

DEVELOPMENT OF AN INNOVATIVE E-LEARNING COURSE TO SUPPORT PATIENTS SELF-TESTING ORAL ANTICOAGULATION

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INTRODUCTION

Self-testing of Vitamin K antagonists (VKAs), where the patient measures their INR using a portable coagulometer has clinical and lifestyle benefits and has been endorsed by NICE¹. Educational preparation to undertake self-testing is essential to ensure safe management and to increase patient confidence. However, there is no standardisation of this education and no nationally endorsed programme for patients in the UK.

METHODS

Information needs of those wishing to self-test their INR were established through semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire survey. Evidence-based learning material was then developed to meet these needs, divided into discrete topics, framed around clear learning aims and objectives.

Formative evaluation of this learning material was then undertaken by experts, patients and carers, and revised content transferred to an on-line platform (Coracle). (Figure 1)

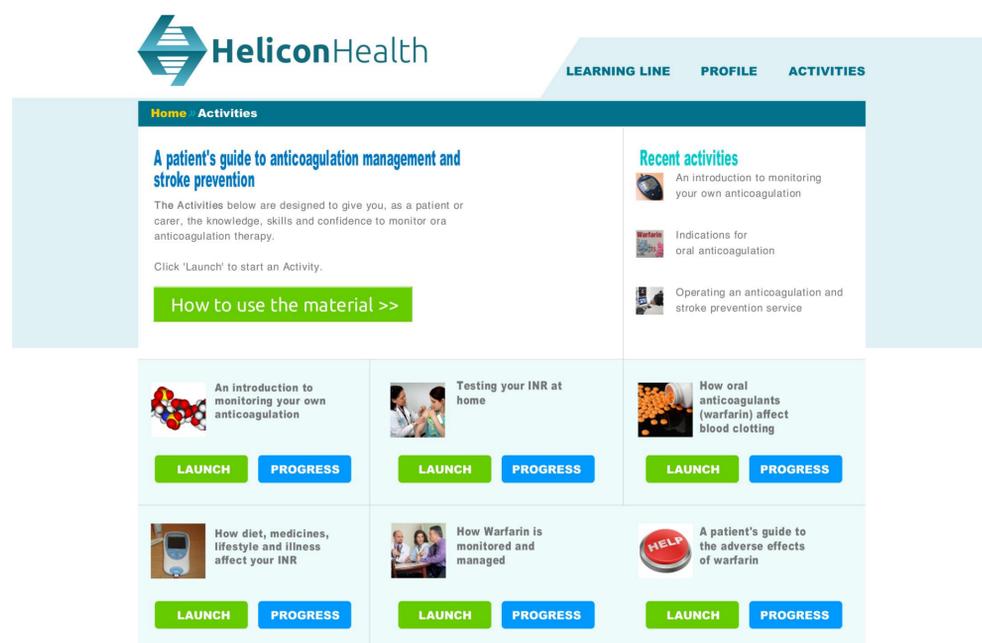


Figure 2: Home page for Helicon Learning for patients

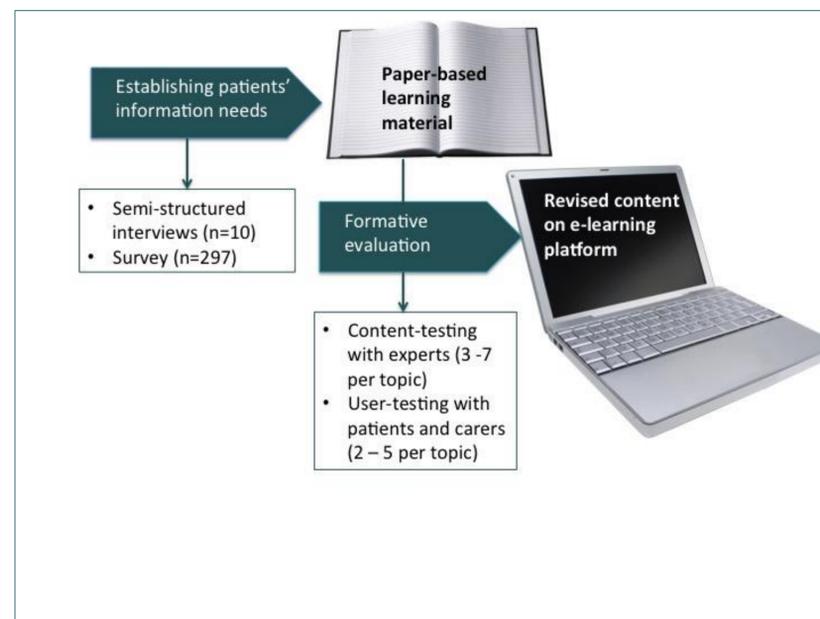


Figure 1: Development of Helicon Learning for patients

RESULTS

Ten patients were interviewed and 297 survey responses received (response rate 44%). Educational support for self-testing was felt to be essential, with guidance on using the coagulometer, determining why an INR is out of range and information on drug interactions and adverse effects identified as the most useful elements.

