

What can a sticker do? Pharmacist driven intervention to improve communication on discharge

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Aim

To improve recording of administration of denosumab and communication to the patient's GP to ensure continuity of care in the community.

Introduction

An audit on the use of denosumab from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 showed 85 patients were initiated on denosumab during their admission and had been discharged from hospital with a discharge summary.

By the end of the audit, 8 of these patients were deceased. Of the remaining 77 patients, 15 patients (19% of cases) initiated on denosumab for treatment of osteoporosis, did not have it recorded in their discharge summary. Thus this information was not communicated to the general practitioner (GP) and therefore had the potential for this therapy not to be continued in the community or for the GP to start a similar bisphosphonate therapy concurrent to denosumab.

Method

A survey was sent to 78 GPs whose patients had been given denosumab as an inpatient in the previous year. This was to determine whether the GP was aware the patient had been administered denosumab and if treatment had continued in the community. GPs were also given the opportunity to provide feedback on discharge summaries including their limitations and make suggestions about how they may be improved.

In addition to the survey, two stickers were developed to be used in patient notes (figure 1): one to be used by the prescriber, and one by pharmacists, to highlight patients who had been prescribed denosumab. These fluorescent stickers were designed to prompt JMOs on discharge, to confirm the patient had been administered denosumab and record it in the discharge summary for GPs to continue in the community.

Patient information leaflets (figure 2) were also developed to help patients understand why they had been prescribed denosumab, offer general information on denosumab, including side effects, and how to improve bone health. It also provides a record of the date of administration and when their next injection is due.

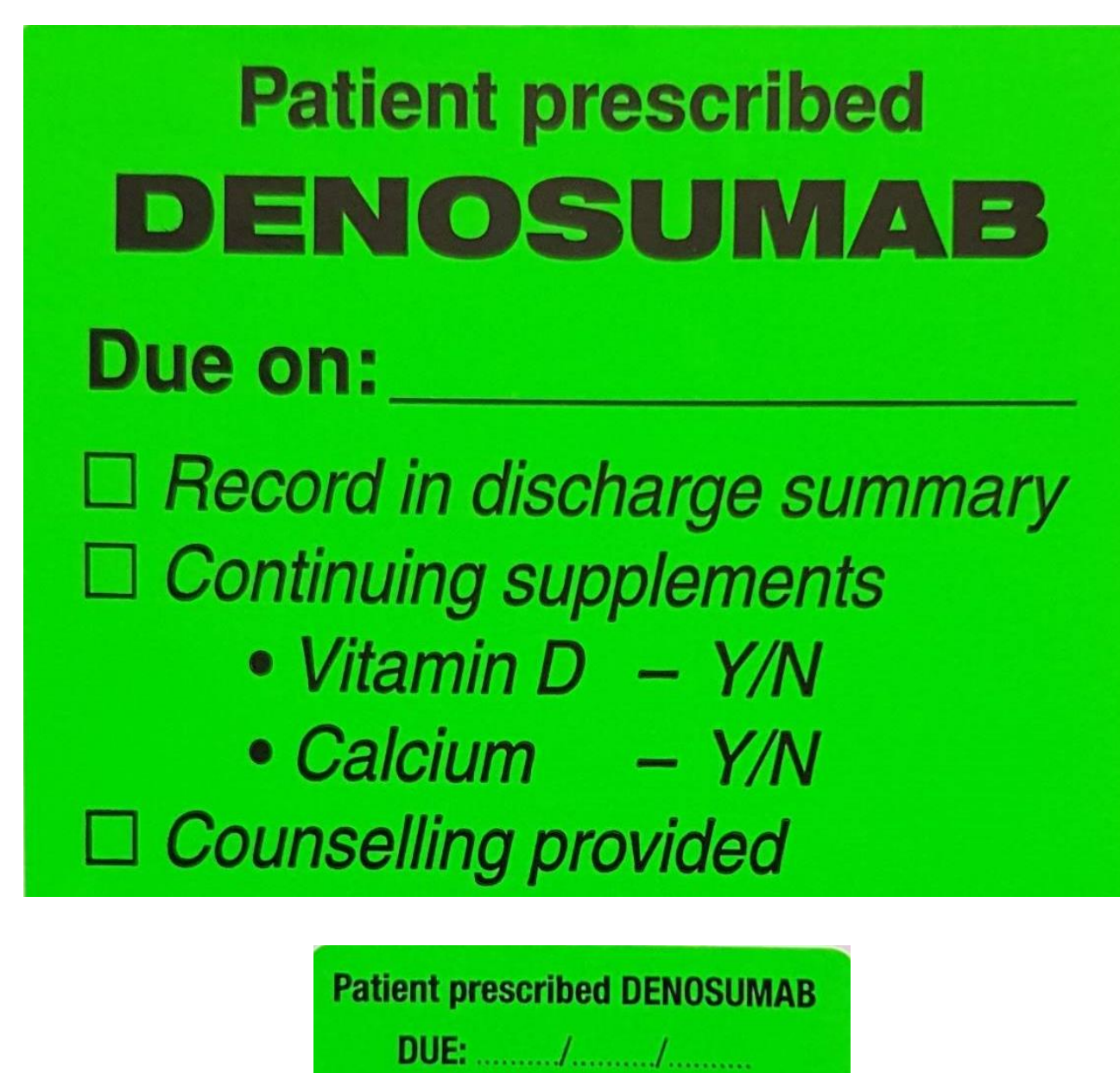


Figure 1. Stickers created to improve the recording and communication of denosumab for use by prescribers (top) and pharmacists (bottom).

