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Demonstrating our worth



As 2009 draws to a close, clinical pharmacists may not be reflecting on the past year so much as looking to the challenges ahead.

We are all too aware of the future financial uncertainties as we head closer to the end of the current budget settlement, and many belts are being tightened in anticipation of this.

Other challenges include the changing patient demographic (with more patients living with chronic diseases than ever before), a shift towards care being provided closer to patients' homes, increasing complexity of drug therapies (including more biological therapies), and workforce issues.

Key themes and proposed solutions to some of these challenges, which have been discussed through the pages of *The British Journal of Clinical Pharmacy*, include the need for our professional roles to be better defined, strong leadership at all levels of practice, innovative ways of working, and sharing local evidence.

All of these solutions have one thing in common — pockets of excellence in which pharmacists have shown that it can be done. It is now up to us to apply this work on a wider scale and add to the evidence base of the positive impact of clinical pharmacists on patient care — to demonstrate our worth.

In this issue, a Drug Safety article describes use of the failure modes

effects analysis tool to identify risks associated with the use of rituximab (p329). Although the article focuses on oncology, the authors point out that the methodology used could be applicable to other therapeutic areas. This could be said for many examples of innovative practice — if it works for one speciality we should consider how it could be adopted in other areas.

Also in this issue is a Sharing Practice article describing a new protocol for 'fast track' hip and knee replacement surgery (p343). This protocol, designed together with the pharmacy team, has been shown to reduce the length of hospital stay and has helped raise the profile of the pharmacy within the Trust.

Since its launch at the beginning of this year, *The British Journal of Clinical Pharmacy* is proud to have provided clinical pharmacists with a forum through which to showcase their work, and we would like to thank all of our contributors and advisers.

Moving into 2010 we will continue to provide this service, and to encourage pharmacists to share best practice, debate professional issues and demonstrate the value of our profession.

**Hannah Pike, MRPharmS
Editor**

***The British Journal of Clinical Pharmacy* reader survey**

The British Journal of Clinical Pharmacy would like to thank all those who responded to the survey mailed to a selection of our readers in October. We had a response rate of nearly 20% and all replies were analysed by an independent research company.

Donations were made to the following charities as selected by respondents: Cancer Research UK £244, Médecins sans Frontières £151, Save the Children £130.

Information you provided about your responsibilities and editorial preferences will help us tailor our content to your needs, and opinions given on the pharmacy profession and challenges to your role development will be used to inform further editorial debate.

Although the survey has now closed, *The British Journal of Clinical Pharmacy* will continue to welcome all feedback, suggestions or criticisms.