Pharmacist Interventions to Improve Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors in Diabetes

A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

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OBJECTIVE — This systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials (RCTs) assesses the effect of pharmacist care on cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors among outpatients with diabetes.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS — MEDLINE, EMBASE, CINAHL, and the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials were searched. Pharmacist interventions were classified, and a meta-analysis of mean changes of blood pressure (BP), total cholesterol (TC), LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, and BMI was performed using random-effects models.

RESULTS — The meta-analysis included 15 RCTs (9,111 outpatients) in which interventions were conducted exclusively by pharmacists in 8 studies and in collaboration with physicians, nurses, dietitians, or physical therapists in 7 studies. Pharmacist interventions included medication management, educational interventions, feedback to physicians, measurement of CVD risk factors, or patient-reminder systems. Compared with usual care, pharmacist care was associated with significant reductions for systolic BP (12 studies with 1,894 patients; −6.2 mmHg [95% CI −7.8 to −4.6]), diastolic BP (9 studies with 1,496 patients; −4.5 mmHg [−6.2 to −2.8]), TC (8 studies with 1,280 patients; −15.2 mg/dL [−24.7 to −5.7]), LDL cholesterol (9 studies with 8,084 patients; −11.7 mg/dL [−15.8 to −7.6]), and BMI (5 studies with 751 patients; −0.9 kg/m² [−1.7 to −0.1]). Pharmacist care was not associated with a significant change in HDL cholesterol (6 studies with 826 patients; 0.2 mg/dL [−1.9 to 2.4]).

CONCLUSIONS — This meta-analysis supports pharmacist interventions—alone or in collaboration with other health care professionals—to improve major CVD risk factors among outpatients with diabetes.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the major cause of death in patients with diabetes and is about two times more frequent in these patients compared with people without diabetes (1). Although studies have demonstrated that control of major CVD risk factors, such as hypertension or dyslipidemia, reduces the risk of cardiovascular complications among patients with diabetes (2–5), CVD risk factors remain poorly controlled in these patients (5–7). Therefore, effective interventions and new models of care are needed to improve management of CVD risk factors among patients with diabetes, particularly in light of the increase in health care costs and the increasing problems with access to primary care physicians in most health care systems (8). A recent systematic review evaluating the effect of pharmacists as team members on patient care in the United States has underscored the integration of pharmacists as a health care team member and provider of health services (9).

Pharmacists can therefore help fill the gap as primary care providers and can contribute to the control of CVD risk factors by their knowledge of medications, their easy accessibility for patients, and their collaborative practice with physicians (9–13). More specifically, pharmacists have the opportunity to provide medication instructions to patients at each prescription, to improve safe medication use, and to assist physicians in chronic care (12,14,15). In a recent meta-analysis, we showed that pharmacist care improves the management of outpatients with major modifiable CVD risk factors (15). However, studies conducted solely in outpatients with diabetes were not included in that meta-analysis. Other reviews have evaluated pharmacist interventions in the management of diabetes but focused solely on glycemic control (16), did not include only randomized controlled trials (RCTs), or did not pool data (17–19). Consequently, the objective of this systematic review and meta-analysis of RCTs is to assess the effect of pharmacist care on major CVD risk factors among outpatients with diabetes.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS — We followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement to conduct our systematic review (20).

Inclusion criteria and outcomes
We included studies that 1) had a RCT design; 2) evaluated the effect of pharmacist care delivered by a community, hospital, or clinical pharmacist; 3) among adults outpatients with diabetes (type 1 or 2) and with any modifiable major CVD risk factors (hypertension, dyslipidemia, smoking, or obesity); and 4) compared with a usual
Search strategy

In collaboration with a research medical librarian (A.L.C.), electronic databases including MEDLINE via PubMed (1950 to March 2012), EMBASE (1980 to March 2012), CINAHL (1937 to March 2012), and the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (up to March 2012) were searched for randomized controlled studies of the impact of pharmacist care on major CVD risk factors among outpatients with diabetes, published in any language. Inclusion criteria and methods of analysis were specified in advance and documented in a protocol available upon request.

