

Interprofessional Collaboration and Patient-Provider Communication Challenges in MS Care: A Mixed-Methods Needs Assessment

Sophie Péloquin¹, Klaus Schmierer², Jiwon Oh³, Thomas Leist⁴, Suzanne Murray¹, Patrice Lazure¹

Background

The evolving diagnostic and treatment landscape in multiple sclerosis (MS) needs more patient engagement and interprofessional collaboration to support a new standard of care.

❖ **The purpose of this study was to inform educational initiatives targeting healthcare providers (HCPs) involved in MS care.**

Objectives

To assess gaps and challenges that HCPs experience in providing care to people with MS (pwMS) regarding:

1. Patient engagement, and
2. Interprofessional collaboration

Methods

A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was used, in which qualitative findings informed quantitative results.

Participants

Neurologists (NEs) and Advanced Practice Nurses (APNs):

- ✓ **in practice for at least 2 years, and**
- ✓ **follow at least 10 MS patients per month.**

Country	Qualitative phase		Quantitative phase	
	NEs	APNs	NEs	APNs
France	4	3	41	16
Germany	4	3	41	15
Italy	4	3	40	15
Spain	4	3	41	15
UK	4	3	40	15
US	6	4	60	21
Canada	4	3	40	16
Total	30	22	303	113

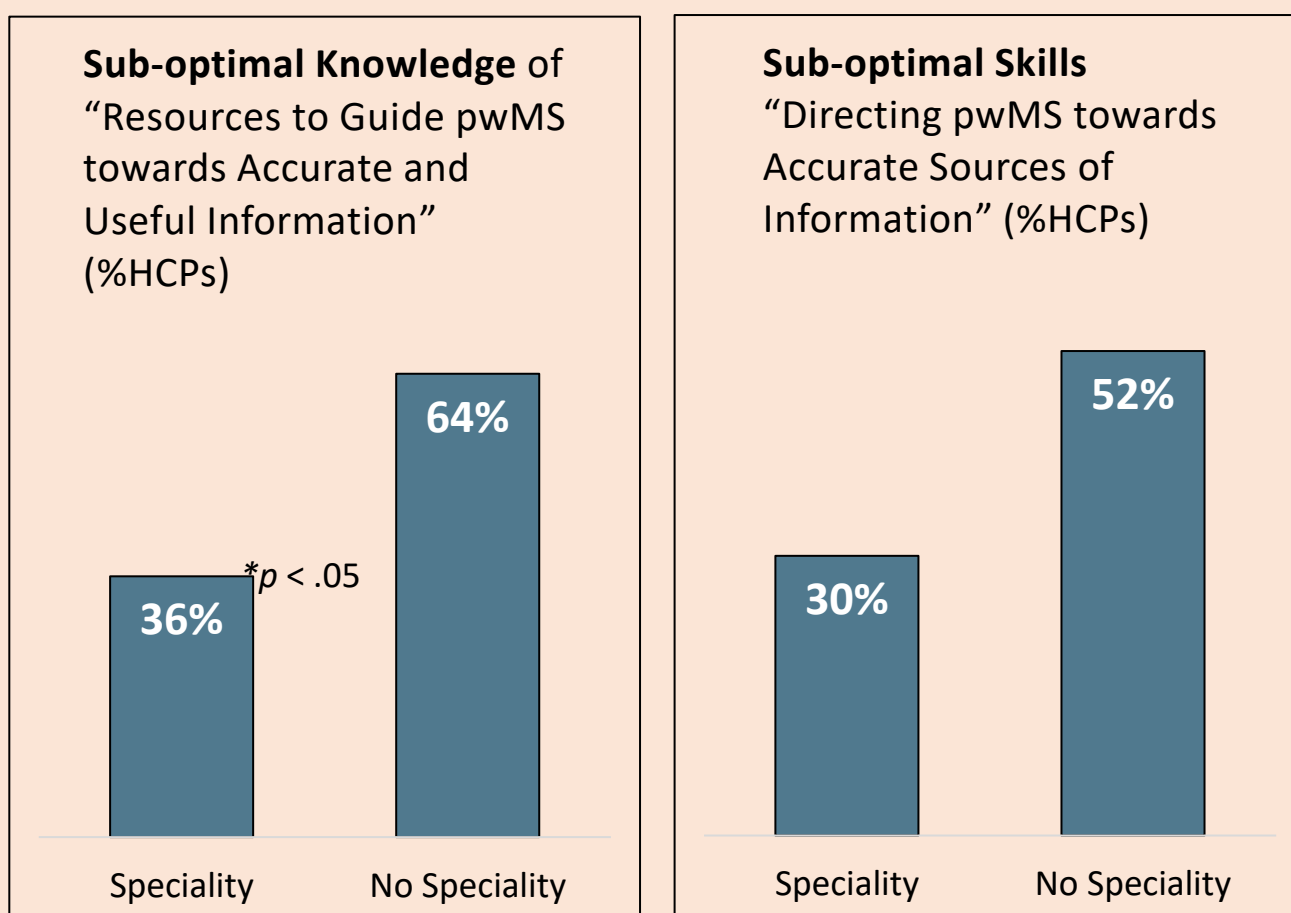
Data Analyses

- Interviews (April-May 2019) were coded using **thematic analysis** (NVivo).
- Surveys (May-June 2019) were analyzed using **frequencies**, and **chi-square statistics** for group comparisons (SPSS).
- Interviews and surveys were **triangulated** to gain greater insights.

