Learning Summary
Pathhead Medical Centre

The **aim** of the project was to reduce the number of acute prescriptions from 25% of overall prescriptions issued to less than or equal to 20% by August 2022.

Background

Pathhead Medical Centre is based in Pathhead, Midlothian. It is in a semi-rural area and has a list size of 6,323 patients.

Key activities

Planning

The practice held an engagement session to involve the whole team and to process map their existing prescribing system. They identified that there was no permissible repeats policy resulting in a lack of consistency in clinical decision-making.

The team then used the Scottish Therapeutics Utility (STU) to review their overall number of acute prescriptions and to analyse their repeatable acute prescriptions using a Pareto chart to identify where they could have the most impact.

Testing

The practice created a permissible repeats policy and went through Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) cycles to test the introduction of a permissible repeats policy, adapting it iteratively based on the findings form each cycle.

The policy was tested and updated by GP partners in the initial testing cycles. The next step is to circulate this to the whole multi-disciplinary team ahead of the next cycle.

Measurement

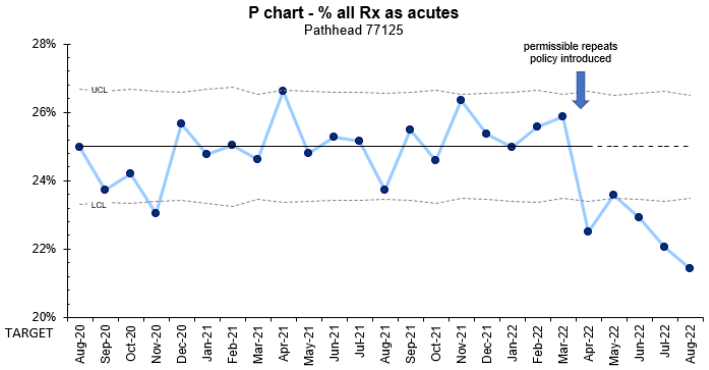
The practice team are using STU data to **measure** the number of repeatable and overall acute prescriptions issued each month to identify any **improvements**.

The chart below shows acute prescriptions as a proportion of total prescriptions issued on a month-by-month basis and enables the practice to track their progress.

The team are also collecting feedback from staff and patients to understand the impact of the new policy on the people involved.

Impact and learning

- **Acute prescriptions**, as a percentage of the overall medications issued, have **reduced** following the introduction of the permissible repeats policy.
- The team will keep collecting and reviewing STU data to understand whether a **trend** or **shift** can be identified indicating improvement.
- Practice staff have been encouraged to provide feedback:
  "I am following the rules I think, happy to be getting more onto repeats and for longer, as [there is] just so much duplication otherwise".
- The practice learned not to try and include everything in the policy but focus on the most frequent prescriptions which will have the greatest impact (identified from Pareto chart).
- The practice team have used STU data in each of their PDSA cycles. This has helped them monitor progress and encouraged the team to keep going.



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