



Medicines & People
Turning Knowledge Into Know-How

The Pharmacy Practice Research Trust Research Bulletin

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Securing the Future

The Trust is delighted to be hosting the strategic practice research event which the Trustees hope will result in a tangible five year research and development strategy.

Over the years the Trust has contributed to practice research by investing over £1.5 million and the published research has helped to build the unique body of knowledge for pharmacy that is the essence of its professional status and has provided some evidence to underpin the place of pharmacy in healthcare.

However, these efforts are far from commensurate with current policy to engage pharmacy further with the wider delivery of health services to the public. In addition, the future of pharmacy practice research is uncertain as the RPSGB, one of the major funding bodies of pharmacy research prepares to divide into two distinct bodies.

The independent role that the Trust plays in the full cycle of research from building research capacity, providing the evidence base and facilitating research into practice must be acknowledged. Now is the time for the profession, leading academics and policy makers to commit to a securely funded robust research and development programme that focuses on patient outcomes and value for money.

Lord Newton of Braintree
Trustee, Pharmacy Practice
Research Trust

The Future of Pharmacy Practice Research: The Case for a National Research Strategy

The White Paper 'Pharmacy in England: building on strengths - delivering the future' clearly indicates that research underpinning both clinical and commissioning decisions for pharmacy needs to be strengthened. Historically, the nature of pharmacy practice research has tended to be small scale and of insufficient power to build robust evidence or case study research that, whilst interesting, cannot be generalised to wider contexts. More recently pharmacy practice researchers are having increased success in securing large research grants, however, the research evidence is still, as expressed, in the white paper 'patchy at best'. For pharmacy services to be integrated into care pathways, robust evidence is needed to support commissioning and clinical decision making.

The Trust believes that there now needs to be a UK wide programme for research and development comparable in scale to that in place in other countries such as the Australian Community Pharmacy Agreement Research and Development Program. To this end, the Trust will be hosting a summit event (details can be found at www.pprt.org.uk) to scope the priorities for a national (possibly UK wide) strategy on pharmacy practice research.

Professor Charlie Benrimoj, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Strategic Planning) & Professor of Pharmacy, University of Sydney will be a key note speaker at the event, "Pharmacy practice research plays an important role in the future of practice at many levels. Significantly it allows for the identification, development and evaluation of sustainable practice change. Nationally focused research is vital to influence policy positions, provide options for new practice programs and improved patient care and outcomes. Funding for R&D gives a positive return on investment for the profession, government and the community. In Australia an investment of AUS \$15M from the Government, as part of the community pharmacy agreement, generated AUS \$500M in funding for cognitive pharmaceutical services", said Professor Benrimoj.

For further information or to book a place please contact the Trust (contact details at the bottom of the page).

British Pharmaceutical Conference 2008 – Pharmacy Practice Research Award winner announced

The high volume of sales of Non-Prescription Medicines (NPMs) has implications for patient safety according to Dr Margaret Watson in her keynote lecture as the winner of the Trust's 2008 Practice Research Award at the British Pharmaceutical Conference. The annual Practice Research Award is presented by the Trust to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the field of pharmacy practice research and have the potential to become a leader in their field.



Dr Margaret Watson & Mr Marshall Davies, Chair of the Trust, at BPC 2008

Dr Watson, Senior Research Fellow at the University of Aberdeen and Public Health Pharmacist for NHS Grampian, stated that, "by highlighting the importance of effective communication during consultations and developing strategies and appropriate training to improve pharmacy staff and consumer communication I hope to improve the safe and effective use of NPMs". For further information on the 2009 Practice Award please see the 'Research Funding' page of the Trust website.

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Supporting and Celebrating Aspiring Pharmacy Academics

As part of its key role in research capacity building in pharmacy, the Trust is pleased to announce the successful award and bursary applicants for 2008:

Optimising dosage of antibiotics in patients with major burns

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'.

Jane Allen - Galen Award 2008

Chief Pharmacist, Queen Victoria Hospital

Exploring Over The Counter (OTC) medicine abuse and misuse – customer, supplier and policy-maker insights

This study will provide unique insights into the experiences of individuals that will inform policy in relation to the sale and supervision of Over-The-Counter (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.

