

## Media Release

14<sup>th</sup> September 2009

### **Pharmacy Practice Research Trust joins forces with Arthritis Care to research pharmacy's role in medication use amongst adolescents with arthritis**

#### **Call for expressions of interest invited**

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the Trust) in collaboration with Arthritis Care is inviting expressions of interest from research teams to investigate the relationship between identity and medication use amongst adolescents with arthritis and to explore the role of pharmacy in delivering services to this group.

There are 17,000 young people in the UK with Rheumatoid Arthritis and 12,000 with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis but commonly held assumptions about arthritis are that it is an 'old person's disease' making it difficult for young people to incorporate a diagnosis into their conceptions of identity. Chronic diseases such as these place extensive behavioural demands on adolescents and a number of studies have demonstrated that approximately 50% of adolescents with a long-term condition do not comply with care recommendations.

In order to develop interventions to improve medication adherence that are inclusive of patients' beliefs and values, research that explores the relationship between conceptions of identity/body image among adolescents with arthritis and their adherence to medication is needed. In addition to exploring these factors, projects that also identify both the actual and potential role of pharmacy in delivering effective services to this group are being sought.

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The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust  
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Potential key areas of research are:

- Conceptions of identity / body image amongst adolescents with arthritis
- The relationship between identity and medication use amongst adolescents with arthritis
- Differences between those newly diagnosed and those who have been living with arthritis for some time
- Current pharmacy service provision to adolescents with arthritis
- Potential pharmacy service provision to adolescents with arthritis
- What might an ideal pharmacy service for adolescents with arthritis look like?
- What are the implications of this ideal service in terms of adherence rates, patient outcomes and cost?

As there are increasing calls for the delivery of services collaboratively, particularly in the care of patients with long term conditions, expressions of interest which incorporate an inter-professional element and that come from multidisciplinary research teams will be welcomed.

Beth Allen, Acting Director at the Trust said: “The pharmacy White Paper made it clear that for pharmacy to become an established voice in primary care and to be recognised as a key and essential element in the delivery of clinical services, a sound evidence base that demonstrates how pharmacy delivers effective, high quality and value for money services is needed.

The lack of information on what services pharmacists already provide or potentially could provide to adolescents with arthritis and the effectiveness of these services represents a gap in knowledge which the Trust would like to see addressed. We hope to see from this call for expressions of interest, projects that will inform the wider debate on the provision of enhanced and advanced services by pharmacists, and to contextualise the place of pharmacy in the key reform policy direction of delivering services in more local settings.”

Rachel Haynes, Public Affairs Director at Arthritis Care said: “The misperception that arthritis exclusively affects older people means children and adolescents with the condition often slip under the radar. We hope that this research will identify the complex challenges confronting young people with arthritis, and can be used by health professionals to help them adjust better to diagnosis as well as improving the

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signposting of vital support services, such as Arthritis Care's young people and family work.”

The Trust has £50,000 available for projects exploring this topic. It intends to work with potential applicants to develop initial expressions of interest in order to seek matched funding from external funders for a total study investment of £100,000. The closing date for expressions of interest is Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009. For further information contact: Charlotte Coates, [charlotte.coates@rpsgb.org](mailto:charlotte.coates@rpsgb.org) or call 020 7572 2278.

Ends

**Further media information is available from:**

**For the Pharmacy Practice Research Trust:** **Bonnie Green**  
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**NB: from 16/09 – 05/10 contact Charlotte Coates on 020 7572 2278 or**  
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**Notes to editors:**

**1. 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 nearly £2m 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 and grant information go to: [www.pprt.org.uk](http://www.pprt.org.uk)

**2. Arthritis Care**

Arthritis Care exists to support people with arthritis, providing free helplines, online information and discussion forums, and workshops in managing the impact of arthritis and long-term pain. Founded in 1947, Arthritis Care is the UK's only health charity working for people who have arthritis in any of its 200-odd forms. It is a user-led organisation, which means people with arthritis form the charity's membership, inform its position, and direct its activities.  
[www.arthritiscare.org.uk](http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk)