Paediatric Dietetic Prescribing Support in Cow’s Milk Protein Allergy

Louise McKerrow, Julie Nicol and Paula Young, Prescribing Support Dietitians NHS Fife

Background:
In 2011, a cow’s milk protein allergy (CMPA) pathway (figure 1) was introduced in NHS Fife to support appropriate nutritional prescribing of specialised baby milks. There was however no dedicated dietetic clinical resource to support dissemination of this pathway. In 2015, a prescribing support dietitian (PSD) was appointed, and identified that inappropriate paediatric nutritional prescribing was evident.

Figure 1
Care pathway for infants with suspected cow’s milk protein allergy

Aims:
• To ensure paediatric nutritional prescribing is clinically appropriate, complying with NHS Fife’s CMPA Pathway.
• To ensure paediatric nutritional prescribing is in line with NHS Fife’s Formulary.
• To deliver cost efficiency savings.

Methods:
Data was obtained for the top 30 high spend GP practices and nutritional prescribing reviews undertaken in 28 practices. Records of paediatric patients on nutritional products were reviewed for appropriateness, adherence to Fife’s Formulary and whether the CMPA pathway was being followed. PSDs offered dietetic reviews in the practices where appropriate. They also took the opportunity to update staff at practice level and training was delivered to health visitors and GPs at Fife wide events.

Outcomes/Results:
The records of 298 patients were reviewed, of which 62 were seen by the PSD (figure 2). Of these 62 patients, 67% had suspected CMPA (figure 3), and the pathway was being followed in less than half (46%) of these patients. There was an 87% adherence to the Fife Formulary for nutritional products. Projected savings to date are £26,739 as a result of all paediatric PSD reviews.

Figure 2: Outcomes of Paediatric Dietetic Prescribing Support Reviews

Figure 3: Indications for Paediatric Nutritional Prescribing

Conclusions:
CMPA is the main indication for paediatric nutritional prescribing however ongoing training is needed to ensure the CMPA pathway is being followed. Lack of awareness of the diagnosis and management can lead to infants being on highly specialist milks indefinitely without an appropriate diagnosis or referral to secondary care. The role of a PSD is essential to support dissemination and implementation of CMPA guidance to ensure appropriate nutritional prescribing, together with development of patient and health care professional resources.

References:
1. NHS Fife Paediatric Dietitians, Nutrition and Dietetic Department. Diagnosis and Management of Infants with Suspected Cow’s Milk Protein Allergy. A guide for healthcare professionals working in primary care. 2011, Revised 2016.