

Health Innovation Network

Polypharmacy: 
getting the balance right

Health Innovation Yorkshire and Humber

Mark Dines-Allen, Senior Programme Consultant

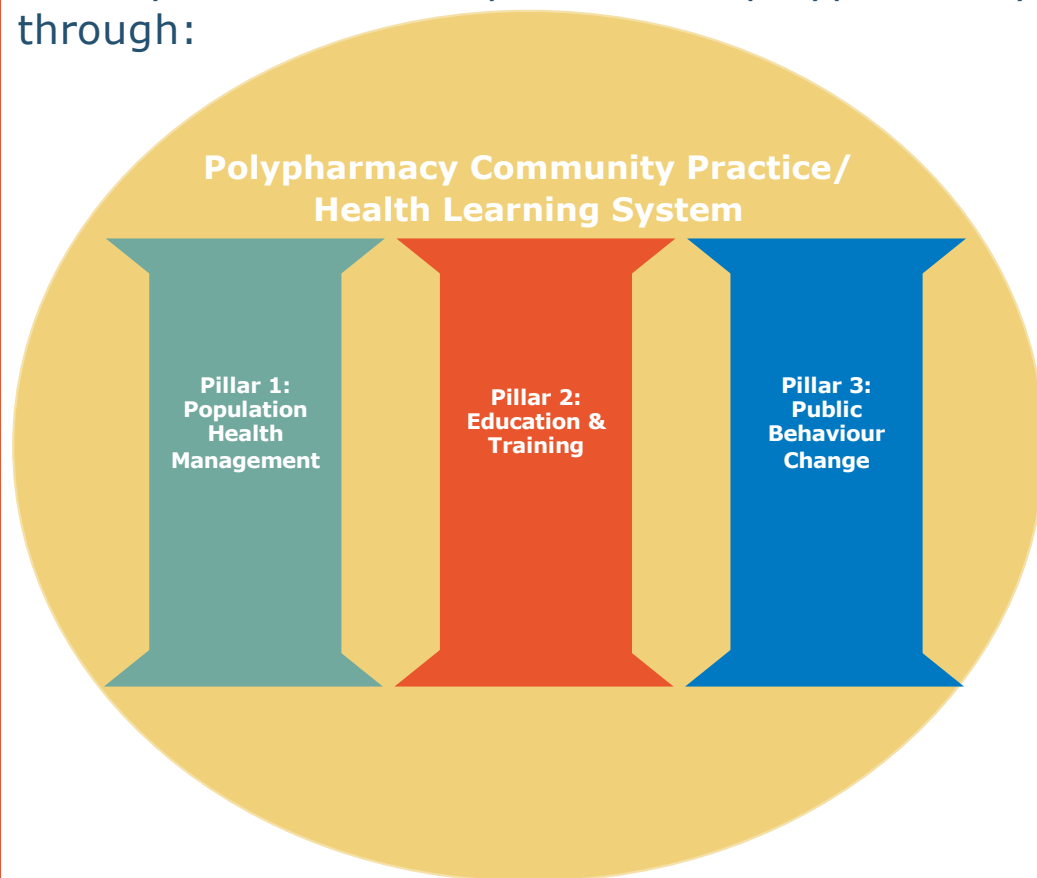
Kirsty Bramley-Dove, Pharmacy Clinical Lead

Calderdale 5th Dec 23



Health Innovation Network Polypharmacy Programme

The core principle of **Polypharmacy** is to support local systems address problematic polypharmacy through:



Polypharmacy aims to support local systems and primary care to identify patients at potential risk of harm and support better conversations about medicines by promoting shared decision making. The core principles of **Polypharmacy** are:

Pillar 1: Population Health Management

Using data (NHS BSA Polypharmacy Comparators) to understand PCN risks and identify patients for prioritisation for a Structured Medication Review

Pillar 2: Education & Training

Running local **Polypharmacy** Action Learning Sets (ALSs) to upskill the primary care workforce to be more confident about stopping unnecessary medicines. ALS model originally developed and piloted by Wessex AHSN and supported by Health Education England (HEE)

Pillar 3: Public Behaviour Change

A menu of public-facing campaigns to change public perceptions of a "pill for every ill" and encourage patients to open up about medicines. e.g., Me + My Medicines, Are Your Medicines Working For You?

