Letter to the Editor

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Patient education in bronchial asthma: analysis of feedback from parents

Sir,

Bronchial asthma is the most common chronic illness encountered in day to day practice.¹ In spite of a sound knowledge of its pathogenesis and availability of proper medications patient adherence to Asthma medications does not exceed fifty percent.² A variety of patients, healthcare provider education programs have been conducted but none has been ideal and probably each centre or practicing pediatrician needs to develop his own education program as there is none which is ideal.³⁻⁵

A patient education program is carried on in our centre for the patients of bronchial asthma and their parents. Author give a thirty minutes power point presentation followed by discussion on the various aspects of asthma. Author wanted to know from the parents what they had understood after attending our session and how could we improve upon our presentation. This was carried out between June 2016 to December 2016.

A telephonic survey was done Six months after the education program. Eight questions were asked. They were pertaining to the age, sex of the child, pathology, trigger factors, use of inhalers and improvement in the understanding of asthma. Suggestions regarding changes in the program were also asked.

Table 1: Summary of feedback.

Questions	No. of responders giving correct answers	%	P value
Basic problem in asthma	35/171	20.4%	<.0001
Awareness of the problem	41/171	23.7%	<.001
Triggers in asthma	71/171	40.1%	<.001
Utility of inhalers	156/171	91%	<.00001
Benefit to your child	162/171	94.7%	<.00001
Increase in knowledge	155/171	90.6%	<.00001

Out of 378 patients on record 171 responded to the questionnaire. There were ninety-five males (55.6%) and seventy-six females (44.4%). Although by and large most parents thought that they had benefited from the patient education program, but their knowledge of the disease did not increase in that proportion to their perception.

Only a minority of patients who thought that this program enhanced their understanding of asthma knew that the basic pathology in asthma is swelling of the airways and could identify the triggers. However, most were convinced that inhalers were the correct method of treatment for asthma patients.

Most parents appreciated the effort by our team and wanted to attend the program more than once. Some wanted more interaction few suggested to have slides in local language.⁶

Better knowledge translates into better adherence, which in turn leads to better control of Asthma.^{7,8}

Sunil Taneja^{1*}, Samarth Vohra², Neha Agarwal¹, Debasis Kundu³

¹Department of Pediatrics, GSVM Medical College, Kanpur, Utter Pradesh, India ²Department of Pediatrics, Madhuraj Hospital, Kanpur, Utter Pradesh, India ³Department of Mathematics, IIT, Kanpur, Utter Pradesh,

*Correspondence:

Dr. Sunil Taneja, E-mail: tanejasunil17@gmail.com

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