The PubMed search syntax served as the basis for all search strategies, using Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and text terms with Boolean operators. The syntax consisted of three search themes intersected by the Boolean term “AND,” MeSH terms included cardiovascular disease-related terms (“Cardiovascular Diseases,” “Dyslipidemias,” “Diabetes Mellitus,” “Smoking,” “Overweight”) and pharmacist-related terms (“Pharmacists,” “Pharmaceutical Services,” “Pharmacy Service, Hospital,” “Pharmacies,” “Pharmacy”). The search was focused on randomized controlled studies using the Cochrane Highly Sensitive Search Strategy for identifying randomized trials in MEDLINE. The search strategy was then adapted for EMBASE, CINAHL, and the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials. In addition to database searches, we also conducted a hand search of bibliographies of all relevant articles. The detailed search strategy used is described in the Supplementary Data online.

Methods of the review

Two reviewers (V.S. and A.C.) independently screened all titles and abstracts and then examined the full text of each potentially eligible article using prespecified inclusion criteria (Fig. 1). Disagreements about study selection were resolved by discussion.

Data extraction

Two reviewers (V.S. and A.C.) independently extracted data using a standardized collection form. From each included study, the following characteristics were abstracted: 1) study authors and country and year of the publication; 2) study characteristics (study setting and design, duration of follow-up, sample size); 3) characteristics of participants (sex, age, CVD risk factors, medications); 4) characteristics of interventions (description and frequency of the pharmacist intervention); 5) characteristics of the usual care group; and 6) outcome measures (change in BP, TC, LDL cholesterol, and BMI between baseline and follow-up).

Pharmacist interventions were classified using a priori-defined categories based on a recent systematic review of pharmacist care of patients with heart failure (21) as pharmacist-directed care (pharmacist initiated and managed interventions) and pharmacist collaborative care (pharmacist collaborated in interventions conducted by a multidisciplinary healthcare team).

Assessment of the methodological quality of individual studies

Using the Cochrane Risk of Bias Tool (22), two reviewers (V.S. and A.C.) independently assessed the quality (risk of bias) of each study regarding the following domains: adequacy of randomization, concealment of allocation, blinding of outcome assessors, completeness of data, selective outcome reporting, and “other bias.” As recommended, we rated each item as 1) “low risk of bias” if it is unlikely that a bias seriously alters the results; 2) “unclear” if it is plausible that a bias raises some doubt about the results; and 3) “high risk of bias” if it is plausible that a bias seriously weakens confidence in the results. Disagreements were resolved by discussion.

Statistical analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted following the recommendations of the Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions (22) and the PRISMA statement (20). Data were analyzed using STATA 11.0 software (StataCorp LP, College Station, TX). The meta-analysis was conducted using a random-effects model because of the a priori heterogeneity (15). Pooled intervention effect estimates are reported as weighted mean differences with 95% CI. We calculated SDs from SEs or CIs presented in the reports, if required. The $\chi^2$ and I$^2$ statistics were used to assess statistical heterogeneity across studies, with I$^2$ values of 50% or more indicating a substantial level of heterogeneity (22). Post hoc subgroup analyses were conducted according to the type of pharmacist care, the type and the number of interventions, and the setting of care. Funnel plots were drawn, and Egger tests were computed to explore a potential publication bias. Sensitivity analyses were conducted.
by excluding relatively small studies and restricting analysis to good-quality studies.

RESULTS

Results of the research and the included studies

Initially, 14,035 citations were identified (Fig. 1). After initial screening of titles and abstracts, 169 potentially relevant full-text articles were reviewed for eligibility. The review included 15 RCTs, all published in English, involving 9,111 participants.