Pillar 1: Population Health Management



Pillar 1:
Population
Health
Management

Pillar 1: Population Health Management
Using data (NHS BSA Polypharmacy Comparators) to understand PCN risks and identify patients for prioritisation for a Structured Medication Review



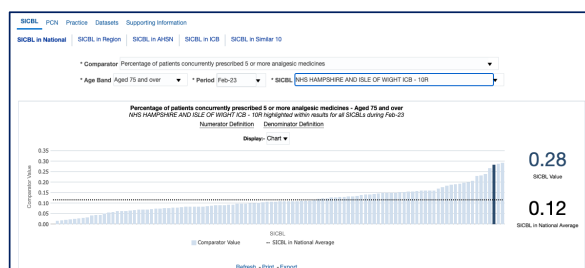
What does the tool look like?

STEP 1

Know your data.

Look at your local polypharmacy data via ePACT 2 and select an area of concern

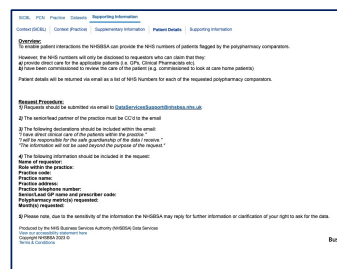
[Portsmouth SICBL percentage of patients with 5 or more analgesic medicines](#)



STEP 2

Find patients at risk.

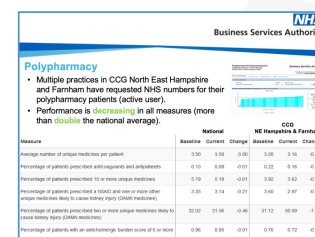
Complete the “request procedure” to access the NHS numbers of the patients in your practice deemed to be at risk and invite those patients for a medication review



STEP 3

Make a difference!

NE Hampshire and Farnham CCG supported every practice to do this well and demonstrated a decrease in all polypharmacy comparators at double the national average rates!

