

# EVALUATING SHARED CARE PRACTICE IN PHARMACY

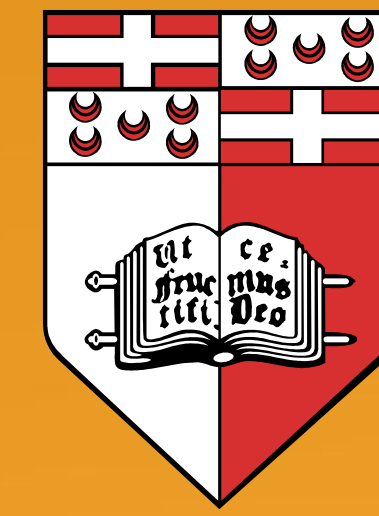
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## INTRODUCTION

Patients are many times visited by multiple healthcare professionals. This results in inevitable fragments as their healthcare information is not recorded in a single record. Documenting patient healthcare information on an electronic health record will improve health care quality and efficiency as duplicated efforts and tests by the healthcare team are avoided, in turn reducing healthcare costs. Moreover, a detailed patient health history is available to the healthcare professional before making a decision on the patient's health.

## AIMS

- To identify the current shared care practices at the hospital pharmacies of the general acute and rehabilitation hospitals in Malta, at community pharmacies through the Pharmacy of Your Choice Scheme (POYC), which is the system adopted in community pharmacies to dispense NHS chronic medications.

## METHOD

### Phase 1:

- Identifying the healthcare settings to be studied and obtaining necessary approvals.
- Twenty community pharmacies participated in the study and were chosen by stratified random sampling

### Phase 2:

- Two observational visits and discussion with pharmacists working in each of the twenty community pharmacies being studied were performed.
- Visits and discussions about current shared care practices with pharmacists working at the hospital pharmacies (2).

### Phase 3:

Development of and validation of questionnaire.

Validation panel consisted of:

- 2 general practitioners
- 2 pharmacists
- 2 lay persons with medical background.

Questionnaire was also proved to be reliable and internally consistent using Kendell-Tau and Cronbach's Alpha tests respectively.

### Phase 4:

Distribution of the questionnaire to pharmacists and analyses of results.

## RESULTS

Results from observational visits identified that shared care exists between the two government hospital pharmacies but not with community pharmacists through the POYC scheme. Pharmacists in the healthcare settings studied have access to the information illustrated in figure 1.

Results from 109 pharmacists show that 66.6% and 37.6% strongly agree and agree respectively that technology can be used better so as to provide a higher level of shared care. Twenty-three point nine percent and 48.6% of respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that electronic health records should be adopted in the Maltese healthcare system.

### Pharmacists at Hospital Pharmacies:

- Results of blood investigations and tests performed to patients;
- Electronic discharge summary;
- Chronic Medications approved on NHS

NOT SHARED

### Community Pharmacists through the POYC scheme:

- Patient entitlement to chronic medications
- History of NHS chronic medications dispensed.

Figure 1: Access to Patient Information

## CONCLUSION

Hospital and community pharmacists are in favour of the integration between private and government institutions. They agree that this will improve patient care and will result in better communication between healthcare professionals. Implementation of electronic records will result in a less fragmented and more efficient healthcare system.