Results

41 completed surveys were returned. Out of 41 GPs who responded, 17 did not know their patient had been initiated on denosumab (41.5%). In 11 of these cases, the information was communicated via the discharge summary. On 3 occasions patients received a second dose of denosumab earlier than recommended and one patient was continued on both alendronate and denosumab.

In the year prior to implementing the stickers, only 81% of discharge summaries noted that the patient was initiated on denosumab. Since the introduction of the stickers, 49 patients have been initiated on denosumab and discharged from hospital. 45 patients have had this recorded in their discharge summary. This intervention using stickers to highlight prescribing of denosumab to inpatients, has shown an increase in recording in the discharge summary from 81% to 91.8%.

Discussion and Future Directions

Since the implementation of the stickers, John Hunter Hospital has moved to an electronic medicines management system, MedChart. With the introduction of MedChart, it is now easier to ensure medication information is transferred to the discharge summary as once a discharge reconciliation has been performed in MedChart, it automatically transfers that information to the discharge summary.

However, in many survey responses from GPs, it was stated that medication information was lost in the amount of information provided in a discharge summary. Therefore it is important to continue to educate junior medical staff writing discharge summaries that this is a medication with the potential to be forgotten. Highlighting the administration of denosumab with the body of the discharge summary and noting when the next dose is due will help to ensure this doesn't happen.

It is also important that the patient and their families are engaged in education around denosumab so that they can be involved in continuity of care. The results of this intervention shows improvement in communication, however this could be further enhanced by dedicating pharmacist resources to the Ortho-Geriatrics team.

Acknowledgements

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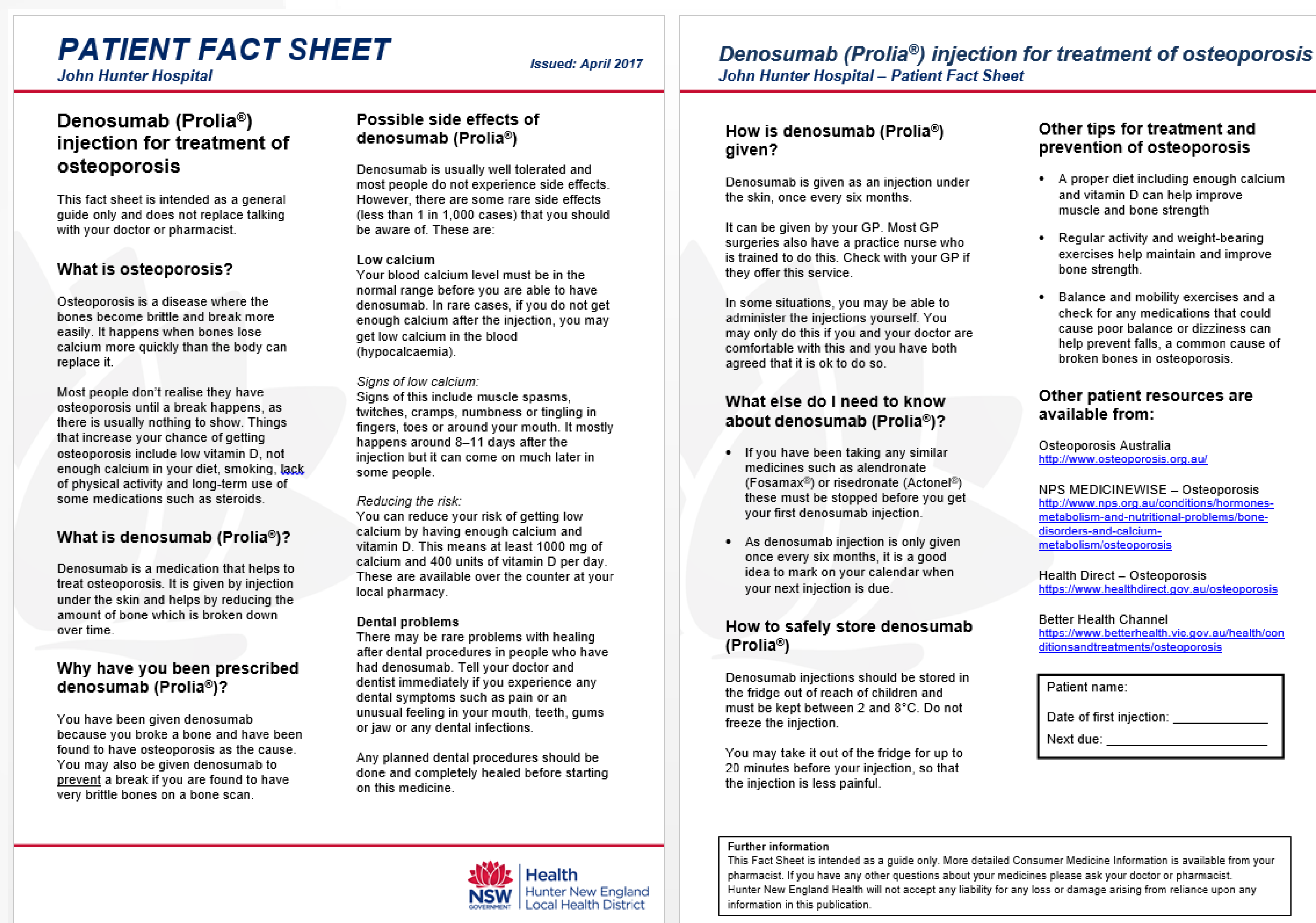


Figure 2. Patient fact sheet on denosumab to be given to the patient. This provides details on their injection and next due date, as well as general information about denosumab, including side effects and ideas for improving bone health.