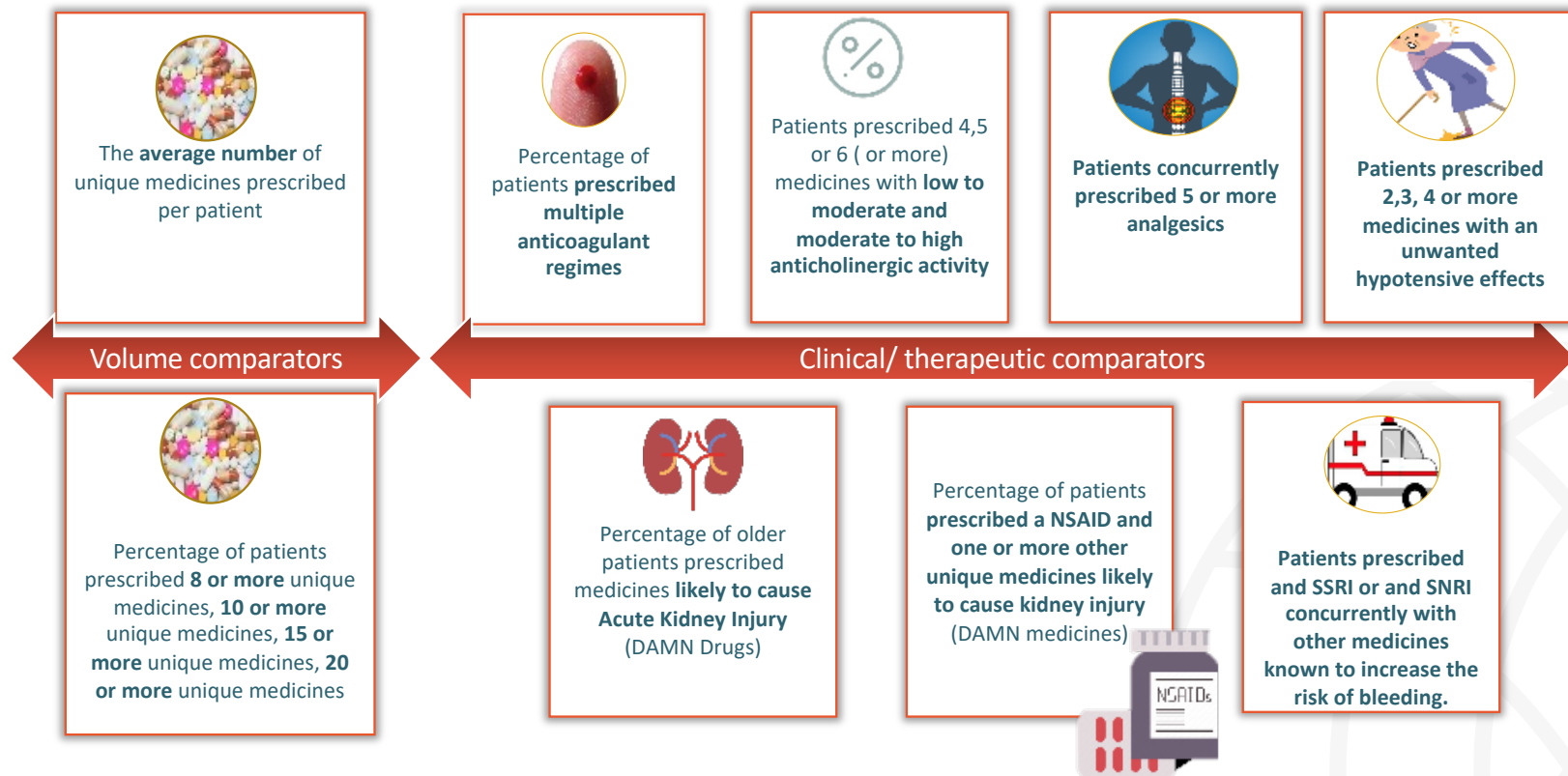


Measure	National	CCG
Average number of unique medicines per patient	5.50	5.50
Percentage of patients prescribed anti-cancer and anti-infectives	0.10	0.09
Percentage of patients prescribed 10 or more unique medicines	0.10	0.09
Percentage of patients prescribed 10 or more unique medicines (excluding those with 10 or more unique medicines)	0.10	0.09
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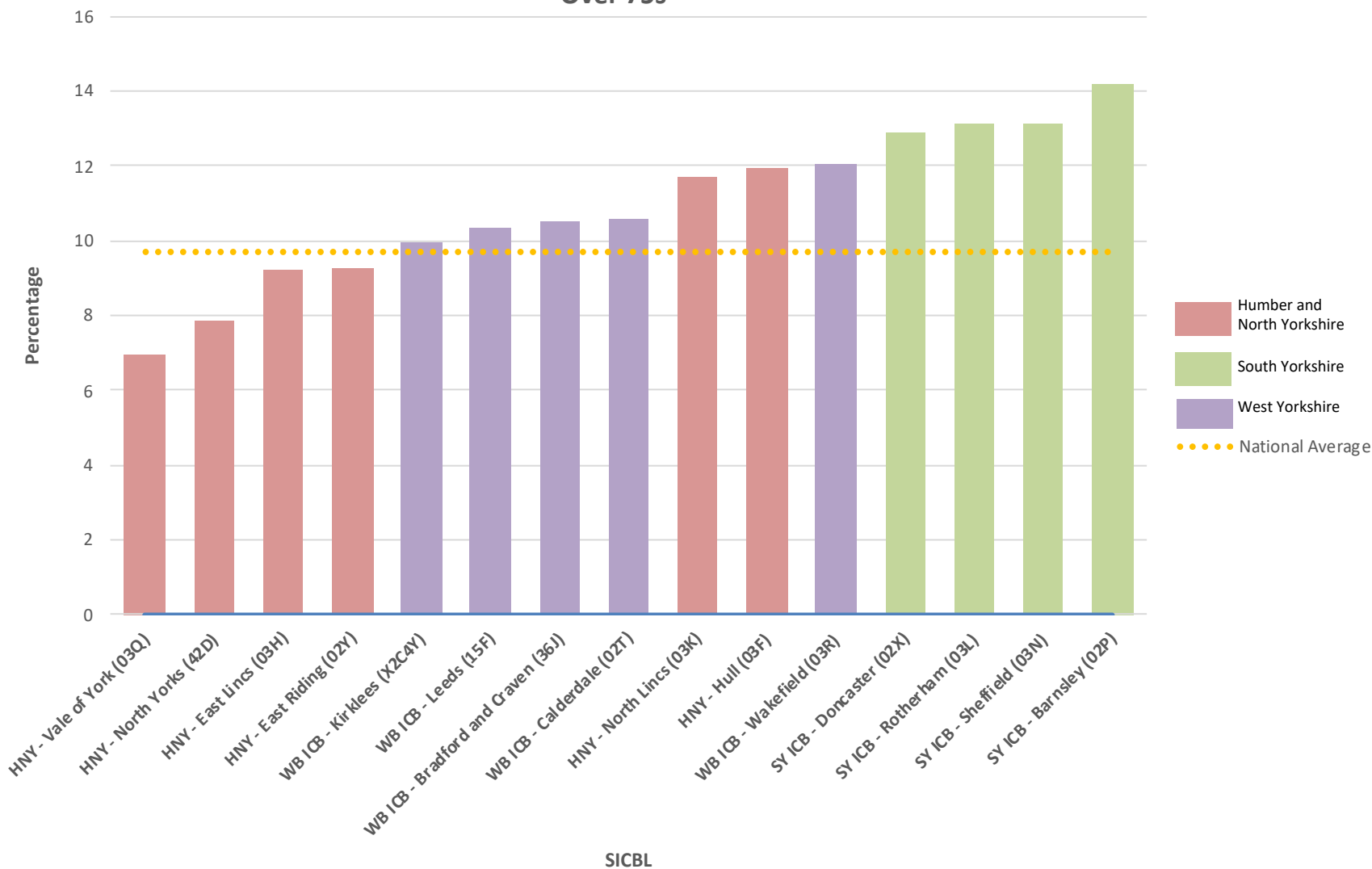
Epact2 Training
23rd Jan (Tues) 12:00 - 13:30
[The AHSN Polypharmacy Programme: Getting the balance right Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)