Details of the included studies, including the characteristics of the participants, the interventions of the pharmacist, and the outcome are given in Tables 1 and 2. The 9,111 participants (52% women) were a mean age of 63 years (range 49–70). The mean duration of follow-up was 11 months (range 4–24). Participants were most often followed up in outpatient clinics (12 studies); for example, Veterans Affairs Medical Centers or primary care clinics. Three studies were conducted in community pharmacies (8,23,24). Nine of the 15 studies were conducted in North America (7 in the U.S. and 2 in Canada), 4 in Asia (Thailand, China, United Arab Emirates, and India), 1 in Europe (Spain), and 1 in Australia.

Table 1—Characteristics of the included studies: study setting and design, sample size, and study participants

| Source; country | Study setting | Study design, duration | Sample size (intervention/usual care) | Study participants; mean age |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pharmacist-directed care | | | | |
| Al Mazroui et al., 2009 (25); United Arab Emirates | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 12 months | 234 (117/117) | Patients with type 2 diabetes taking oral hypoglycemic Med; 49 years |
| Chan et al., 2012 (26); Hong Kong | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 9 months | 105 (51/54) | Patients with uncontrolled type 2 diabetes (AIC ≥ 8%), taking at least 5 Meds including one hypoglycemic Med; 62 years |
| Fornos et al., 2006 (23); Spain | Community pharmacy | RCT, 13 months | 112 (56/56) | Patients with diabetes taking oral antidiabetic Med; 64 years |
| Kraemer et al., 2012 (24); U.S. | Community pharmacy | RCT, 12 months | 67 (36/31) | Employees with type 1 or 2 diabetes; 54 years |
| Phumipamorn et al., 2008 (27); Thailand | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 8 months | A1C, TC, HDL-C, 130 (63/67), LDL-C, 108 (53/55) | Patients with diabetes (A1C >7%); 54 years |
| Planas et al., 2009 (28); U.S. | Community pharmacy | RCT, 9 months | 40 (25/15) | Patients with uncontrolled diabetes (A1C >7.0%) and hypertension (BP ≥130/80 mmHg) or taking antihypertensive Med; 65 years |
| Rothman et al., 2005 (29); U.S. | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 12 months | 194 (99/95) | Patients with type 2 diabetes (A1C ≥8.0%); 55 years |
| Sriram et al., 2011 (30); India | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 8 months | 120 (60/60) | Patients with type 2 diabetes; 56 years |
| Pharmacist-collaborative care | | | | |
| Clifford et al., 2005 (31); Australia | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 12 months | 180 (92/88) | Patients with type 2 diabetes taking at least one prescribed Med; 70 years |
| Edelman et al., 2010 (32); U.S. | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 12 months | 239 (133/106) | Patients with uncontrolled diabetes (A1C>7.5%) and hypertension (BP>140/90 mmHg) taking Med for diabetes; 62 years |
| McLean et al., 2008 (8); Canada | Community pharmacy | RCT, 6 months | 227 (115/112) | Adult patients with diabetes and BP >130/80 mmHg taking insulin or oral hypoglycemic Med for >6 months; 65 years |
| Pape et al., 2011 (33); U.S. | Outpatient clinic | Cluster-RCT, 24 months | 6,963 (2,047/4,916) | Patients with type 1 or 2 diabetes; 64 years |
| Scott et al., 2006 (34); U.S. | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 9 months | 131 (64/67) | Patients with type 2 diabetes; 51 years |
| Simpson et al., 2011 (35); Canada | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 12 months | 260 (131/129) | Patients with type 2 diabetes; 59 years |
| Taveira et al., 2010 (36); U.S. | Outpatient clinic | RCT, 4 months | 109 (58/51) | Patients with uncontrolled type 2 diabetes (A1C between 7 and 9%); 64 years |

