

HOW TO WRITE A COPD ACTION PLAN

STEP 1

Discuss the purpose of the COPD Action Plan

- Explain it will help them become familiar with their *baseline symptoms* and to know what to do if they have an exacerbation.
- Ask about any previous COPD exacerbations - *symptoms (infective/non-infective), management, changes in function.*

STEP 2

Complete the green section – COPD history

- Complete demographic information and baseline data - FEV₁ and CO₂ retaining status.
- Ask about their usual COPD symptoms (their baseline). Ask how they usually feel when completing daily activities - *walking, showering, carrying groceries*

STEP 3

Complete the green section – COPD medicines

- Ask what they understand about their usual COPD medicines.
- Provide education as required- *inhalers, oral medicines, and oxygen, if used.*
- Demonstrate correct inhaler device technique - *use the BlippAR app to view Lung Foundation Australia's inhaler device technique videos.*
- Ensure they understand how to use their inhaler - *ask them to teach you the correct technique.*

STEP 4

Complete the orange section – Managing a COPD exacerbation

- Discuss what a COPD exacerbation is, common symptoms, and benefits of early treatment.
- Complete the flare-up medicines regimen highlighting the need to monitor symptoms for improvement / worsening.
- Provide instructions on when to commence prednisolone *e.g. breathlessness and/or wheeze persist*, and write the specific regimen on the COPD Action Plan.
- Provide education on recognising signs of infection *e.g. Your mucus may turn green*, and write the specific antibiotic and regimen on the COPD Action Plan.

STEP 5

Complete the red section – Urgent medical review

- Discuss severe exacerbation symptoms and when urgent medical review is required.
- Ensure they understand when it is appropriate to call an ambulance.
- Discuss possible actions they can safely do prior to urgent medical review *e.g. Start your prednisolone and/or start antibiotics (if not already actioned).*

STEP 6

Provide your details and authorise

- Complete the My HealthCare Team section. Include an after-hours contact person for your clinic.
- Complete the Health Professional Authorisation section. *Non-prescribers: liaise with the doctor to review, sign and date the plan. Ask the doctor to provide prescriptions for recommended medicines and to reinforce the plan to the patient.*

STEP 7

Save and provide to the patient

- Save and import / print and scan to their electronic clinical file.
- Give the patient a copy. *Ask them to keep their COPD Action Plan in a visible place e.g. on the fridge and to bring it to future appointments for discussion.*
- Suggest the use of a 'symptom diary' to help keep track of symptoms over time.



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