To access your data go to:
nhsbsa.nhs.uk/epact2/dashboards-and-specifications/medicines-optimisation-polypharmacy
For more resources go to
<https://wessexahsn.org.uk/projects/160/polypharmacy-what-next-planning-for-wessex>

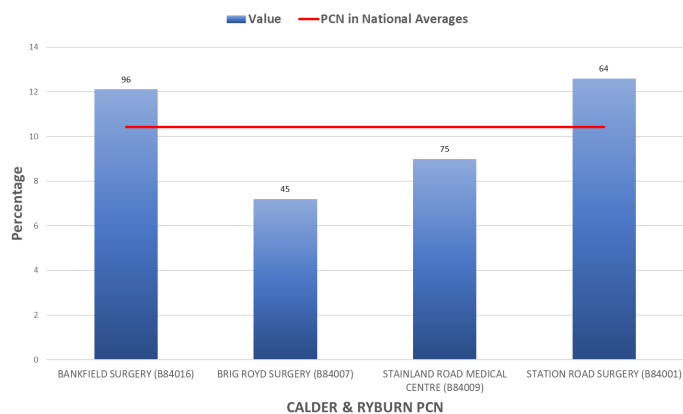
What do the comparators measure?



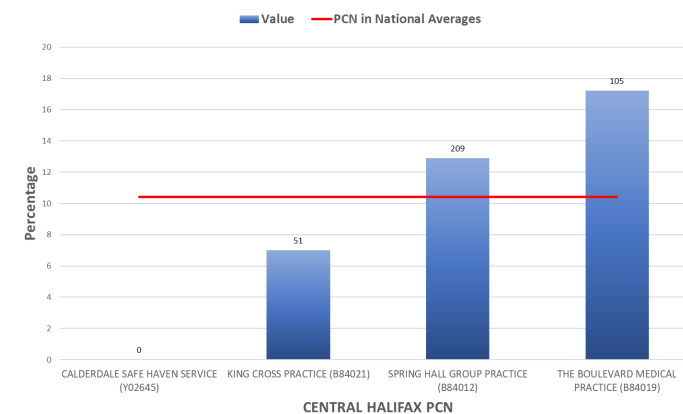
Number of patients prescribed 10 or more unique medicines Over 75s



