



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of the American Pharmacists Association

journal homepage: www.japha.org

RESEARCH

Evaluating patient satisfaction with pharmacist-administered long-acting injectable antipsychotics in the community pharmacy

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 9 August 2017

Accepted 26 April 2018

ABSTRACT

Objective: To evaluate patient satisfaction with pharmacist-administered long-acting injectable antipsychotics (LAIs) in the community pharmacy.**Design:** Prospective survey.**Setting:** Albertsons Companies community pharmacies during December 2016 to February 2017.**Participants:** Patients receiving LAIs at participating pharmacies.**Main outcome measures:** A survey assessed patients' satisfaction with pharmacist-administered LAIs in the community pharmacy.**Results:** LAI recipients (N = 104) reported satisfaction with community pharmacist-administered LAIs. Participants who had received the service at other types of health clinics (N = 57) also reported higher satisfaction with current service compared to a similar service received elsewhere. Participants indicated that they would recommend service to others and that service was more convenient than a similar service received in an alternative setting. There was not a statistically significant relationship between patient demographic characteristics and likelihood of recommending service to others.**Conclusion:** Patients were satisfied with a pharmacist-administered LAI service in the community pharmacy, and they found it more convenient than similar services provided elsewhere.© 2018 American Pharmacists Association[®]. Published by Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Schizophrenia is a chronic mental illness that affects an estimated 1% of the population worldwide.¹ Schizophrenia is diagnosed in approximately 1.5 per 10,000 people annually.² Schizophrenia affects more men than women (1.4:1 ratio) with a typical onset during adolescence.² Bipolar disorder is another chronic mental illness that affects young adults with an estimated global prevalence of 2.4%.³ Bipolar disorder

affects men and women in similar proportions.⁴ If not managed properly, these mental illnesses are linked to numerous negative consequences, including decreased quality of life and increased burden on the health care system. In 2013, schizophrenia was estimated to create an economic burden of \$155.7 billion in the United States.⁵ Bipolar disorder is the eighteenth leading cause of disability in the United States, placing this illness ahead of chronic kidney disease and stroke.⁶ Adherence to prescribed medications is important to improve outcomes; however, more than 40% of patients affected by schizophrenia or bipolar disorder are not adherent to their medications.^{7,8} Poor adherence to antipsychotics has been associated with higher risk of relapse, hospitalization frequency, and costs.^{9,10}

One way to improve adherence is by using long-acting injectable antipsychotics (LAIs). Medication adherence has been shown to be greater with LAIs compared with oral antipsychotics in patients affected by schizophrenia and in those affected by bipolar disorder.^{11,12} In addition to improved adherence, LAIs possess several advantages over oral

Disclosure: The authors declare no conflicts of interest or financial interests in any product or service mentioned in this article.

Previous presentations: Presented previously at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Midyear Clinical Meeting and Exhibition, Las Vegas, NV, December 2–6, 2016; the American Pharmacists Association Annual Meeting and Exposition, San Francisco, CA, March 24–27, 2017; the Colorado Pharmacist Society 2017 Annual Meeting and Certificate Program, Aurora, CO, June 15–16, 2017, and the Mountain States Conference, Salt Lake City, UT, May 11–12, 2017.

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Key Points**Background:**

- Long-acting injectable antipsychotics have been shown to have improved adherence compared with oral antipsychotics.
- Increasing access to mental health care services is important for improving patient outcomes and decreasing health care costs.
- Studies assessing patient satisfaction with LAIAs administered in the community pharmacy are lacking.

Findings:

- Patients were satisfied with the pharmacist-administered long-acting injectable antipsychotics service provided in the community pharmacy.
- Those who received a similar service at another health clinic were just as satisfied with the pharmacy-administered long-acting injectable antipsychotics in the community pharmacy.

antipsychotics, such as increased dosing interval, decreased relapse rates, and improved patient outcomes.^{11,13} The medication possession ratios for patients receiving LAIAs are higher compared with oral antipsychotics.¹¹ Overall, treatment with LAIAs was associated with decreased health care costs even though drug costs are higher.^{11,14} Compared with patients taking oral antipsychotics, patients receiving LAIAs have lower mean inpatient costs and hospitalization rates and fewer inpatient days.¹⁵ Studies have found a reduction in outpatient costs for schizophrenia-related services and services for any cause; however, these findings were not replicated by other studies.^{11,16}

Typically, patients receive LAIAs in a mental health clinic setting. Administration of LAIAs in a mental health clinic has some inconveniences, including limited hours of operation, availability in rural areas, and increased stigma, such as experiencing perceived social rejection.¹⁷⁻²² However, LAIAs can be administered in a community pharmacy setting when specific criteria are met. Potential benefits of receiving LAIAs at a community pharmacy site include increased patient accessibility with extended hours of operation, multiple locations, and decreased stigma, because patients can visit a community pharmacy for a wide variety of services and not just for a mental health appointment. The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) recently released a report supporting pharmacist involvement in administration of long-acting injectable medications including LAIAs.²³ APhA also provides practice guidance for pharmacy-based medication administration, such as practice development, program structure, education and training, and legal authority.²⁴

To the authors' knowledge, studies that review LAIA administration in the community pharmacy are lacking. This study aims to evaluate patient satisfaction with LAIAs administered in the community pharmacy. Understanding whether patients who receive LAIAs in the community

pharmacy as an alternative to health clinics are satisfied with the service is an important first step to expanding access to mental health services.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate patient satisfaction with pharmacist-administered LAIAs in the community pharmacy. The secondary objectives of this study were to evaluate patient satisfaction with current service compared to a similar service received elsewhere and to determine the relationship between patient demographic characteristics and likelihood of recommending service to others.

Methods*Study design and study period*

This study used a prospective survey design that was approved by the Regis University Investigational Review Board. The survey assessing patient satisfaction was provided to adults receiving LAIAs administered by a pharmacist in a community pharmacy from December 12, 2016, until February 6, 2017.

Practice setting

Albertsons Companies provides a pharmacist-administered LAIA service as part of a Specialty Care program in select community pharmacies in 9 different states. This service became available approximately 7 years ago. Local mental health clinics refer patients to this service. Administration of these medications is coordinated by the company's Specialty Care team. Company pharmacists administer medications by "prescription to administer" from a provider with prescriptive authority. As of October 2016, approximately 450 pharmacists in the organization were trained to administer LAIAs, including aripiprazole (Abilify Maintena; Otsuka America Pharmaceutical), aripiprazole lauroxil (Aristada; Alkermes), fluphenazine, haloperidol decanoate, paliperidone palmitate (Invega Sustenna, Invega, Trinza, Janssen Pharmaceuticals), and risperidone (Risperdal Consta; Janssen Pharmaceuticals).

Criteria set by Albertsons Companies for community pharmacist-administered LAIAs include completion of company-approved immunization training, LAIA administration training, blood-borne pathogen training, cardiopulmonary resuscitation training, established medication-specific protocols, established adverse reaction protocol, readily retrievable emergency kit, and private areas for injection administration.

Pharmacists complete a company-approved immunization training program and a manufacturer-specific LAIA training to be certified for LAIA administration. The Specialty Care team notifies the administering pharmacist when a patient requests administration of a LAIA. Injections are provided by appointment and may be administered during all operating hours of the pharmacy. The store team staffs the pharmacy appropriately according to the number of appointments for the given day.

Appointments are approximately 30 minutes in duration and are conducted in a private space that is dedicated to patient care. A consent form for medication administration,

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