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Increasing complexity of drug therapy in older adults and the importance of adherence monitoring

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Over the past two decades more than 600 new drugs were brought to the market allowing the effective treatment of the most major chronic diseases effectively. In addition to this different drug delivery systems and administration routes have emerged from pharmaceutical science adding sophistication to pharmaceutical products and its use. With the baby boomer generation coming into age and the increasing life expectancy, patients beyond 85 and even 95 years will rather be the norm than the exception. As chronic diseases occur with age, drug therapy is an integral part of our later life and with a high likelihood to become “polypharmacy” when multiple chronic diseases occur. Despite the increasing complexity of drug therapy the responsibility of the medication management is shifted to the patients when the pharmacist is handing over the drug products. Poor adherence has been recognized since many years to play an important role in medication problems that account for a significant number of hospital admissions of multimorbid older patients. Recent research has shown that monitoring patient adherence patterns provide important insight into the therapeutic progress, allowing healthcare professionals to identify early on adherence problems, understand the root causes and resolve the underlying issues like for example forgetfulness, non-acceptance or occurrence of adverse drug reactions. Advances in pharmaceutical technologies are providing different approaches to monitor adherence in the critical patient populations including an effective feedback loop to the healthcare professionals to intervene accordingly to increase safety and effectiveness on the drug therapy.

Biography

Sven Stegemann is a pharmacist by training and holds a PhD in pharmacology. He started his career at Sanofi-Aventis working in different roles of the pharmaceutical product development and manufacturing cycle. Before joining Capsugel he worked for AstaMedica where he was responsible for product licensing. Since 1997 he is Director for Pharmaceutical Business Development at Capsugel. Within this role he is leading common research projects with all major pharmaceutical as well as SME companies on a global base. Within the pharmaceutical community he is serving different organizations as President, Chairman or Committee Member. Beside his professional tasks, he is substantially engaged in Education & Training in academy and through high level conferences across the world and special engagement within the European Commission to support strengthening the life sciences in Europe. His scientific interest is in improving drug therapy in older adults through multidisciplinary and patient centered research. Recently he founded the Geriatric Medicines Society e.V., which is supported by industry, academia and regulatory authorities. Another area of scientific interest is the delivery of affordable medicines through simplified product design and manufacturing.

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