

Recruitment completed for Pharmacy Care Plans

We are really excited that you recruited more than 860 patients in to the Pharmacy Care Plan service by the end of June.

Our research partners at the School of Pharmacy, University of East Anglia, are very pleased with the quality and detail of the data you are entering on to Pharm-outcomes. They believe that this will produce enough information to undertake a full evaluation of the service in due course. On their advice, we were able to close the recruitment phase and move on to service delivery.

All your patients on the Pharmacy Care Plan service will need booking in for follow-up visits over the next

eight to 10 months, which will allow lots of opportunities for you to help them achieve the personal health goals they have identified.

The data you have entered shows that we have a very good spread of patients taking part in the service, with a broad range of ages, medical conditions and activation levels. This will help show that our service could be of benefit to patients at any pharmacy.

The next big step will be patients' six-month reviews in the autumn. Over the summer, we will be sending you a range of support materials to help you prepare and carry out these reviews to get the best outcomes from them.

Progress report

At the end of the recruitment phase, week 18 (26th June 2015), final patient recruitment figures were:

Pharmacy Care Plan service 865 enrolments 705 first consultations (82%)

These figures will be used as part of the final analysis, taking account of patients who subsequently withdraw for whatever reason.

Pharmacy Care Plan service photo of the month

The team at Rowlands Pharmacy in Knottingley, led by pharmacist Shazia Mahmood, have started seeing the benefits of providing the Pharmacy Care Plan service to their patients.

Team member **Kathryn Carr** says: "I was a bit reluctant at first to do the cholesterol testing and measurements. Working closely with our patients has meant I've got to see them in a very different light and forge much better relationships with them.

"I'm really glad we've been involved with CPF II and looking forward to working with our patients over the next year."

With most patients coming back for interim reviews in the next couple of months, there will be plenty of opportunities to speak to patients about their health goals (see our Top Tips on p2).

One thing to start planning ahead for is the winter flu season. Most of our patients are likely to fall in to one of the "at risk" groups and so would benefit from getting a flu jab. Pharmacies participating in the previous phase of the Community Pharmacy Future project did a fabulous job with getting their patients vaccinated, with those in the Wirral achieving 97.5% – let's see if we can keep this valuable work going.



Picture courtesy of Rowlands Pharmacy

Deborah Walsh, Shazia Mahmood, Kathryn Carr and Dianne Rudd of Rowlands in Knottingley

What sort of goals are we helping patients with?

The key aim of our Pharmacy Care Plan service is to support patients to achieve health goals they have set for themselves. Most patients have set themselves at least one goal. About a fifth have set more than one goal, with one patient setting four goals!

The most common desire among patients is to an increase in physical activity and/or reducing weight as a way of improving their quality of life. Nearly half of patients have set a goal around this.

Around one-third of patients want to see an improvement in their medical condition and about a tenth want

to see a reduction in any of the symptoms they may be experiencing.

There are many ways we can help our patients achieve their goals. The good news is that more than half of our patients describe themselves as being actively involved in their own health (Patient Activation Measure scores of levels 3 or 4). This means they should be receptive to the information you can give them and the actions they can take to adopt or maintain a healthy lifestyle. We will be sending more information on local and national sources of help to you over the summer.

What our patients think of the service

It is clear from our initial feedback that patients are very satisfied with the Pharmacy Care Plan service, so much so that some patients were referred in to it by others who had already been enrolled by pharmacy teams. Such “word of mouth” recommendations are the most valuable.

Patients like the free weight, blood pressure and cholesterol testing that we offer as part of the service. Many are surprised to hear that pharmacies can offer such services.

They like the convenient appointments offered in pharmacies, rather than having to wait weeks to get an appointment to see their GP. They also enjoy the time that pharmacists spend with them discussing their health and medicines, contrasting this with 10 minutes with a GP followed by “some tablets being prescribed”.

What our pharmacy teams are saying

Steven Carmichael, pharmacist at Boots in Carlton Lanes Shopping Centre, Castleford, says: “We’ve had a great start to the project in Castleford and have already had eight patients through for their second consultation.

“These were done slightly earlier than the quarterly review that was suggested, but I felt they could do with a bit of extra support to implement what we had set out in the Patient Care Plans.

In terms of the response from the patients, there is definitely an overall positive feel to the service, with patients appreciating that someone is taking an extra interest in their condition and health outcomes.”

He says that although the pharmacy team already has great relationships with some of their patients, providing the service has been a good opportunity to strengthen those relationships and to develop them with others.

Steven adds: “Through the first round of conversations I have had five New Medicines Service interventions and

two patients referred for our smoking cessation service in store, which has been a great link into services.

With flu vaccinations on the horizon, the six-monthly reviews will be a great time to start conversations with patients about protecting themselves.”

Steven says that on a personal level, he is enjoying the opportunity to take time to go in to greater depth with patients and really explore their needs, but he does feel that the data collection might need to be simplified.

Steven’s comments have been echoed by other pharmacists – while they’ve said that the service is “professionally challenging” and it “pushes them to the edge of their comfort zone”, they also feel rewarded to see that they are making a difference and that patients are very positive about the support they are getting.

Team working is also improving, with support staff growing in confidence and feeling that their jobs are worthwhile and helping patients.

Doing things better – top tips to help you

We can all learn from each other. Here are some ideas about how to make the interim reviews run smoothly.

- ❖ **Check-up** Interim reviews are just a check on patient progress, so they should only take 5-10 minutes
- ❖ **Review data** Review patient data from the first consultation on PharmOutcomes in advance
- ❖ **Health goals** Check patient’s progress on any actions to confirm they are still aiming to achieve their goals
- ❖ **Changes** Use the Pharmacy Care Record to note any changes in health or any use of NHS resources
- ❖ **Support** See if there is any more support you can offer or any services that might be appropriate