Results

Sub-optimal Knowledge & Skills among HCPs in Directing Patients to Information that Supports Engagement

Nearly half (46%) of HCPs regardless of specialty reported sub-optimal knowledge of resources to guide pwMS to accurate and useful information. Approximately 67% of HCPs reported a specialty in MS.



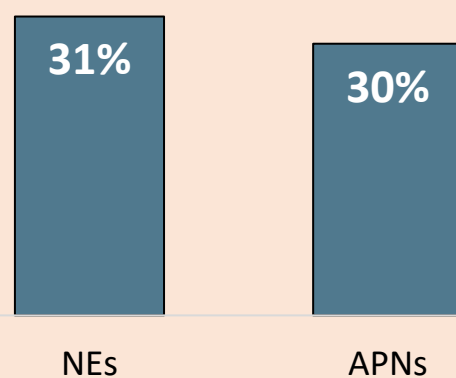
"There's a percentage of patients who say, 'well, I hear you, Doc, but I don't think that's what I've got,' or, 'I don't need any treatment. I'm going to my naturopath and I'm going to get these really awesome protein shakes. That's going to cure my MS.' That's a very well-defined population and it's pretty difficult to convince them of anything ..." - NE, CAN

"I believe this is excessive pressure on the patient, that's not their role to chose their treatment, they can give their opinion but must not bear a charge they might not stand. You must take the state of mind of patient." - NE, FR

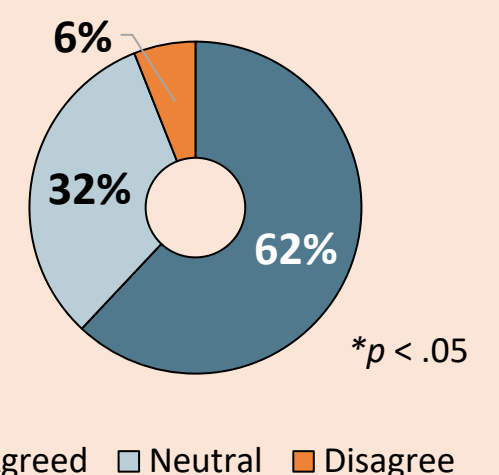
HCPs reported barriers engaging pwMS in shared decision-making

Sub-optimal Skills & Confidence in Providing Patient Psychosocial Support by Profession

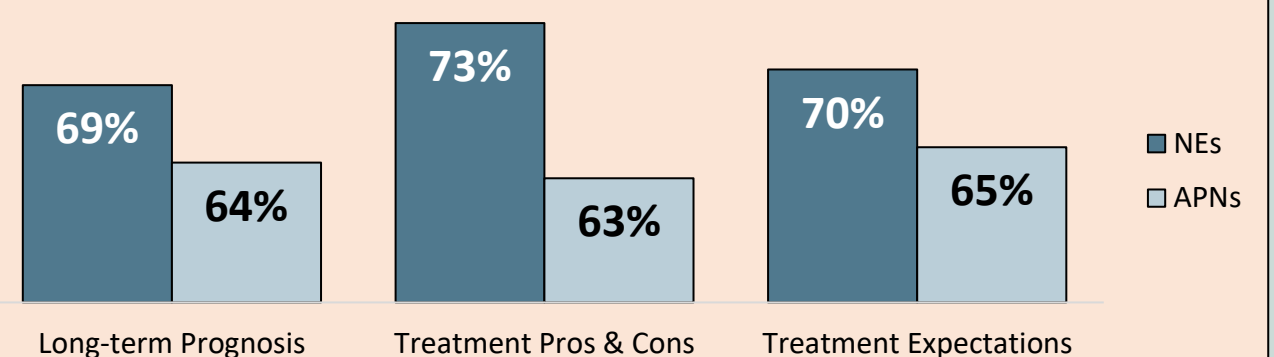
Sub-optimal Skills
"Assessing Need for Psychological Support in pwMS"



A majority perceived "I have a role to play in managing psychosocial issues" (%NEs)



Confidence Gaps in Communicating with pwMS



Conclusion

1. This study identified knowledge, skills, and confidence gaps reported by HCPs in providing optimal educational and psychosocial support for pwMS.
2. IP education, focused on developing communication and collaboration skills, and strategies to foster patient engagement through shared-decision making could help support optimal care for with pwMS.