

HIPS/26/1025 - A National Mixed Methods Exploration of Community Pharmacy Services for People with Drug Problems in Scotland

Community pharmacies are established in providing services to reduce drug-related harm. This includes medication assisted treatment, injection equipment provision and naloxone supply. However, there is no recent Scottish data about the level and nature of service provision. Surveys were distributed in 1995, 2000, 2006 and 2014 to all community pharmacies in Scotland, charting provision and capturing changes in attitudes towards providing these services. This provided essential information for specialist pharmacists, treatment services and commissioners. Much has changed since 2014. There has been a rise in drug-related harm which was prioritised by Scottish Government through their National Mission (2021-2026). Professional changes have occurred with increased numbers of pharmacist prescribers, including all pharmacists qualifying from 2026. There is a national move to train pharmacy teams to adopt trauma-informed approaches. It is essential and timely to repeat the survey to document and analyse these changes and guide future developments. Additional qualitative data through interviews will explain survey findings with focus-groups providing a policy perspective. Previous surveys used postal questionnaires. Since the last survey, survey methods have largely moved online which are more efficient but can suffer from lower response rates. We will use evidence-based methods to maximise response rate. The questionnaire will be updated to ensure relevance to current practice whilst ensuring comparisons to previous surveys are valid. The team will survey all Scottish pharmacies using an online survey, conduct a sample of interviews with pharmacists and focus groups with stakeholders. Findings will be presented to different audiences to inform policy and practice.