1-133 Aricept and use

TIPS Question:

Frequently, families are very reluctant to agree to discontinue the use of Aricept. What suggested articles/data are available to assist in teaching families etc regarding this drug – if/when it is appropriate to stop it.

Response:

This is a good question and speaks to the importance of weighing the:

1) benefits
2) risks

From the RISKS side, it would be useful to see if the drug is causing any of the common side effects and /or making the condition worse (see psychotropics section of Guide and "MIND").

In terms of benefits, research clearly indicates its use in early dementia and benefits in later stages are now being identified. Case studies have also shown its benefits in behavioural problems in dementia.

It would be beneficial to review with the caregiver what the benefits were when it was introduced to determine what it may be helping with (ie. was it cognition, behaviour functioning)

Pfizer has a teaching resource for families; you may want to contact your local representative.

Please note: *TIPS information should be used similar to the way you would use information from a text book! TIPS is not intended to serve as an individual consultation service! .P.I.E.C.E.S. participants should use this information in context and always work closely with the family physician involved in the care of the resident or client and with other Partners In Care to find solutions to individual resident/client issues.*