Formative evaluation by experts resulted in minor redrafting of material to improve its clarity. Through user testing, all of the patients and carers met the topics' learning objectives, felt that the material was clear and that the scope was appropriate. There were divergent views on depth of information provided.

The resultant e-learning course comprised 8 topics with a total indicative learning time of 5-10 hours (Figure 2). Learning material included textual content, images, animation and videos (Figure 3). Reflective thinking exercises were included, with users encouraged to share their experiences on the site's forum.

CONCLUSION

To our knowledge, this comprehensive e-learning course for patients undertaking self-testing of VKAs is the first of its kind. Furthermore, the information needs of this group of people had not previously been systematically assessed.

Self-testing of VKAs falls within the broader agenda of shared decision making (SDM). For SDM to be successful both parties need to be informed and to understand what is important to the other person. Making this resource available to both clinician and patient should allow them to reach a common understanding to facilitate SDM.

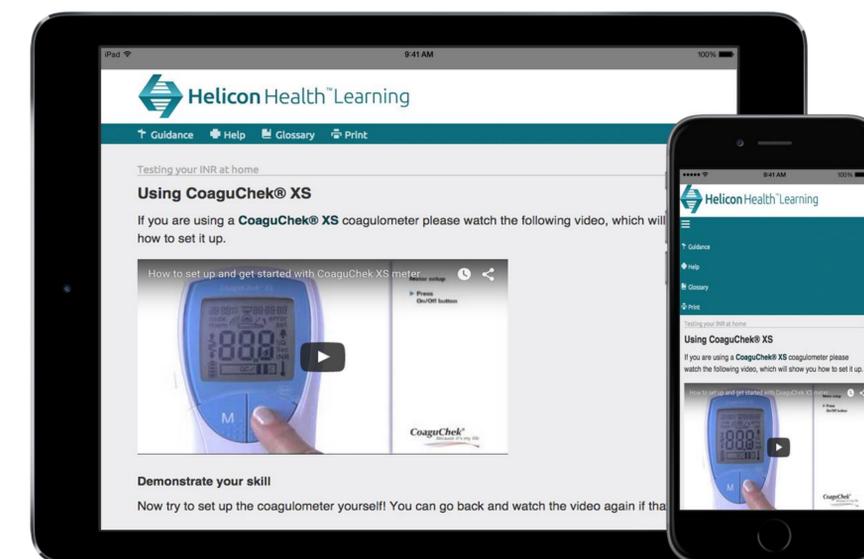


Figure 3: Helicon Learning for patients – content example

REFERENCES

1. Atrial fibrillation and heart valve disease: self-monitoring coagulation status using point-of-care coagulometers (the CoaguChek XS system and the INRatio2 PT/INR monitor). NICE DG14. September 2014. www.nice.org.uk

For further information:

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