



**Media Release
19 September 2008**

**First Multiprofessional Grant awarded for research
on pharmacist provision of clozapine services**

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the Trust) has awarded its first Multiprofessional Practice Research Grant to the University of Bath for a study addressing treatment resistant schizophrenia (TRS), its management with clozapine and the pharmacist provision of these services.

The study, to be led by Ms Denise Taylor and Dr Jane Sutton from the Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, University of Bath will evaluate alternative models for the delivery of clozapine services. Clozapine, which can improve the negative symptoms of schizophrenia and increase social integration amongst people with TRS, also has some potentially dangerous side effects that require careful management. Pharmacists are increasingly becoming involved in the delivery of clozapine services, but there is a lack of evidence about the most cost-effective organisational model to inform these developments.

Their research will compare patient outcomes and costs when different teams of professionals, including hospital or community pharmacist, nurse, hospital doctor or psychiatrist, are involved in delivering care by studying five different clozapine services for people with TRS in a large NHS trust in Wales.

“Without a robust empirical evidence base demonstrating that interventions by pharmacists can have a positive impact upon patient outcomes and provide value for money, local commissioners may seek to cancel services or seek to commission from

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other sources. We hope that this particular study, for which the Trust has awarded this grant, will make an important contribution to the evidence base that demonstrates how pharmacy can deliver effective, high quality and value for money services in the important area of mental health,” says Professor Clive Smee, lead Trustee on the award panel and former DH Chief economist.

Welcoming the grant, Denise Taylor, senior teaching fellow in clinical pharmacy said: “Recent Department of Health reports have suggested a greater role for pharmacists in the delivery of health care. Our research, which addresses a chronic mental health problem, will inform decision makers for mental health services and enable them to determine the extent and impact of pharmacists working within different models of clozapine services.”

The Trust has awarded a grant of £80,000 for the 20 month study starting this month as part of its new multiprofessional practice grants programme. Introduced by the Trust in 2008 they will specifically fund research which looks at long term conditions, span different professions and seek to investigate the economic value of services.

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Notes to editors:

1. Research team

Ms Denise Taylor, Senior Teaching Fellow in Clinical Pharmacy, Dept of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, University of Bath; Dr Jane Sutton, Teaching Fellow in Pharmacy Practice, Dept of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, University of Bath; Dr Heather Gage, Senior Lecturer in Economics, University of Surrey; and Professor David Taylor, Chief Pharmacist, South London and Maudsley Foundation NHS Trust.

2. Aims of the research

The aims of this research are to:

- (1) evaluate the effect of individual professions on patient and cost outcomes, and
- (2) synthesise a preferred matrix of clozapine service provision after accounting for structural and process effects on outcomes.

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Specific study objectives are to:

1. Identify and describe alternative models for the delivery of clozapine to people with TRS.
2. Evaluate the effect of different models on the experiences and outcomes of service users.
3. Explore the views of professionals about different team configurations.
4. Examine the roles, responsibilities and impact of pharmacists in each delivery model, and explore the factors that enable pharmacists to contribute most effectively to successful outcomes from care.
5. Investigate the resource implications, costs and value for money of the alternative service delivery approaches.

3. The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust was established by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of GB in July 1999 as an independent research charity with a broad objective to promote and develop the field of pharmacy practice research. Its trustees are drawn from senior health policy makers, leading academics, industry and retailers.

The Trust has invested over £1.5m in research; 30% supporting capacity building in pharmacy practice research and 70% on commissioned research. Annual grants from the Pharmaceutical Trust for Education and Charitable Objectives and the Leverhulme Trades Charities Trust contribute to the funds of the Pharmacy Practice Research Trust. For further information and to access reports of Trust commissioned research go to: www.pprt.org.uk