HDL-C, HDL cholesterol; LDL-C, LDL cholesterol; TC, total cholesterol; Med, medication; HTA, hypertension.
| Source; country | Key components of pharmacist interventions | Intervention frequency | Description of usual care group | Outcomes extracted |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| **Pharmacist-directed care** | | | | |
| Al Mazroui et al., 2009 (25); United Arab Emirates | Pharmaceutical care including: 1) Patient education regarding Med (side effects, storage of medication), disease (risk on diabetes complications), lifestyle and compliance; distribution of printed leaflet; 2) behavioral modification support (advice on self-monitoring of glycemic control, physical exercise; Med compliance and smoking cessation); and 3) discussion with physician and, if necessary recommendation (dosage simplification) to physician regarding Med changes. | Not applicable | Usual care from medical and nursing staff; no patient education; no treatment plan | BP, TC, LDL-C, HDL-C, and BMI at follow-up |
| Chan et al., 2012 (26); Hong Kong | Face-to-face interview with pharmacist before each physician visit including: 1) Assessment of Med history (prescription Med, such as over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and herbal supplements); 2) evaluation of patient Med adherence; 3) education about CVDs and lifestyle modifications; 4) distribution of color stickers for pillboxes or Med bags of patients; and 5) DRPs identification with notification to physician. | Every patient encounter | Usual care without pharmacist intervention | Change in BP, HDL-C, LDL-C, TC, and BMI from baseline |
| Fornos et al., 2006 (23); Spain | Pharmacotherapy follow-up program including: 1) Patient interview regarding Med, health problems, and lifestyle; 2) patient education regarding diabetes, lifestyle (physical activity, healthy diet, smoking cessation) and Med; 3) distribution of verbal and written information about the correct use of Med; and 4) detection and resolution of DRPs. | Monthly | Usual care | BP, TC, LDL-C, HDL-C, and BMI at follow-up |
| Kraemer et al., 2012 (24); U.S. | Multiple scheduled educational appointments including: 1) Patient education and empowerment; and 2) progress note to patient’s physician by fax, e-mail, or mail after each visit. | 1, 2, 3 months; thereafter, every 1–3 months | Usual care received written and postal educational information about diabetes | Change in BP, HDL-C, LDL-C, and TC |
| Phumipamorn et al., 2008 (27); Thailand | Check Med pill count; patient education regarding Med, diabetic treatment and lifestyle; distribution of diabetic pamphlet. | Every 2 months (7 visits over 12 months) | Usual care provided by physicians; usual Med dispensation by pharmacist | Change in TC, LDL-C, and HDL-C from baseline |
| Planas et al., 2009 (28); U.S. | A community-based MTM program including: 1) Med review related to current prescribed and nonprescribed Med to identify DRPs; 2) DRPs identification; 3) if DRP identified, recommendations to physicians regarding adjustment HTA Med dose and addition Med by fax or telephone; 4) patient education regarding Med, lifestyle and diet; and 5) a copy of the visit note sent to physician. | Monthly | Usual care | Change in BP and TC from baseline |
| Rothman et al., 2005 (29); U.S. | Intensive diabetes management: 1) Patient education and counseling regarding diabetes and Med; 2) Med adjustments (initiation or increase) based on BP, cholesterol, and glucose evidence-based algorithms with the approval of physicians; and 3) proactive management of clinical parameters using a database to track patient outcomes and proactively improve care. | Every 2–4 weeks or more frequently if necessary | Usual care | Change in BP and TC from baseline |