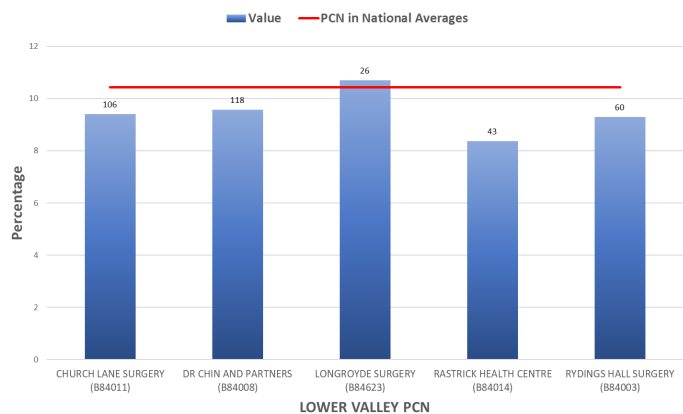
Percentage of patients prescribed 10 or more unique medicines : Aged 75 and over



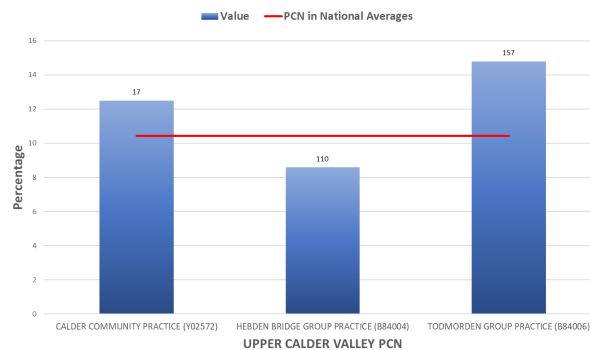
Percentage of patients prescribed 10 or more unique medicines : Aged 75 and over



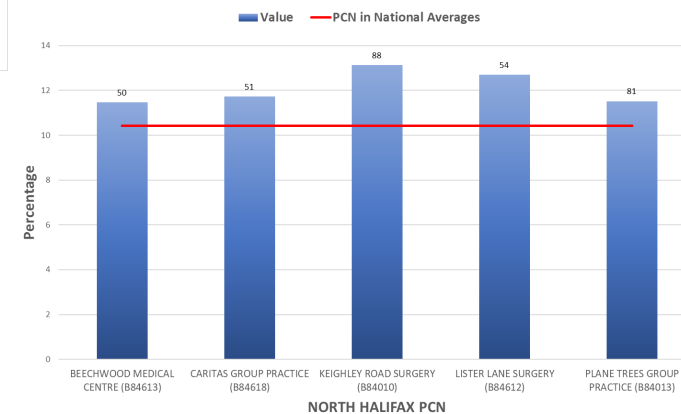
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Pillar 2: Education & Training



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Running local **Polypharmacy** Action Learning Sets (ALSs) to upskill the primary care workforce to be more confident about stopping unnecessary medicines. ALS model originally developed and piloted by Wessex AHSN and supported by Health Education England (HEE)

Core Principles of Polypharmacy

Pillar 2: Education & Training

The **Polypharmacy** ALSs build on the evaluated model and content developed by Wessex AHSN in partnership with Health Education England (HEE).