Richard Cooper - Sir Hugh Linstead Fellowship 2008

Temporary Lecturer, School of Health and Related Research, University of Sheffield

Implementation and effectiveness of a community pharmacy based physical activity counselling scheme in the adjunctive treatment of mild to moderate depression

The community pharmacist is being seen as a potential front line agent for the promotion of healthy 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.

Trudy Thomas - Sir Hugh Linstead Fellowship 2008

Senior Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice, Medway School of Pharmacy

Andrew Potheary – 2008 Level 2 Bursary
Independent
Community Pharmacy
Manager, West Sussex

MSc Community Pharmacy (Year 3), University of Portsmouth

This bursary funding helps with course costs and facilitates the release of my time in order to upgrade my postgraduate diploma to an MSc. I plan to continue working in community pharmacy, but hope to develop a portfolio of roles which might also include prescribing advice and teaching.

Deborah Layton – 2008 Level 3 Bursary
Senior Research Fellow
& Locum Community
Pharmacist,
Southampton

Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning, University of Portsmouth

This bursary will support my career intention to consolidate my pharmacoepidemiological training, contribute to the training of others and encourage high quality research in pharmacovigilance, as well as enable me to pursue my research interests and desire to communicate the importance of pharmacovigilance within the public health arena.

Lynette James – 2008 Level 3 Bursary
Research & Teaching
Fellow, Medication
Safety, Department of
Pharmacy, KCL &
locum community
pharmacist

Training in Qualitative Methods and Occupational Psychology, King's College London

My focus as a pharmacist and researcher is to undertake practice based research which influences the daily practices of pharmacy staff and improves the quality of patient care. This bursary will enable me to receive training and have the opportunity to utilise a new research method within my post-doctoral research.

Alison Astles – 2008 Level 2 Bursary
Locum Community
Pharmacist, Merseyside

MPhil, University of Manchester

I would like to further my career in research, and this bursary offers a route into this whilst maintaining my links with community pharmacy. In the future I would like to continue to work as a part time locum and further build research into my practice. In particular, as a locum, I recognise the huge contribution that pharmacy staff make to service delivery, and would like to investigate changes in their roles.

Richard Adams – 2008 Level 1 Bursary
Locum Community
Pharmacist and
Teacher/Practitioner,
Norfolk

Research Training, University of East Anglia

This bursary will provide me with the opportunity to obtain guidance in the rigorous design of research and to acquire the statistical skills for analysing data. A future goal would be to undertake training in health economics to provide me with robust skills to write a business case for new services in the community setting and to conduct appropriate evaluation of these services.

The 2009 Award and Bursary scheme will be advertised this coming January. For further details, please contact Beth Allen, Research Programme Coordinator (Tel: 020 7572 2466; Email: beth.allen@rpsgb.org).



Research Support from the National Institute for Health Research

RDInfo, (www.rdinfo.org.uk) is funded by the Department of Health as part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) and is a unique service. It aims to be a one-stop-shop for health and social care researchers and provides the following individual services:



RDFunding (www.rdfunding.org.uk) compiles a list of funding opportunities for health and social care researchers from a range of sources both national and international. These are presented in an accessible format. The RDFunding database is fully searchable by keyword or using the freetext search function. The service offers free funding updates either as RSS Feeds or as a profiling service. RDFunding provides Special Editions which pull together information relating to types of research awards specific to areas of research or to specific professions such as Pharmacy.

RDLearning (www.rdlearning.org.uk) details courses and events targeted at health and social care researchers. These include postgraduate degree, short courses and workshops as well as national and international conferences held by various organisations. The website is searchable via keywords or geographical areas. The RDLearning website features a conference calendar. There are a large number of Special Editions which gather together courses concerning specific topics such as Pharmacy, Cancer and Diabetes. There are Special Editions produced which cover the UK Clinical Research Network Topic Specific Research Networks.



