Citation for published version:

Publication date:
2014

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Link to publication

Publisher Rights
CC BY

University of Bath

General rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Download date: 05. Dec. 2018
Laura Edwards¹, Benjamin Gascoyne¹, Matthew Jones², Jenna Power¹, Richard Spear¹ & Corinne de Vries¹.
¹Department of Pharmacy & Pharmacology, University of Bath. ²Pharmacy Department, Royal United Hospital, Bath.

Introduction
- Despite making up ~70% of pharmacists, community pharmacists (CPs) submit a small minority of the enquiries received by the UKMi network.
- Hospital pharmacists (HPs) submit a significant proportion of enquiries, despite making up ~20% of the work force.
- Newer CP services may require increased access to information about medicines, so the objectives of this study were to identify which written sources of information are used by CPs & HPs, & to explore reasons for any differences.

Method
- Quantitative data were collected via a questionnaire sent to CPs & HPs across the south west of England in Autumn 2011.
- The questionnaires contained only minor sector specific variations.
- Qualitative data from telephone interviews were analysed to explore the reasoning behind individual pharmacists' decisions.

Results
- Quantitative data were obtained from 129 CPs & 80 HPs, with similar levels of professional experience in each group.
- CPs reported accessing information on medicines to answer a query significantly less often than HPs (means of 9.4 & 19.0 times/week respectively; p=0.002).
- When asked where they would look for information in specific scenarios, CPs preferred "general" resources such as the BNF, whereas HPs preferred a wider range of "specialist" resources.
- CPs commonly suggested they would consult only one resource, usually the BNF.
- All HPs reported having unrestricted or only partially restricted internet access in the workplace, but 56% of CPs reported having either no internet access or access to only pre-approved websites.
- Interviews highlighted the difficulties CPs face in obtaining information on medicines: they appeared less confident when using the internet or new information sources.
- CPs reported that new services had increased their need for information, but they did not have enough access to specialist sources & it was difficult to find new resources.

Discussion
- Despite a growing need for information, CPs face a number of barriers to accessing information about medicines, including limited internet access & lack of knowledge of the range of information available.
- This is reflected in their use of a narrower range of less specialist resources & might result in poorer quality answers.
- The publication of a list of "essential resources" for CPs would be a first step in addressing this issue, to support the further development of safe CP services.