Continued on p. 2710
| Source, country | Key components of pharmacist interventions | Intervention frequency | Description of usual care group | Outcomes extracted |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Sriram et al., 2011 (30); India | Pharmaceutical care including: 1) Patient education including Med counseling, dietary, exercise, and lifestyle modifications; 2) distribution of educational materials, including information leaflet and diabetic diary; and 3) contact by telephone to monitor patient progress. | Not applicable | Usual care receiving no pharmaceutical care | BMI at follow-up |
| Pharmacists-collaborative care | Clifford et al., 2005 (31); Australia | Pharmaceutical care program including: 1) Med review including complementary and diabetes Meds by patient questionnaire; 2) listing and ranking of DRPs; 3) recommendations to physician regarding Meds; and 4) patient education related to Meds, diet, exercise, and home glucose monitoring (distribution of educational pamphlets). **Team members: physician** | At baseline, 6 and 12 months plus 6 weekly telephone contacts | Usual care | Change in BP, TC, HDL-C, and BMI from baseline |
| Edelman et al., 2010 (32); U.S. | At each GMC session (7–8 patients with the care team): 1) Med review from medical records by pharmacist and physician; 2) review of BP and home blood glucose readings by pharmacist and physician; 3) development of individualized plan for Med or lifestyle management with pharmacist and physician; 4) adjustment of Med by pharmacist and physician and report to primary care providers; and 5) patient education and counseling related to Med and lifestyle. **Team members: physician and nurse** | Every 2 months (7 visits over 12 months) | Usual care; no active intervention | BP at follow-up |
| McLean et al., 2008 (8); Canada | Pharmacist-nurse team including: 1) Patient education and counseling regarding cardiovascular risk reduction; 2) distribution of HTA education pamphlet and wallet card documenting recorded patient BP measures faxed to physicians; and 3) patient’s risk factors, current Med and BP measures with any suggestions for further management based on guidelines faxed to physicians. **Team member: nurse** | Every 6 weeks | Usual care with distribution of BP wallet card, pamphlet on diabetes; with general counseling from nurse and pharmacist | Change in SBP from baseline |
| Pape et al., 2011 (33); U.S. | Physician-pharmacist team including: 1) Reviewing of medical charts of patients with an elevated LDL-C; 2) recommendations on Med and follow-up laboratory monitoring sent electronically to physician; 3) if recommendation is accepted by physician, telephonic pharmacist intervention to patient (confirmation of Med history and previous adverse reactions, identification of barriers of adherence); and 4) documentation of patient communication and care in medical record and consignment by physician. **Team member: physician** | Not applicable | Usual care | LDL-C and BP at follow-up |

Continued on p. 2711
Types of pharmacist interventions

Eight studies were pharmacist-directed care (23–30) and seven were pharmacist collaborative care (8,31–36) (Tables 1 and 2). Pharmacist interventions were

1) medication management (monitoring of drug therapy such as adjustment and change of medications, medication review from patient interviews, or assessment of medication compliance; Team members: physician, nurse, and dietician); 

2) educational interventions to patients (education and counseling about medications, lifestyle and physical activity or about compliance; distribution or use of educational material; educational workshop; Team member: physician); 

3) feedback to health care professional (drug-related problems [DRPs] identification, recommendation and discussion with physician regarding medication changes or problems of compliance, development of treatment plans; Team members: nurse, nutritionist, and physical therapist); 

4) measurement of CVD risk factors (measurement of BP or review of laboratory data by the pharmacist during follow-up); and 

5) patient-reminder systems (telephone contact).

Methodological quality of included studies

As assessed by the Cochrane Risk of Bias Tool (22), the quality of the 15 included studies varied (Supplementary Fig 1). Most studies adequately described randomization sequence generation, were free of selective outcome reporting, and were free of other bias (e.g., important baseline imbalances, sequence generation free of bias, allocation concealment in patient and blinding to outcome assessment was not described in most studies, participants were not blinded to pharmacist intervention).

Outcomes

The outcome was systolic BP in 12 studies (including 1,894 patients) (23–26,28–30,32,33,36); 7 demonstrated statistically significant reductions with pharmacist care. Of the 12 studies reporting systolic BP (8,23–26,28–30,32,33,36), 7 demonstrated statistically significant reductions with pharmacist care. No study reported smoking as an outcome. 

As assessed by the Cochrane Risk of Bias Tool (22), the quality of the 15 included studies varied (Supplementary Fig 1). Most studies adequately described randomization sequence generation, were free of selective outcome reporting, and were free of other bias (e.g., important baseline imbalances, sequence generation free of bias, allocation concealment in patient and blinding to outcome assessment was not described in most studies, participants were not blinded to pharmacist intervention).
Pharmacist care in diabetes

studies reporting diastolic BP (23–26,29,31,32,35,36), three demonstrated statistically significant reductions with pharmacist care. Pooled analyses indicate that pharmacist care showed greater reductions in systolic BP (weighted mean difference −6.2 mmHg [−7.8 to −4.6]; P < 0.001) and diastolic BP (weighted mean difference −4.5 mmHg [−6.2 to −2.8]; P < 0.001) compared with usual care (Fig. 2A and B). Heterogeneity was negligible for systolic BP (I² = 2%) but moderate for diastolic BP (I² = 46%).