RDDirect (www.rddirect.org.uk) is a friendly, professional signposting service for all researchers working in health and social care settings. The site contains information relevant to health research, whether for an experienced researcher or a beginner. The RDDirect website hosts the highly acclaimed Research Process Flowchart mapping the different stages of research and providing hints, tips and checklists for researchers at all levels. There is a variation of this Research Process Flowchart for Social Care Researchers. The RDDirect team has a panel of advisors. If you have a query and the team can't help you, they will be able to direct you to someone who can!

RDInfo is an essential resource for all researchers and research offices. To contact a member of the team call 0113 295 1122 or email on info@rdinfo.org.uk. Alternatively, please visit the RDInfo website: www.rdinfo.org.uk

Opportunity for research support via e-mentoring scheme

An opportunity now exists for registered pharmacists to draw on academic expertise in the pursuit of a research interest. A one-to-one research e-mentoring scheme has been devised by the Pharmacy Practice Research Trust to bring practitioners together with experienced researchers / academics to enable the former to develop research knowledge relating to their practice with the support of an e-mentor. This can be done using whatever methods best suit the individuals involved, for example, email, telephone or face-to-face.

As a mentee you will gain support and advice on key research areas (concept development through to grant applications) while forging professional links with researchers and perhaps, most importantly, gaining access to a critical friend who can listen to your ideas.

For example you may need support in conducting a service evaluation which can provide practical information to help decide whether a development or service should be continued, extended or terminated.

A service evaluation may be particularly useful for exploring and identifying specific local needs – the outcomes of which may be invaluable in future liaisons with Practice Based Commissioning Consortia.

To register your interest as a mentor or mentee all you need to do is go to:

<http://www.pprt.org.uk/ResearchSupport/E-MentoringScheme.aspx> and complete a simple form.

Research Commissioning

Multiprofessional Practice Grants

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.

Professionalism in Pharmacy Practice

The Trust has awarded its first two “Professionalism in Pharmacy Practice” Grants to the School of Medicine, Swansea University and the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Manchester.

Professor Frances Rapport from the School of Medicine, Swansea University will be investigating the concept of patient centred professionalism in pharmacy practice. The study will seek to clarify how health professionals, patients and stakeholders define and perceive patient-centred professionalism in terms of patient and health care practitioner needs and expectations; and how different working environments influence community pharmacists’ practice. The 16 month study commenced in September.

The second grant has been awarded to Professor Karen Hassell, from the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Manchester University. The aim of her research is to understand and clarify how professionalism is learned, cultivated and facilitated in the academic environment. The study will look at how professionalism is covered in the curriculum; examine staff perceptions about the ways the subject is taught and assessed; and describe what students understand by the term professionalism plus their perceptions about how it is taught and assessed in the educational setting. The nine month study will start in October 2008.

Publications

Working lives of preregistration trainees

The “*Working lives of preregistration trainees*” report is the third in a series of reports from a longitudinal study of career drivers and expectations of a cohort of 2006 pharmacy graduates – from undergraduate education through to practising as a pharmacist. This particular report focuses on the cohort’s experiences of their preregistration year – the quality of their working lives taking into consideration factors such as job satisfaction, their experiences of work and relationships between these variables.

Trust response to the White Paper for Pharmacy

A UK wide research strategy to support the development of robust evidence to inform commissioning and clinical decision making is needed if pharmacy services are to be integrated into care pathways says the Trust in a response to the Government’s White Paper on the future of pharmacy. Research is acknowledged in the White Paper as key to the future of a world class pharmacy service and the Trust agrees that future commissioning decisions will need to be based on sound evidence of improved outcomes.

The effect of the new community pharmacy contract on the community pharmacy workforce

Increased workload, higher levels of stress and higher rates of delegation to support staff have resulted from the initial implementation of the contractual framework for community pharmacy (CPCF), a study reveals. The research, part of a larger body of work evaluating the implementation of the CPCF, investigated issues related to work load and job satisfaction and was led by Professor Alison Blenkinsopp of Keele University, together with Professor Christine Bond, University of Aberdeen and Gianpiero Celino, Webstar Health.

All publications can be accessed via the Trust’s website at:

<http://www.pprrt.org.uk/Publications/2008Publications.aspx>