

**Press Release
20 October 2008**

**Advancing the Profession and Building the Evidence Base for
Pharmacy:
2008 Practice Research Awards announced**

The successful applicants for the 2008 Practice Research Awards have been announced by the Pharmacy Practice Research Trust (the Trust).

Awards for research totaling £60,000 have been made to Jane Allen, Joint Chief Pharmacist at Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, East Grinstead; Richard Cooper, Temporary Lecturer at the School of Health and Related Research, University of Sheffield; and Trudy Thomas, Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice, Medway School of Pharmacy.

The awards and research projects are:

- Jane Allen: £10,000 Galen Award to investigate optimising the dosage of antibiotics in patients with major burns
- Richard Cooper: Sir Hugh Linstead Fellowship grant of £45,000 to explore over the counter (OTC) medicine abuse and misuse – customer, supplier and policy-maker insights
- Trudy Thomas: £5,000 Sir Hugh Linstead Fellowship grant to study the implementation and effectiveness of a community pharmacy based physical activity counselling scheme in the adjunctive treatment of mild to moderate depression

Sue Ambler, Director of the Trust says: “High quality robust pharmacy practice research relies on having a highly qualified, knowledgeable and skilled research workforce but we know that more academic pharmacists and PhD students are needed to meet both the

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needs of pharmacists' expanding roles and the increasing numbers of students. The purpose of the practice research awards is to develop this research capacity, as well as contribute to the knowledge base for pharmacy. This in turn achieves the Trust's objectives of establishing a secure scientific basis for the profession and providing the evidence necessary to underpin future decisions on policy, practice and service development."

Pharmacists will be able to apply for the 2009 Practice Research Awards in January 2009. For further details go to: www.pprt.org.uk

Ends.

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Notes for editors:

1. Details of research and comments from award recipients:

Jane Allen: *to investigate optimising the dosage of antibiotics in patients with major burns*

The primary aim of the study is to produce national dosing guidelines to ensure the effective use of four intravenously administered antibiotics, meropenem, imipenem, linezolid and colistin, commonly used to treat life-threatening infections in patients with severe burns. Severe burn injury affects 1,000 people every year in the UK, of which approximately 300 will die. Infection is a major cause of death and illness in these patients and it has been estimated that as many as 75% of all deaths not due to the immediate burn injury are related to infection. The multicentre study will be undertaken at UK NHS burns centres, supported by academics at the schools of pharmacy at King's College London and University of Brighton.

Jane Allen says: "Pharmacokinetics is a fundamental clinical role of the pharmacist. This study will promote pharmacists as researchers by applying their scientific training to determine the clinical effectiveness of medicines in practice and improve patient outcomes, as set out in the White Paper 'Pharmacy in England'."

Richard Cooper: *to explore over the counter (OTC) medicine abuse and misuse – customer, supplier and policy-maker insights*

Research suggests that around two thirds of pharmacists identified OTC medicine abuse/misuse problems in their pharmacies. However, little is known about the experiences of those who have abused or misused OTC medicines or the impact of changing availability of medicines, such as internet supplies and pack size changes. The study will explore experiences and perceptions of three key stakeholder groups:

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individuals who have misused or abused OTC medicines, pharmacists and medicines counter assistants involved in the supply and surveillance of OTC medicines, and those involved at a policy and regulatory level.

Richard Cooper says: "This study will provide unique insights into the experiences of individuals that will inform policy in relation to the sale and supervision of OTC medicines and potential abuse/misuse. The research will also assist in educating community pharmacists and medicine counter assistants about this specific customer group, so that they can more effectively manage the responsible use of OTC medicines"

Trudy Thomas: *to study the implementation and effectiveness of a community pharmacy based physical activity counselling scheme in the adjunctive treatment of mild to moderate depression*

The evidence base on the use of physical activity as an adjunct to the treatment of depression is growing. However, no one group of professionals has emerged as the instrument through which this important intervention can be made. This study aims to consider the feasibility of a community based one-to-one counselling service which specifically aims to increase the level of participation in physical activity by people with a view to improving mental health outcomes.

Trudy Thomas says: "The community pharmacist is being seen as a potential front line agent for the promotion of health living. This is already being exploited through community pharmacy based services such as smoking cessation and weight management services. This study opens up future roles of pharmacists, moving the pharmacist's role from one of mere information giver to providing practical support for people wanting to bring about a lifestyle change."

2. The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust Practice Research Awards are available for:

- Those requiring funding between PhD and postdoctoral grants
- Those requiring funding to go from MPhil to PhD
- Practitioners new to research
- PhD students requiring 'research costs' to enhance their PhDs

The awards can be used to fund new areas of research, e.g. pre-pilot and feasibility studies that would not be considered by other funding bodies. There are two types of award available:

- The Galen Award of up to £10,000 granted annually funded by the Galen Trust to support registered pharmacists from all sectors to undertake practice research
- The Sir Hugh Linstead Fellowship, one or more awards of up to £45,000 granted annually, funded by the Leverhulme Trade Charities Trust to support research relating to community pharmacy

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. 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 opportunities go to: www.pprt.org.uk