

School of Pharmacy

How do we avoid the 'ever decreasing circles syndrome' in service improvement? A. Manzoor, L. Breen, I. Marques, Z. Edwards L.Breen@Bradford.ac.uk

Introduction

Pharmacy provides a core service within the NHS in the UK and has experienced cost-cutting legislation and efficiency initiatives e.g. Carter Review 2016. To remain productive/sustainable pharmacy needs to avoid the fate of 'Ever Decreasing Circles' where improvement seems unachievable.

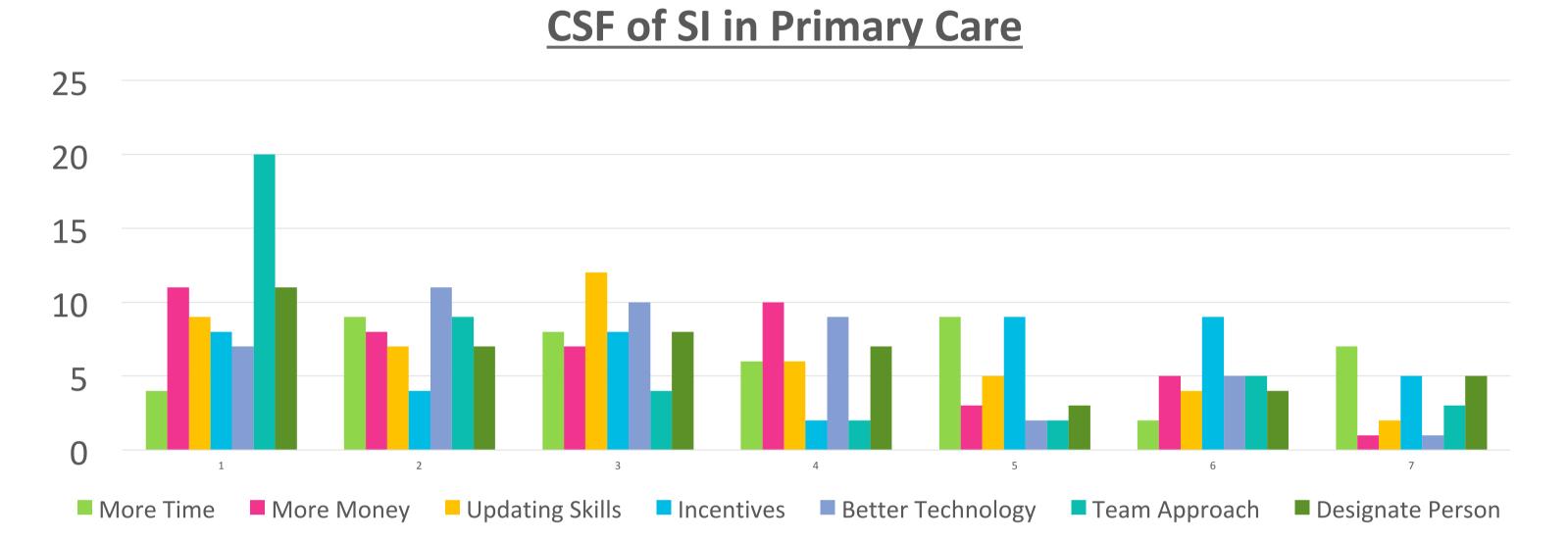
Study Purpose

To critically analyse success factors (SF) and SI obstacles (O) linked to SI activity in UK pharmacies

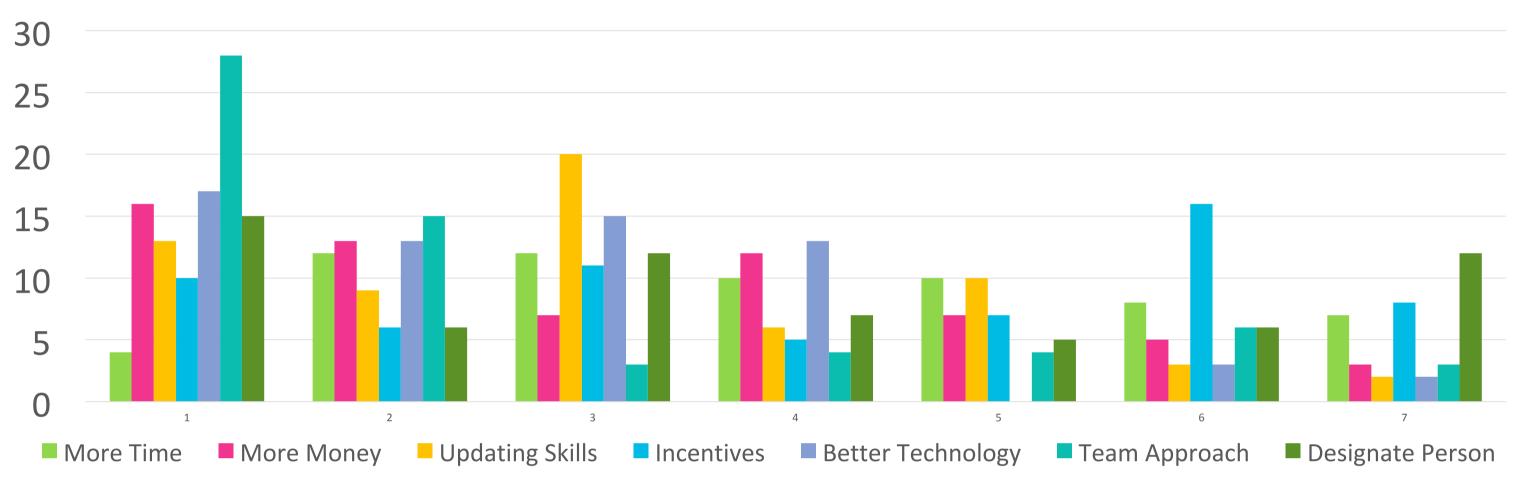
Method

A piloted qualitative e-questionnaire was deployed via a multi-channel approach in November 2016. This was purposely targeted at pharmacy staff investigating reasons for undertaking and benefits of service improvement initiatives, and the SISFs and SIOs influencing its successful implementation. Data were analysed using thematic analysis.

Results

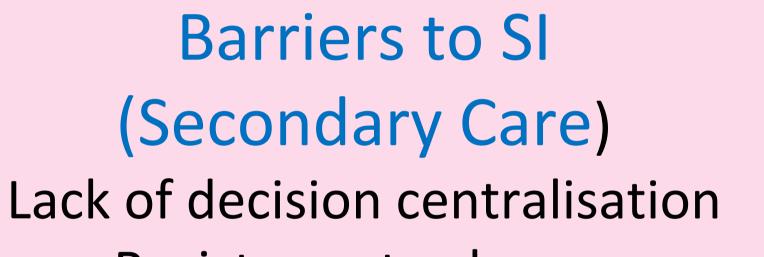


CSF of SI in Secondary Care



Barriers to SI (Primary Care) Lack of commissioned services No staff incentives Insufficient training Insufficient remuneration Limited access to medical records Patients not locked into one pharmacy Lack of experience (staff) Disagreements occurring in clinical team (lack of cohesion) Staff performance linked to profits





Primary and Secondary Care

Management inefficiencies Time pressures Staff shortages Workload Lack of funding Lack of recognition of pharmacists' skills and knowledge Paperwork Resistance to change Staff engagement Lack of sufficient knowledge/ skills Professional and team isolation High staff turnover Patients' ability to self-manage medications efficiently Inadequate IT systems Lack of specialist knowledge Low morale and motivation

Discussion

- The study indicated that successful delivery of the SI agenda may be accomplished through the expansion of pharmacists' skills, promotion of team working, and improvement in the management of SI to deliver services consistently across different pharmacies.
- Solutions to overcoming barriers were suggested such as: increasing funding; investing in services, IT systems and number
 of staff; providing additional/specialist training and increasing the skill-mix; improving communication across the teams and
 collaborative working; offering more incentives and career progression for staff retention; and educating patients about their
 medicines and self-management.
- Participants reported valuing a team work approach to SI with the view to nurture positive change, helping pharmacy become fit for purpose in 2017/18 and beyond.

Conclusion

This study shows areas of concern with current SI initiatives and proposes key areas to target action, improve dissonance and disengagement and help avoid the scenario of 'ever decreasing circle' of SI activity and limited returns.