

FINAL PROJECT:

TITLE: Bridging the Knowledge Gap in Diagnosis and Treatment of Atopic Dermatitis

ABSTRACT: Atopic Dermatitis is commonly seen in primary care, internal medicine, urgent care clinics & emergency departments, yet is frequently misdiagnosed or mismanaged due to a lack of knowledge about the disease & about medications & treatments for the disease. The disease can often be managed by a non-dermatologic provider (particularly primary care) when they have adequate understanding about long term treatment and management.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Description of problem: atopic dermatitis is a common inflammatory skin disease affecting approximately 7.2% of adults in the United States (1-3% estimated worldwide). It is the most common skin disease seen in pediatrics, affecting 15-20% of children worldwide. Often patients are seen and evaluated by their primary care provider or pediatrician who do not have the experience or knowledge of how to provide the best care for this disease. Atopic dermatitis is a chronic, relapsing inflammatory skin disease and caring for these patients optimally requires knowledge both about the pathophysiology of the disease and treatments.

2. Available knowledge: there are many publications available with regard to pathophysiology of the disease. Many publications are available with regard to basic skin care, use of bathing & emollients as well as prescription treatments. There is little available knowledge aimed at providing advanced knowledge to primary care providers.

3. Rationale: often patients will initially see a primary care provider or pediatrician before they are referred to a dermatology specialist or once stable, ongoing care for maintenance will be done by a primary care provider. It is important for them to have the knowledge to continue optimal care since atopic dermatitis is a chronic & relapsing skin disease

4. Specific aims: the specific aim of this project is to bridge the knowledge gap in diagnosis & treatment of atopic dermatitis for non-dermatologic providers.

METHODS:

1. Interventions: the intervention is a visual power point presentation where a brief pathophysiology of the disease is presented and more detailed information with regard to diagnosis, treatments and common triggers that cause flare and relapse. A written care plan will also be given to providers that can be utilized in a clinic setting & tailored toward specific patient needs.

2. Study of interventions: providers listening to the presentation will be allowed to ask questions at the end and the pre & post test (see below) will be reviewed for clarity.

3. Measures: a pre and post test will be given to participants with five basic questions to measure baseline knowledge with regard to diagnosis & treatment before the presentation. After the presentation is completed, the same five questions will be asked and participants will then be asked whether they feel more confident in their ability to care for patients with atopic dermatitis.

4. Analysis: the pre & post tests will be tabulated & scored to determine if knowledge was improved after hearing the presentation. Data from the tabulations will be themed with a descriptive analysis.

5. Ethical considerations: none

RESULTS:

The practice managers from the primary care clinics at OHSU (Gabriel Park, Richmond & Scappoose) were contacted & agreed to have this presentation to the providers. An outreach to the OHSU primary care clinics at Tuality & Adventist was also anticipated. The COVID-19 pandemic development caused all of these presentations to be put on hold. They will possibly be presented later in the year, depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic progresses or

becomes contained. The presentation was also accepted by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), to be presented at the annual convention in June 2020, but this convention was canceled due to the pandemic. It is anticipated that it will be able to be presented in 2021 at the annual convention. The Nurse Practitioners of Oregon (NPO) have agreed to use this presentation as an enduring educational on-line lecture, this is in process.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION:

1. Summary: it is anticipated that the resulting pre and post tests could be compared & a robust discussion regarding whether the confidence of providers to diagnose & care for patients with atopic dermatitis had improved after hearing the information. In analyzing the data, it is anticipated that key findings will show that primary care providers will demonstrate greater understanding of the pathophysiology of atopic dermatitis and have comprehensive & practical knowledge with regard to treatment planning & long term management.
2. Limitations: COVID-19 placed a delay in being able to do this presentation at this time. Other limitations will be if providers are unable to attend the presentation due to time constraints.

FUNDING: the only funding needed for this project was printing of the treatment plan, the test questionnaires and the light refreshments provided to participants.