

Follow-up phone calls by pharmacists help patients after hospital discharge

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A new *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* study illustrates the benefits of having clinical pharmacists follow up, by telephone, with patients at risk of having medication-related issues after hospital discharge. The aim is to help patients manage their medications effectively.

In the study, patients who received such pharmacist-led, post-discharge telephone follow-up were matched with patients in a control group. All patients in the study had been prescribed multiple medicines for the management of their medical conditions.

The [intervention](#) reduced 30- and 90-day hospital readmission rates by 9.9 percent and 15.2 percent, respectively, compared with controls. The intervention also had positive effects on time to hospital readmission, length of hospital stay upon readmission, healthcare costs, patient beliefs about medicines, patient adherence to their medications, and patient satisfaction.

"Many patients have difficulty in managing their medicines after discharge from hospital. Telephone follow-up allowed [clinical pharmacists](#) to give tailored support to patients according to their individual needs," said senior author Prof. James McElnay, of Queen's University Belfast, in the UK. "This simple intervention had very positive outcomes and was welcomed by [patients](#). We are working to introduce this new approach into routine practice across the hospital service."

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