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## Patients' experiences of a clinical pharmacist integrated into a General Practice setting


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## Patients' experiences of a clinical pharmacist integrated into a General Practice setting

### Abstract

Presentation at 2015 Primary Health Care Research Conference, Adelaide, Australia, 29-31 July.

### Disciplines

Medicine and Health Sciences | Social and Behavioral Sciences

### Publication Details

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# Patients' experiences of a clinical pharmacist integrated into a General Practice setting

2015 PHC RESEARCH CONFERENCE: PAPER ABSTRACT

## Author(s)

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## Organisation

[University of Wollongong](#), [Woonona Medical Practice](#), [Illawarra and Southern Practice Research Network](#)

## Aims & rationale

In the Australian primary care setting, pharmacists are not traditionally incorporated into the healthcare team. Patients are accustomed to pharmacists in the hospital or community pharmacy setting. A five-month study provided the opportunity for a pharmacist to be integrated into the routine management of patients receiving anticoagulants. The aim of this research was to investigate the attitudes and acceptability by patients of a pharmacist as a member of the primary healthcare team.

## Methods

Anonymous surveys were given to patients involved in the pilot project to gauge their attitudes to having the pharmacist engaged in their care, access to their medical histories and advising on medication management. Free-text and additional comments were encouraged. Thematic analysis of the surveys was performed.

## Findings

The response rate was 83%. Ninety-five percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had increased knowledge and confidence in discussing their medicines as a result of the pharmacist consultations; knew to take care with new or purchased over-the-counter medicines and to alert their clinicians of intercurrent illnesses. Thematic analysis of the free-text responses provided by 52% of participants identified two roles of the pharmacist: as an intermediary and an educator. Positive attitudes towards the pharmacist and the professionalism of the pharmacist were additional emergent themes.

## Relevance to policy, research and/or practice needs

The placement of pharmacists in general practice is presently being deliberated by professional pharmacy and medical organisations. This study provides evidence for

the acceptability of such a role, based on actual patient experiences.

#### Presentation type

Paper

#### Session theme

Consumer perspectives

#### Presentation



PDF 671.1 Kb

#### Audio presentation



MP3 2474.0 Kb

#### Session details

2:45pm Thursday 30 July 2015, Adelaide Convention Centre - Riverbank 6


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### Patients' experiences of a clinical pharmacist integrated into a General Practice setting



**Margaret Jordan**  
Haley Frew  
Dr Adele Stewart  
Dr Judy Mullan



### Research study

**Aim**

To pilot the placement of a clinical pharmacist within an integrated anticoagulant clinic in a general practice setting and to:

- qualitatively evaluate the acceptability of the pharmacist and barriers to the placement, from the viewpoint of :
  - GPs and Practice Nurses
  - patients;
- quantitatively compare pre and post outcomes
- explore additional benefits for participants

### Research study

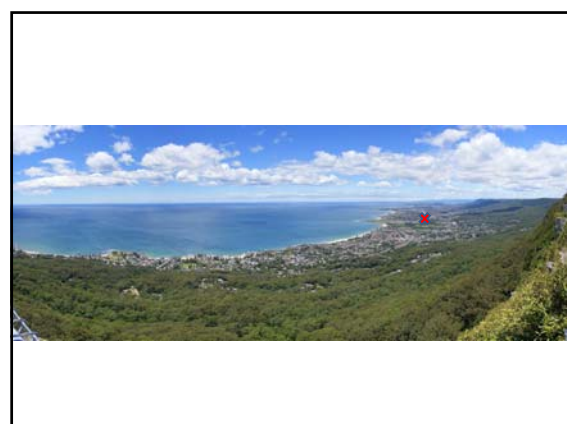
**Aim**

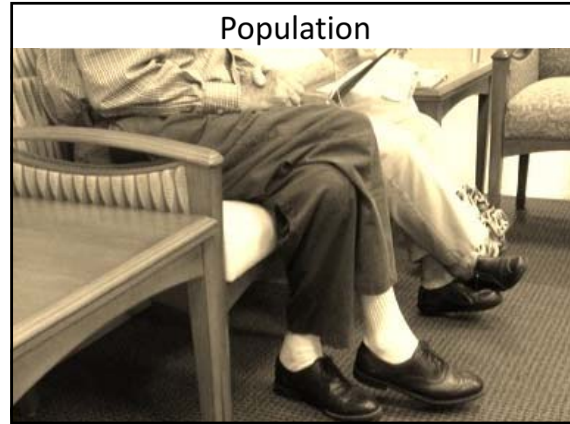
To pilot the placement of a clinical pharmacist within an integrated anticoagulant clinic in a general practice setting and to:

- qualitatively evaluate the acceptability of the pharmacist and barriers to the placement, from the viewpoint of :
  - GPs and Practice Nurses
  - patients
- quantitatively compare pre and post outcomes
- explore additional benefits for participants

### Method

Setting:  
A busy northern suburbs General Practice in Illawarra





### Oral anticoagulants

For:

- atrial fibrillation;
- treatment or prophylaxis against venous-thromboembolism; or
- thrombophilias; and

...taking

WARFARIN



### Non vitamin K-antagonist oral anticoagulants (NOACs)

- apixaban - Eliquis™
- dabigatran - Pradaxa™
- rivaroxaban - Xarelto™

### Evaluation tool

Anonymous survey

APPENDIX B PATIENT PARTICIPANT SURVEY

"the introduction of a clinical pharmacist into a collaborative anticoagulant clinic in general practice and an evaluation of the outcomes"

Please do not write your name on this sheet

Woolongong Medical Practice has been participating in a project this year about the oral anticoagulant medicines: warfarin, apixaban, dabigatran and rivaroxaban. You have been given this survey to fill in because of your involvement in that project. The survey is anonymous.

Questions 1 - 4 are about you:

1. Please tick which oral anticoagulant medicine that you have been taking during this year (2014). (If you have had more than one, please tick all that you have had.)

warfarin

Eliquis™    apixaban    dabigatran    rivaroxaban  
(Coumadin™)   (Eliquis™)   (Pradaxa™)   (Xarelto™)

2. How long have you been taking any of these anticoagulant medicines?

1-3 months    4-6 months    7-12 months    more than 1 year

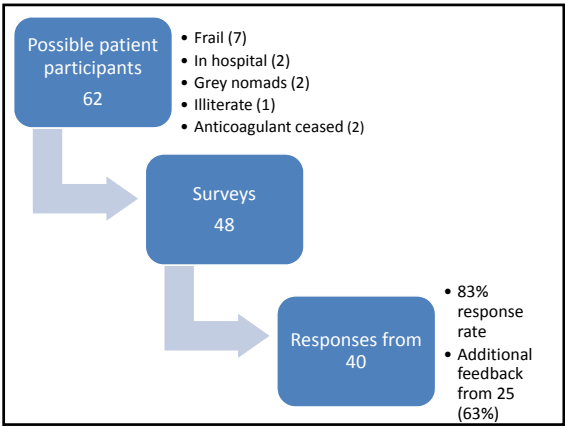
### Patient survey questions

- About them
- About their consultations / interactions with the pharmacist during the study
- Their views / reflections on the role in management of their medicines of...
  - the study pharmacist
  - any pharmacist

Free-text questions were asked and additional comments encouraged



### RESULTS & FINDINGS




	Anticoagulant study - patient cohort	
Number of participants	62	
Male	68%	
Mean age (years)	75	
% over 70 years of age	74%	
<i>Anticoagulant indication:</i>		
Atrial Fibrillation	69%	

	Anticoagulant study - patient cohort	Patient respondents
Number of participants	62	40
Male	68%	69%
Mean age (years)	75	(Not asked)
% over 70 years of age	74%	69%*
<i>Anticoagulant indication:</i>		
Atrial Fibrillation	69%	66%

### Knowledge and intent

95% **agreed** or **strongly agreed** they.....

- knew more about their anticoagulant;
- felt confident talking to the pharmacist about their medicines





### Knowledge & intent

95% now knew to inform the GP....

