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Defining an international framework for pharmacy standards on oral anticoagulation

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Background and Objective: To design and characterise a framework of international pharmacy standards for pharmaceutical care application on oral anticoagulation for prevention of Atrial Fibrillation (AF) related strokes.

Design: Literature review (including existing international guidelines and quality measures) was conducted to characterise the standards and design an international framework for pharmaceutical practice application on oral anticoagulation for prevention of AF-related strokes. Expert opinions were sought through a Delphi method to reach consensus on the framework domains and standards.

Results: The framework consisted of twelve overarching standards, which were defined and grouped into four domains as follows; ([personal care package]:- communication with patients, support decision making process, education and counselling, adherence. [medicines optimisation]:- clinical review and therapy optimisation, initiation and control, maintenance, supply and transfer between care settings. [workforce]:- workforce planning, training and development, analysing information; and [governance]:- assurance of service provision) specific to oral anticoagulation in prevention of AF-related stroke. Each standard was also categorised within dimensions and supporting statements to describe what a quality pharmacy service should deliver. A total of forty five dimensions and twelve statements were incorporated into the framework.

Conclusion: A clearly defined framework of international standards was developed as a clinical tool and quality assurance to optimise the delivery of care for oral anticoagulation in prevention of AF-related strokes. It will support pharmacists and their teams to develop their professional practice, improve services, and deliver safe and high quality patient care across all pharmacy settings.

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