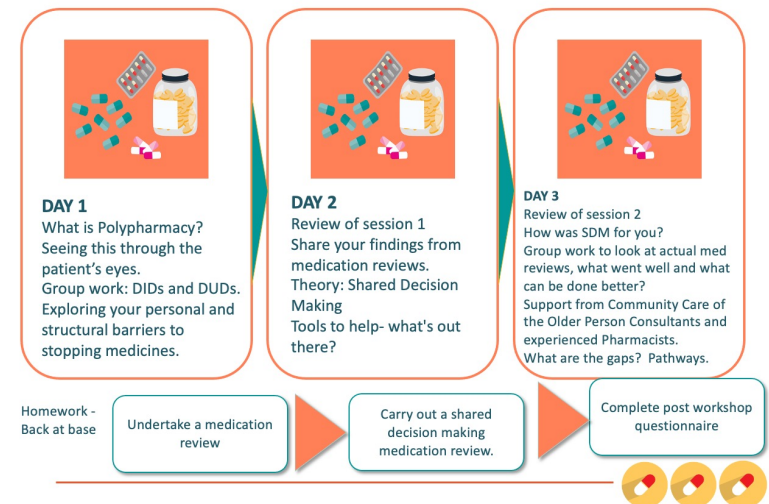
The Action Learning Sets are a structured method enabling small groups to address complicated issues by meeting regularly and working collectively. This format is especially suitable to learning around a complex topic. It supports personal development at the professional and managerial levels, and ideally suits the aims of our work. Learning is achieved through the ALS process.

The key principles of Action Learning include

- Creating the context and environment for empowered action
- Learning from experience - what has and has not worked well
- A multi-disciplinary approach to addressing complex issues
- Acknowledging that people in the room have the capability and capacity to effect change
- Utilising the resources in the room fully

ALS Structure and Content:

POLYPHARMACY ACTION LEARNING SETS



Evidence Base for ALS training: Brooks et al 2022

Key areas of improvement include awareness, confidence and management of inappropriate polypharmacy, equipping with relevant knowledge, information, tools and resources and decision-making and discussion about stopping medicines with colleagues in different settings. In addition, the ALS tool was well received as an educational learning tool in terms of being comprehensive, meeting expectations and strongly recommended.

Action Learning Set Training Dates

Cohort 12:

- Session 1- 25th Jan
- Session 2- 8th Feb
- Session 3- 22nd Feb

Registration link: <https://events.weahsn.net/PolypharmacyActionLearningSetCohort12>

Cohort 13:

- Session 1- 6th March
- Session 2- 20th March
- Session 3- 3rd April

Registration link: <https://events.weahsn.net/PolypharmacyActionLearningSetCohort13>

Cohort 14:

- Session 1- 28th March
- Session 2- 11th April
- Session 3- 25th April

Registration Link: <https://events.weahsn.net/PolypharmacyActionLearningSetCohort14>

Polypharmacy Masterclass

Reviewing Anticholinergic Burden - improving peoples' health and well-being

Yorkshire and Humber AHSN are running a Masterclass to highlight the practicalities of assessing ACB score and how to withdraw medication effectively and safely. Presenters Heather Smith and Anne Bentley will set the scene around the impact of Anticholinergic Burden as well as calculating ACB scores alongside cases studies showing how to work with patients to reduce anticholinergic impacts.

Anne Bentley- Lead Pharmacist, Digital Care Hub, Airedale NHS Foundation Trust, and Chair of the Pharmacist Group at the British Geriatric Society

Heather Smith- Consultant Pharmacist: Older People, West Yorkshire ICB.