TC, LDL cholesterol, and HDL cholesterol

Two of the eight studies reporting TC demonstrated statistically significant reductions with pharmacist care (25,27), and the pooled estimate showed a significant reduction in TC (weighted mean difference −15.2 mg/dL [−24.7 to −5.7]; P = 0.002; Fig. 3A). Five of the nine studies reporting LDL cholesterol demonstrated statistically significant reductions with pharmacist care (25–27,33,34), and the pooled estimate showed a significant reduction in LDL cholesterol (weighted mean difference −11.7 mg/dL [−15.8 to −7.6]; P < 0.001; Fig. 3B). Six studies reported HDL cholesterol (Fig. 3C). The pooled estimate did not show a statistically significant change in HDL cholesterol (weighted mean difference 0.2 mg/dL [−1.9 to 2.36]; P = 0.846). There was substantial heterogeneity for TC (I² = 75%) and HDL cholesterol (I² = 72%) and moderate heterogeneity for LDL cholesterol (I² = 41%).

BMI

Five studies reported BMI (Fig. 3D). Two studies (30,31) showed a statistically significant benefit of pharmacist care. The pooled estimate showed a significant reduction in BMI (weighted mean difference −0.9 kg/m² [−1.7 to −0.1]; P = 0.026) with a substantial heterogeneity between studies (I² = 92%).

Subgroup analyses

We conducted post hoc subgroup analyses to explore the possible differences between studies according to the type of pharmacist care, the type and the number of interventions and the setting of care (Supplementary Table 1). These analyses, conducted only for the outcome systolic BP available in 12 studies, showed a statistically and clinically significant reduction in systolic BP for both pharmacist-directed care and pharmacist-collaborative care, with a tendency to a greater reduction in systolic BP for pharmacist-directed care compared with pharmacist-collaborative care (weighted mean difference −8.1 mmHg [−12.3 to −3.7] vs. −5.7 mmHg [−7.7 to −3.7]). Studies conducted in community pharmacies inclined to a greater reduction in systolic BP compared with other studies (weighted mean difference −10.0 mmHg [−16.4 to −3.7] vs. −5.5 mmHg [−7.3 to −3.7]). We found no major differences in systolic BP reductions according to the type and the number of interventions.

Publication bias

We explored the possibility of publication bias for the 12 studies in which the outcome was systolic BP. The funnel plot for the outcome systolic BP showed a slight asymmetry, with a borderline P value using the Egger test (P = 0.08), indicating a potential publication bias.

Sensitivity analyses

Because of a potential publication bias and to explore the impact of study quality on the effect estimates, we conducted two sensitivity analyses. After excluding the six smallest studies (8,25,29,31,32,35), with fewer than 80 participants per randomization group, the six remaining studies demonstrated a statistically significant reductions in systolic BP for pharmacist care compared with the usual care group (weighted mean difference −5.7 mmHg [−7.8 to −3.6]; I² = 0%) and of the same magnitude that was observed when all studies were included. The second sensitivity analysis was restricted to studies of “good quality.” Of 12 studies with the systolic BP outcome, 5 were of good quality, with a low risk of bias on at least 4 of 6 items using the Cochrane Risk of Bias Tool (22), and showed again statistically significant and similar reductions for the pharmacist care (weighted mean difference −5.6 mmHg [−8.2 to −2.9]; I² = 0%).

CONCLUSIONS—Our systematic review and meta-analysis supports the benefits of pharmacist interventions in the management of major CVD risk factors among outpatients with diabetes. Pharmacist interventions were associated with significant reductions in systolic and diastolic BP, TC, LDL cholesterol, and BMI compared with the usual care group. No significant change was observed with HDL cholesterol. The most frequent pharmacist interventions were medication management (monitoring of drug therapy such as adjustment and change of medications, medication review from patient interviews, or assessment of medication compliance), educational interventions to patients (education and counseling about medications, lifestyle and physical activity or about compliance; distribution or use of educational material; educational workshop), and feedback to another health care professional (DRPs identification; recommendation and discussion with physician regarding medication changes or problems of compliance; development of treatment plans).

