

## Award winners

### *Pain management guidance*

Pain management guidance in primary care across the Southampton region is consistent for the first time, following new guidance developed by Emma Davis, specialist pharmacist, pain services, and her team from Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust. The work involved reviewing existing guidance and the latest evidence, making changes to reflect local practice, and gaining consensus across the three secondary care specialist centres and two primary care trusts in the region.

Patient access to medicines in primary care is now equivalent across the region, and GPs have a clear indication of the therapies they are expected to have tried before referring their patients to specialist services. Ms Davis was awarded the Napp pain award for her work. This is the second year that she has won this award.

### *Electronic antimicrobial referrals*

An electronic referral system for joint pharmacy and microbiology review of patients with complex infection problems has been developed at Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust. Microbiologists and pharmacists can now generate a secure patient list, by ward or by speciality, in advance of the ward round, and recommendations made during the round can be recorded and analysed.

An average of 175 patients are reviewed every month under the new system, most commonly for a general microbiology review. The most common intervention is advice to stop the antimicrobial drug, or to recommend a stop date.

Kieren Hand, consultant pharmacist in anti-infectives at the Trust, was presented with the Novartis antimicrobial management award for this work.

*The UK Clinical Pharmacy Association autumn symposium, entitled 'Progress in practice' was held in Stratford-upon-Avon on 13–15 November.*

# Progress in practice

Examples of joint working across pharmacy sectors were among the award-winning presentations at the recent UK Clinical Pharmacy Association symposium. By Hannah Pike.

The uncertain financial times ahead will challenge the pharmacy profession to plan its workforce effectively and make best use of skill mix, said Catherine Duggan, chair of the UK Clinical Pharmacy Association. Speaking at the opening session of the symposium, she pointed out that financially challenging times often bring with them great opportunities, and that our profession should take advantage of these.

“Even if we find that healthcare is protected to a greater or lesser degree, we do know that there are cuts on the horizon, and yet we cannot lose the quality in what we are delivering,” she warned.

Turning to opportunities to explore skill mix within our teams, Dr Duggan emphasised the importance of recognising different levels of practice. She described how the UKCPA is working for recognition of advanced pharmacy practice, and will be collaborating with other specialist pharmacy groups to discuss how different levels of practice can be recognised consistently.



Catherine Duggan: explore the opportunities

“This is to ensure that our profession is supported to lead, during times of challenge and during times of plenty,” said Dr Duggan.

She added that this will also ensure that the pharmacy profession meets its mission of being the medicines experts, and is developed across the sectors.

## Developing a tool to measure pharmacist interventions

A simple, reliable tool for rating the clinical significance of pharmacists' contributions to patient care has been developed by the pharmacy department at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation trust.

Presenting the work during an oral communication session, Raliat Onatade, deputy director of pharmacy clinical services at the Trust, explained that having a validated method for assessing the significance of pharmacists' interventions can be used to demonstrate the value of the pharmacy team, prioritise resource allocation, and identify common problems with care processes.

Following a literature search and review process, it was decided to base the new

tool on that described by Hatoum et al (*Drug Intel Clin Pharm* 1988;22:252–9) — a single scale tool used for rating interventions and prevention of medication errors. After modification and updating of the tool, it was used by 34 pharmacists to independently rate 21 pharmacist contributions. Reliability was tested using a statistical technique involving weighted kappa coefficients, and it was found to have moderate to fair reliability following minimal training.

Ms Onatade explained that the next stage of development is to improve the reliability by rewording the descriptors and adding more scenarios.

Ms Onatade won the Hameln oral presentation award for her work.