ABC Masterclass: https://youtu.be/_Im4nPeWC08

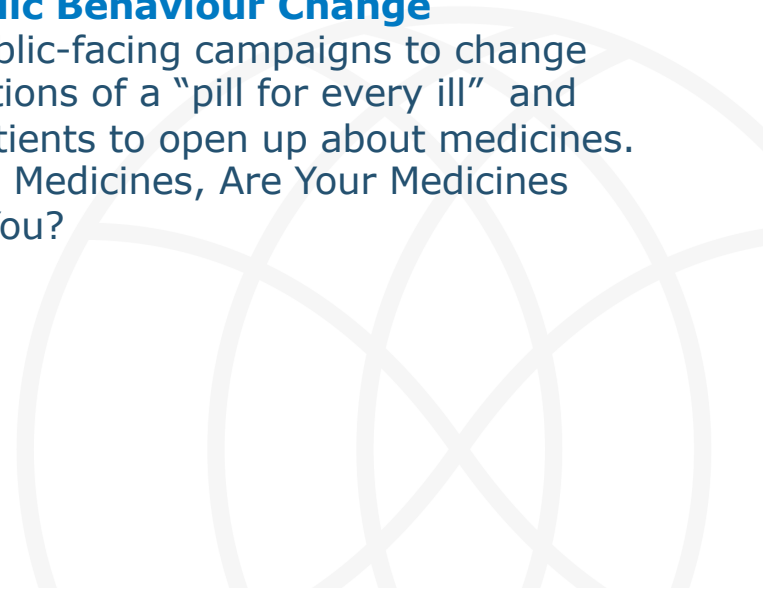
Pillar 3: Public Behaviour Change



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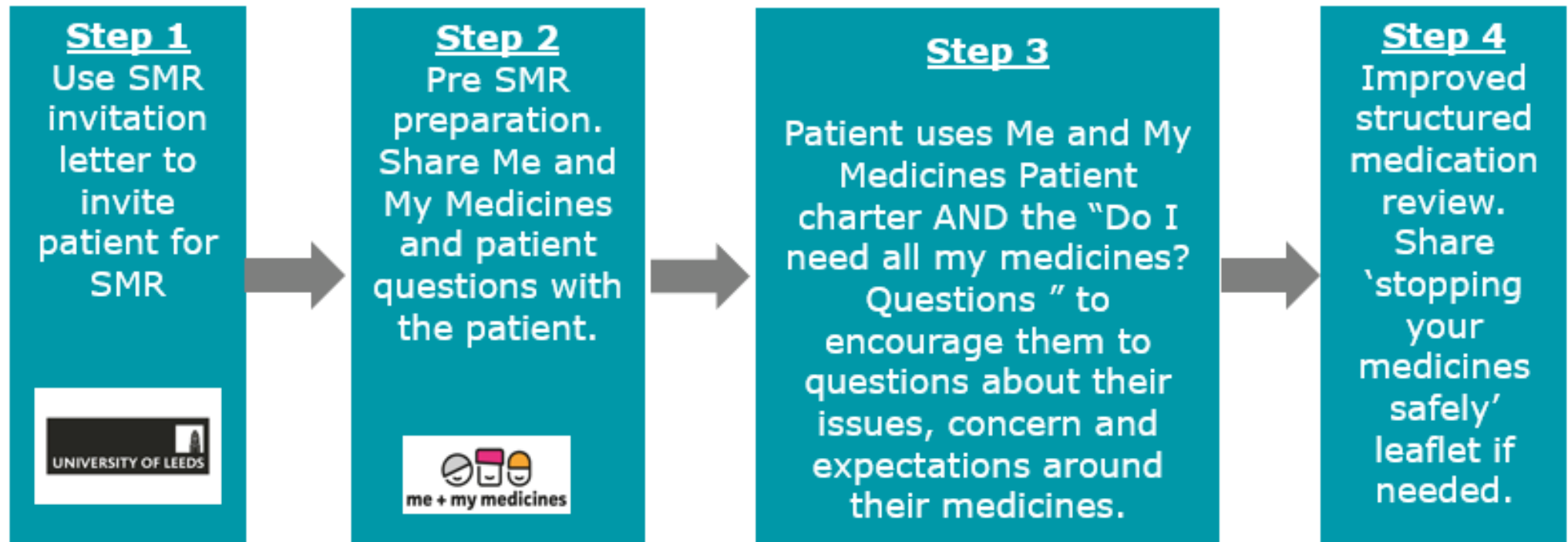
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The structured medication review pathway

Supporting patients to voice their issues and encourage better conversations about medicines



Patient SMR Invitation Letter

Text box for GP practice name and address

NHS

Dear <name of patient>

Reviewing your medicines

The practice is running a new service to help you with your medicines - this is called a medication review.

A medication review is a chance to check that your medicines are the best ones for you.

What will happen at the review?

- You will have a face-to-face appointment or telephone call with the practice pharmacist or GP.
- They will check your medicines are working - and not causing side effects.
- It is also a chance for you to tell us how you are getting on with your medicines - and to ask questions and find out more about them.

Why are we doing this?

We are doing this to make sure that your medicines are the right ones for you.

- The purpose of the review is not to save money.
- Also it is not to check if you are taking your medicines.

No medicines will be altered without agreement between you and the pharmacist or GP.