Beyond the individual studies included in our review, no other systematic review has examined the efficacy of pharmacist interventions in the management of major CVD risk factors among patients with diabetes. Nevertheless, these beneficial results are consistent with our recent systematic review on the effect of pharmacist care in CVD care among outpatients (15) and extend this earlier work by including data from trials focusing specifically on pharmacist care among outpatients with diabetes.

The benefit of pharmacist interventions on CVD risk factors in patients with diabetes combined with the impact of pharmacist care on metabolic control (A1C and fasting blood glucose), as shown in a recent systematic review (16), could translate in substantial benefits on patient morbidity and mortality as well as on health care costs. Our review indicates that pharmacist care improves in a comprehensive manner all major CVD risk factors among outpatients with diabetes, except smoking, for which no study was identified. Because smoking amplifies the risk of CVD among patients with diabetes (37) and may have deleterious effect on diabetes control (38), studies are needed to assess the impact of pharmacist care to reduce the risk of smoking among patients with diabetes. The beneficial effect of pharmacist care on BMI that we observed is encouraging because, like smoking cessation, weight loss is difficult to achieve but of major importance among patients with diabetes to help reduce CVD risk and control blood glucose (39).

We could not identify which type of intervention was more potent to control CVD risk factors among patients with diabetes. Our subgroup analyses restricted to studies assessing systolic BP did not reveal clear differences in effect size according to the type of pharmacist care, the type and the number of interventions, or the setting of care. Moreover, we could not estimate from this review how much training the pharmacist needs, which elements of the intervention have a real impact, the
Figure 2—Forest plots show the effect of pharmacist care on the mean difference in systolic BP (A) and in diastolic BP (B). Mean differences of less than 0 between pharmacist care and usual care groups indicate an effect in favor of pharmacist care. (A high-quality color representation of this figure is available in the online issue.)
**Pharmacist care in diabetes**

**A**

| Study               | Pharmacist care N | Usual care N | Favors pharmacist care | Favors usual care | Mean difference (95% CI) | Weight |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| Al Mazroui et al., 2009 | 117               | 117          |                        |                   | -32.87 (-42.21 to -23.53) | 15.23  |
| Chan et al., 2012   | 51                | 54           |                        |                   | -12.40 (-25.87 to 1.07)  | 13.14  |
| Clifford et al., 2005| 92                | 88           |                        |                   | -3.87 (-11.97 to 4.23)   | 15.81  |
| Fornos et al., 2006 | 56                | 56           |                        |                   | -15.00 (-30.75 to 0.75)  | 11.98  |
| Kraemer et al., 2012 | 36                | 29           |                        |                   | -6.50 (-23.38 to 10.38)  | 11.42  |
| Phumpamorn et al., 2007 | 63               | 67           |                        |                   | -30.40 (-46.52 to -14.28) | 11.79  |
| Rothman et al., 2005 | 99                | 95           |                        |                   | -15.00 (-42.25 to 12.25) | 7.24   |
| Simpson et al., 2011 | 131               | 129          |                        |                   | -5.41 (-18.39 to 7.57)   | 13.39  |
| Overall (I-squared = 75.0%, P < 0.001) |                   |               |                        |                   | -15.18 (-24.69 to -5.68) | 100.00 |

