Publicly available contact information will also be searched to develop contact lists. An ODPRN member or study coordinator will make contact with clinicians by phone, e-mail or fax.

General calls for recruitment of all eligible groups will be placed in professional organization newsletters, e-blasts and social media (Twitter, Facebook).

We will aim to recruit 2-3 participants from each clinician group or until saturation of themes is met.

Data Collection and Analysis

Qualitative data will be collected through one-on-one, semi-structured telephone interviews. Interviews will be 30 - 60 minutes in length. All interviews will be guided by a semi-structured interview guide, and will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Interview transcripts will comprise the primary source of data. A secondary source of data will be field notes, made by a note taker that will be present at each interview.

Data will be analyzed using a framework approach. A framework for analysis will be developed after an initial review of the primary and secondary data sets. The framework will be applied to the data in subsequent sets to derive key policy-relevant concepts. Emerging codes will be incorporated to the framework to integrate unexpected results. A final framework will be developed and reported to the ODPRN after thorough analysis of all data.

A qualitative literature scan will also be conducted to gather any relevant qualitative findings on patient experiences with the use of and access to low molecular weight heparins.

Outcome(s) of Interest:

- Experiences accessing low molecular weight heparins
- Experiences treating patients with low molecular weight heparins
- Perceived safety and effectiveness of low molecular weight heparins
- Perceived barriers to access and health equity issues
- Any unanticipated issues related to low molecular weight heparins

Phase 2

The purpose of this phase is to assess the social acceptability of recommended policy actions related to the drug class of interest

Study Design:

RAND Appropriateness Method and Survey

Study Population:

Representatives of the general public; stakeholder groups (i.e. among the 6 groups described in Phase 1 above)

Methods:

To determine the social acceptability of each of the recommendations at the level of the general population, we have recruited a diverse set of 15 individuals from the general public to form a Citizen's Panel. The Citizen's Panel will provide feedback on recommendations from all drug class reviews. Feedback from participants will be obtained in two surveys and a webinar using the RAND Appropriateness Method. First, an online survey will be distributed to Citizen's Panel members, asking them to read the final report and recommendations, to provide their input and to rank the policy options. Next, Citizen's Panel members will attend a webinar meeting, at which we will present key issues, findings and policy implications, and engage in group discussion on the recommendations. Citizen's Panel members will complete a second survey after the meeting enabling them to provide additional feedback and giving them the opportunity to re-rank the policy options. This approach allows each person to express their idea(s); each person's opinion is taken into account (compared to traditional voting where only the largest group is considered).

To determine the social acceptability of each of the recommendations among stakeholders, we will develop and distribute an online survey measuring aspects of social acceptability including affordability, accessibility and appropriateness. The survey will be developed in FluidSurvey. The study coordinator will send the survey link and report through e-mail to participants who took part in the phase 1 interviews and agreed to be contacted for follow-up. Survey analysis will include descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, standard deviation, median) and thematic content analysis for open-ended questions.

Outcome(s) of Interest:

Feasibility and acceptability of draft recommendations.