What happens next?

We will contact you to make an appointment to speak with the practice pharmacist or the GP at the practice or over the telephone.

- The pharmacist or GP will explain what your medicines are for.
- They will check if any changes to your medicines are needed.
- There will also be a chance to have your questions answered.

If someone helps you with your medicines, it may be helpful for them to be with you when you speak to the practice pharmacist.

On the other side there are some questions you might want to ask about your medicines at the appointment. >>

Text box for name and signature

NIHR | Yorkshire and Humber Patient Safety Research Collaboration

ageUK

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NHS

Questions to think about before the appointment that you may wish to ask

Why am I taking these medicines?

How do I know they are helping me?

Do I still need all my medicines?

What side effects do they cause?

It is difficult for me to open the containers - can you help with this?

Why do I have to take so many pills?

It is difficult to remember to take my medicines - can you help with this?

It is difficult to swallow my medicines - can you help with this?

I run out my medicines at different times - can you make this the same time for all of them?

See other language versions >>



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Year 1 Evaluation:

Need for 'setting the scene' information

- Why is this important?
- What do expect from a SMR
- Prompt questions
- Materials to be tested and used by patients
 - NIHR
 - Leeds University

Me and My Medicines

It's OK to ask...



me + my medicines

What is Me + My Medicines?

Me + My Medicines is a patient-created, patient-led and health professional supported campaign to help patients get more benefit and greater value from their prescription medicines.

The Medicines Communication Charter encourages patients to ask, and clinicians to support people to ask about their medicines, to agree together a shared approach to overcoming any issues around their medicines.

The Charter

As your health professional I want to help us get the best from your medicines, and to do that we need to work together.

As your health professional I can help and advise you about your medicines. You are the expert when it comes to your experience and views on how your medicines affect you and your daily life.

Being honest about your understanding and feelings towards medicines helps me better understand and appreciate your situation.

I will listen to you and respect what you tell me so we can share responsibility and work together to get the best from your medicines.

This will help us to have an open conversation about your medicines, so that you feel confident that the decision we reach together is in your best interests and is based on your circumstances.


This was shared with: _____ on: _____

by: _____

The **AHSN** Network


Notes

It's OK to ask...



me + my medicines

See other language versions



The **AHSN** Network

Year 1 Evaluation:

- 74% said materials did not need improving
- Explain what the Charter is.
- Simplify some of the text.
- Room for notes.

Accessibility

An easy-read, audio version of the materials is available by scanning the QR code on each resource.



The resources are available in the following languages in addition to English:

- Arabic
- Bengali
- Gujarati
- Polish
- Panjabi Gurmukhi
- Punjabi Shahmukhi
- Urdu
- Romanian



In addition, an [animation](#) has been created to help patients think about their medicines and to prepare for a Structured Medication Review.

All three resources in the various languages are available via the [AHSN Network national Polypharmacy website](#). The resources are free to use and can be amended with local information including logos etc.

Partnership working and endorsement



Authorised use of Age UK logo
Materials reviewed by Age UK Health Policy, Branding and Media Teams
August > all staff briefing and public helpline teams & website



Shared with patient involvement review team



Authorised use of NHS Logo
Pharmacy Communications Lead
Transformation Directorate Social Media and Media Teams



Innovators (Gemma Donovan and Graham Prestwich)

Two patient reps

Resources

Polypharmacy Action Learning Set Promotional 5min video <https://vimeo.com/852300976?share=copy>

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Polypharmacy dashboard training- understanding the data.

[The AHSN Polypharmacy Programme: Getting the balance right Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)

Community of Practice Y&H contact Graham.Finney@yhahsn.com

Recordings of previous events

Anticholinergic burden masterclass https://youtu.be/_Im4nPeWC08

Community of Practice patient participation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6W401VYvf90>

Polypharmacy Programme Launch of Resources for Patients Webinar recording

<https://vimeo.com/868360325?share=copy>



Contact:

Mark Dines-Allen, Senior Programme Consultant

mark.dines-allen@yhahsn.com

Kirsty Bramley-Dove, Pharmacy Clinical Lead

kirsty.bramley-dove@yhahsn.com