Nurse prescribing in the Netherlands

Hanneke Voorneveld-Nieuwenhuis
21 February 2019
Nurse prescribing

• In Australia, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom and USA, (advanced) nurses are legally authorized to prescribe. (1)

• The prescription authority varies greatly

1 BIG issues, D de Bruijn-Geraerds, 2018
Nurse prescribing; potential drawbacks

- Higher risk of prescription errors
- Over prescribing
- Incorrect diagnosis
Prescribing by nurses

- Review: Nurses prescribe in comparable ways to physicians and the effects of nurse prescribing on medication and patient outcomes are similar or better when compared to physician prescribing.

Benefits

- Improvement in quality of care
- Improvement in patients' access to health care
- Better use of the skills and experience of nurses,
- More recognition for nurses’ competences and expertise,
Overal benefits

• Improved working relationship between health care professionals,
• A reduction in the workload of medical staff
• Time savings for patients and medical practitioners
The Dutch situation

Two groups of prescribing nurses

• Specialised nurses
  – Limited frames

• Nurse practitioners
  – Independently authorized
Specialised nurses

- Amendments to the law 2007
- Nurses with a Bachelor in nursing and extended course on Pharmacotherapy
- Till now 3 groups of nurses are designated
- First designated group in 2011
Prescribing conditions for specialized nurses

Limited frames

- Patient must be diagnosed by a doctor
- Prescribing following guidelines
- Groups of nurses are designated by ministerial regulation
Limited prescribing range

• Diabetic care: blood glucose lowering agents
• Lung care: bronchodilatators
• Oncology care: antidiarrhics, anti-emetics, benzodiazepines, laxatives, pain relief agents and secretion inhibitors
Nurse practitioners (M-ANP)

- The first NP graduated in 2000, in 2019 more than 3600
- Integrate nurse and medical care as an independent practitioner or as a co-therapist
- 2012 adoption of a government degree on medical tasks including prescription, for a period of 5 years and subject of evaluation
Priscribing by NP anchored in law

• In 2018, final adoption of a government decree after evaluation
• NP can independently perform medical tasks, such as prescribing prescription-only medication, giving injections and catheterize
Prescribing prescription only medication

- Authorized if competent
- Within your specialty
- Thoughtfully
- Individual responsibility
- Keep up the knowledge
Take home

• Nurse prescribing is save but
• Prescribing brings responsibilities
• Keep education up to date
• Know the guidelines