

**Press Release
22nd March 2010**

Investigating the effectiveness of pharmacy interventions

Call for research project proposals

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the Trust) is inviting applications for up to three research projects to investigate the effectiveness of pharmacy interventions in one of three areas; the management of long term conditions (LTCs), public health or the treatment of minor ailments.

The Trust is looking for proposals that specifically address the aspirations of the White Paper¹ in providing evidence in terms of patient outcomes and economic value of pharmacist intervention. In addition, the project must deliver on the key priorities identified in the Trust's strategic direction for pharmacy practice research² published last year.

Evidence of the effectiveness of pharmacy interventions in LTCs exists but it tends to be exploratory in nature and relatively small scale. For example, the Trust has identified a gap in large scale trials that investigate the cost of service delivery and the clinical and quality of life outcomes of patients following pharmacist intervention in the management of LTCs. In public health there have also been small scale studies examining the role of the pharmacist in many areas but the Trust suggests that these should now be extended to large-scale, multi site trials across a range of public health priority areas such as obesity, vascular risk assessment and management, sexual health and alcohol misuse.

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In the treatment of minor ailments, a recent report suggested that over 50 million GP consultations annually are solely for minor ailments³. However, while the treatment of minor ailments is a core activity within pharmacy the Trust has identified that there appears to be no collation of evidence in this area nor does there seem to be any identification of minor ailments on which pharmacists could have significant impact.

Beth Allen, Acting Director of the Trust says: "It is often quoted that pharmacists are 'ideally placed' to support patients with long-term needs through such things as medicines management, regular monitoring of conditions and advice on disease management and lifestyle. However, to move pharmacy from a position of 'ideally placed' to demonstrably delivering cost effective services focused on patient outcomes requires an investment in building the evidence base. We hope that an outcome of these projects will be to provide sufficient evidence for pharmacy interventions in these areas, as well as providing opportunities to secure larger funding resources for the conduct of, for example, full randomised controlled trials."

Funding of up to £300,000 is available and it is envisaged that this will support systematic reviews of current evidence and exploratory, multi-site investigations of a specific pharmacist intervention. The full commissioning brief and application form is available from: charlotte.coates@rpsgb.org or at: www.pprrt.org.uk/ResearchFunding/Commissioning.aspx. The closing date for submission of project proposals is 14th May 2010.

Ends.

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Notes to editors:

1. The full commissioning brief and application form is available at: www.pprrt.org.uk/ResearchFunding/Commissioning.aspx

2. The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the 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 around £2m in research; 30% supporting capacity building in pharmacy practice research and 70% on commissioned research. The Trust receives financial support from the Pharmaceutical Trust for Education and Charitable Objectives, the Leverhulme Trade Charities Trust and the Galen Trust, as well as a gift in kind from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. For further information and to access reports of Trust commissioned research or for funding/grant opportunities go to: www.pprt.org.uk

¹ Department of Health, *Pharmacy in England; Building on strengths - delivering the future* 2008. www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_083815

² Pharmacy Practice Research Trust, *A Strategic Direction for Pharmacy Research*, 2009. <http://www.pprt.org.uk/ResearchActivity/StrategicDirectionForPharmacyPracticeResearch>

³ The Self Care Campaign, *Self-care: an ethical imperative*. 2010 <http://www.selfcarecampaign.org/white-paper>