- if new or changed complementary (CAM) or over-the-counter medicines (OTC)
- To inform the GP if they had recently been unwell

87% were more likely to alert GP or nurse re missed medicines



*"I don't need to take extra supplements like vitamin C, fish oil, glucosamine as long as I keep a balanced diet"*

*"I have to be careful what I buy from the chemist, checking with the doctor first"*

*...."the effect herbs and herbal medication used in conjunction with warfarin"*

### Pharmacist as member of team

97% comfortable with pharmacist....

- accessing medical notes
- discussing their medicines & progress with GP & practice nurse




### Major themes

The pharmacist's role as an

- intermediary
- educator




- The pharmacist as a professional
- The patients' positive attitude toward the pharmacist



*'Shop pharmacists don't always have time to discuss your medicines and if you have any questions (..here..) they can be discussed with the doctor there in front of you and treated straight away.'*

*'It is nice to have someone ...to go to here and have advice about my health needs'*





**Educator...**

- Supplements
- Diet and alcohol

*"Eat green vegetables regularly"*


*"Always tell doctor if the diet has changed"*

- Anticoagulants and management

*'Easier to understand reasons for taking warfarin'*

*'It (dabigatran) must be declared before oral or any other surgery'*

- Other medications



The pharmacist....



*'shows concern to what I am doing with the warfarin to stay on track and keep focussed'*

*'very helpful in all aspects of my medications and always very professional in her attitude and pleasant manner'*

*'is caring and focussed pharmacist who makes you feel at ease, and a person to be trusted'*

**Attitudes to project pharmacist**

*'was always pleasant & friendly'*

*'Enjoyed working with her.'*

*'Thank you for your involvement in my health – has been very helpful'*

*'I have complete faith in decisions made by my doctors in prescribing medicines, yet appreciate her assistance in the use of warfarin'*

**Attitudes to pharmacists in general practice**

- *'I believe having a pharmacist available gives confidence to patients being treated'*
- *'I would be concerned if pharmacists in the future were to "push" a certain medication'*
- *'Pharmacists should advise from a pharmacy and not a doctor's surgery'*

**Comparisons**

- 97% of participant patients agreed to having pharmacist as member of the healthcare team –access to medical notes and discussions
- 37% of patients surveyed agreed to pharmacists having access to medical files

*Freeman et al, 2012*



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## GP practices offered funding to employ pharmacists under £15m NHS England scheme

7 July 2015 | By Jamie Keffau

Print | Email | Like (0) | Tweet (0) | +1 (0) | Comments (30) | Save

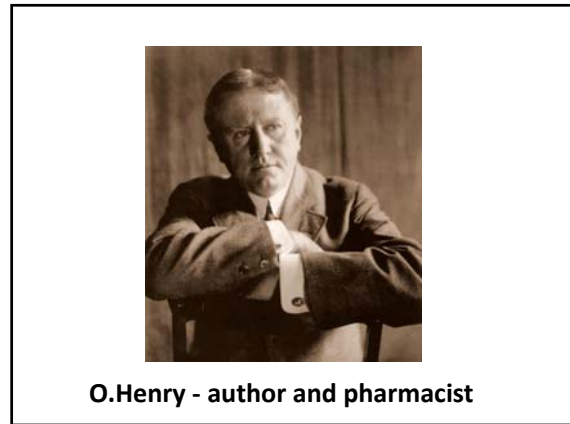
NHS England has committed to investing £15m to recruit clinical pharmacists to GP practices, its chief executive has announced today.


As part of the three-year pilot schemes announced by Simon Stevens, 300 pharmacists will be employed directly by practices - likely as part of federations - in areas of greatest need where GPs are under greatest pressure.

NHS England said it will fund 60% of the costs of the pharmacists to the practices for the first 12 months of employment, which will decrease to 40% for the second year and 20% for the third year.

The GPC said it would 'look closely' at how the pilots will operate.

This follows the health secretary's announcement of a 'new deal' last month, in which he said the Government would look to introduce 5,000 staff - including pharmacists.



  
Woonona Medical Practice

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People receiving oral anticoagulants

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