

Adrenaline autoinjector (AAI) provision and training among adult patients in the UK

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Key message

The survey has identified that, in spite of the MHRA recommendations, prescribers are not consistently prescribing two AAI devices to adults at risk of anaphylaxis.

Given that over half the adults surveyed had carried an AAI for over 15 years, it is concerning that only a limited number were shown how to use the device again when collecting a repeat prescription. In addition, despite the wide range of resources available to help patients manage, store and use their AAI devices, prescribers and dispensers are not signposting patients to these resources. Consequently, adults may have a false sense of security about their ability to manage their allergies and AAI.

Objective

The Anaphylaxis Campaign conducted a patient survey on the quality of allergy care in the UK. The objective was to identify current gaps in the standard of care, with a view to addressing these gaps with enhanced support and information.

Methods

Patients who had an episode of anaphylaxis or were deemed at risk were questioned on their experiences of care including prescription of AAIs and training on their use. The survey was open for 6 months. The findings from adult respondents are presented here.

Conclusions

Given the potentially life-threatening nature of anaphylaxis, it is surprising that a substantial proportion of patients are not instructed on proper use of their AAI, expiry dates and storage restrictions. The wrong number of pens are often prescribed, with limited direction to instructional resources.

Results

Respondents

Of 1217 respondents, 562 were adult patients. Respondents were aged from 17 to over 60 years, with a geographic spread across the UK. 93% had been prescribed an AAI.

Patient responses to survey

- Two-thirds (65%) were prescribed two AAIs as recommended by the MHRA, with 24% prescribed one AAI. Half (50%) of respondents had carried AAI(s) for more than 15 years.
- Three-quarters (74%) agreed they were shown how to use their AAI when first prescribed (vs 20% who disagreed). Just 47% were given a training device (48% disagreed).
- A minority (28%) were directed to the company website for instructional videos (60% disagreed).
- Just 73% were informed that AAIs have an expiry date (19% disagreed), and 23% were told about the expiry alert service (67% disagreed).
- Less than half (41%) were given instructions on AAI storage (45% disagreed). Just 10% were shown how to use the device when collecting their repeat prescription (79% disagreed).

