

# University researchers to test new community pharmacy service

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A new NHS community pharmacy scheme to help patients understand and get the best out of a new medicine is to be tested and evaluated by a team led by The University of Nottingham in collaboration with University College London and Warwick Business School.

The New [Medicine](#) Service started in October 2011 and will run until March 2013 with funding of up to £55 million in both 2011/12 and 2012/13 available for its delivery. The service provides support from community pharmacists for people with long-term conditions who are newly prescribed a medicine to help them solve any problems with their medication or its management.

The study is being led by Professor Rachel Elliott and Dr Matthew Boyd. Dr Boyd said: "The New Medicine Service is a great opportunity to formalise the excellent work community pharmacists already do every day supporting [patients](#) with their medicines. This study intends to provide an evidence base for how pharmacists can support patients with their new medicines. It is hoped it will inform the development of more pharmacy services in the future."

Professor Nick Barber from the UCL School of Pharmacy and a project team member, whose work formed the basis for this new service said: "We hope this service will make patients' lives better; our task is to find out if this happens in reality."

It is believed that up to a quarter of people with long-term conditions

such as asthma and diabetes don't take their medicines properly. Under the New Medicine Service, community pharmacists offer follow-up consultations and phone calls to patients to help them manage their medicines regime. These take place one to two weeks after receiving the new medicine and again a further two to three weeks later.

The aim is to help more patients take their newly prescribed medicines correctly to improve the drugs' effectiveness and improve outcomes for patients. It is also hoped this will reduce medicines wastage and hospital admissions due to adverse reactions to medicines.

Following an open competitive tender, a team led by investigators from The University of Nottingham's School of Pharmacy has been awarded a £442,000 grant from the Department of Health to carry out a randomised control study of the new scheme in the East Midlands, South Yorkshire and London areas and will compare the experiences of patients who receive the New Medicine Service with those who do not. In addition researchers will interview patients, pharmacists and GPs to get grass roots experiences of how the service improves outcomes for patients and opinions on how the service could be improved. The study will run for 18 months from January 2012 reporting to the Department of Health in summer 2013.

The results of the research will inform decisions at government-level about whether the New Medicine Service should continue to be funded and future arrangements for service provision.

**More information:** More details can be found on the [NHS Employers website](#)

Provided by University of Nottingham

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