**NOTE:** Weights are from random-effects analysis

**B**

| Study               | Pharmacist care N | Usual care N | Favors pharmacist care | Favors usual care | Mean difference (95% CI) | Weight |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------|
| Al Mazroui et al., 2009 | 117               | 117          |                        |                   | -22.04 (-30.00 to -14.08) | 14.36  |
| Chan et al., 2012   | 51                | 54           |                        |                   | -12.70 (-23.80 to -1.60) | 9.48   |
| Fornos et al., 2006 | 56                | 56           |                        |                   | -7.00 (-22.11 to 8.11)   | 5.94   |
| Kraemer et al., 2012 | 35                | 27           |                        |                   | -4.00 (-18.65 to 10.65)  | 6.25   |
| Pape et al., 2011   | 2047              | 4916         |                        |                   | -12.00 (-15.19 to -8.81) | 26.42  |
| Phumpamorn et al., 2008 | 53               | 55           |                        |                   | -24.10 (-41.02 to -7.18) | 4.92   |
| Scott et al., 2006  | 64                | 67           |                        |                   | -11.20 (-19.80 to -2.60) | 13.16  |
| Simpson et al., 2011 | 131               | 129          |                        |                   | -5.41 (-16.25 to 5.43)   | 9.79   |
| Taveira et al., 2006 | 58                | 51           |                        |                   | -3.50 (-14.43 to 7.43)   | 9.89   |
| Overall (I-squared = 40.5%, P = 0.098) |                   |               |                        |                   | -11.73 (-15.82 to -7.64) | 100.00 |

**NOTE:** Weights are from random-effects analysis

**Figure 3**—Forest plots show the effect of pharmacist care on the mean difference in TC (A), LDL cholesterol (B), HDL cholesterol (C), and BMI (D). Mean differences of less than 0 between pharmacist and usual care groups indicate an effect in favor of pharmacist care. (A high-quality color representation of this figure is available in the online issue.)
frequency with which the pharmacist has to intervene, or if there is an impact on CVD risk factors beyond the period of intervention. Nevertheless, identification of the more potent intervention was hampered because pharmacist interventions varied among the identified studies and often included a combination of several interventions. Heterogeneity was found in the effect of interventions on diastolic BP, TC, LDL cholesterol, and HDL cholesterol and may be attributable to differences in terms of interventions, care setting, and co-interventions between studies (15).

**Strengths and limitations**
The strengths of our review include a comprehensive systematic review of the
literature, the assessment of the impact of pharmacist interventions on all major CVD risk factors, and the inclusion of different types of pharmacist interventions. Limitations include the variation in pharmacist interventions between studies, preventing the definite identification of the most beneficial intervention, and the absence of direct evidence of the effect of pharmacist interventions on CVD events or death among patients with diabetes. Another limitation includes the absence in many studies of a detailed description of the intervention provided to the control group. In addition, we could not explain the observed heterogeneity between studies for some outcomes. We also identified a potential publication bias. However, our sensitivity analysis restricted to relatively large studies as well as our analyses restricted to good quality studies did not suggest any substantial bias in the estimation of the effect of pharmacist interventions. Finally, most studies were conducted in the U.S. and Canada, reflecting an advanced role of the pharmacist in these health care systems.

Summary and perspectives
Our review provides evidence that pharmacist interventions—conducted alone or in collaboration with other health care professionals—improve management of major CVD risk factors among outpatients with diabetes. However, our work also indicates that more research is needed to assess which pharmacist interventions are most effective, implementable, and less time-consuming in various types of health care systems or jurisdictions. Future research should also demonstrate cost-effectiveness of pharmacist interventions for patients with diabetes and CVD risk factors. There is also a significant need to develop and evaluate interprofessional education initiatives during pharmacy, medical, and nursing training to enhance future collaborative care among patients with diabetes.

V.S. and A.C. contributed substantially to the conception and design of the study protocol, contributed to the acquisition and management of data, performed statistical analysis, were responsible for the analysis and interpretation of data, drafted the manuscript, revised the manuscript for important intellectual content, and gave final approval for the submitted version. G.P. and B.B. contributed substantially to the conception and design of the study protocol, were responsible for the analysis and interpretation of data, supervised the study, obtained funding, revised the manuscript for important intellectual content, and gave final approval for the submitted version. A.L.C. contributed to the acquisition and management of data, revised the manuscript for important intellectual content, and gave final approval for the submitted version. V.S. and A.C. are the guarantors of this work and, as such, had full access to all of the data in the study and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.

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