

**MHRA Health Care Professionals
GPs, Pharmacists & Hospital Physicians (Medicines) Version
Topline Results
21/07/06**

All fieldwork was undertaken between 23 May and 27 June 2006

Telephone interviews were carried out with three types of NHS staff. In total, 300 interviews were carried out: 100 with GPs, 100 with Pharmacists and 100 with Physicians.

Quotas were set during fieldwork to ensure sufficient numbers of interviews were carried out with particular groups of staff.

Data are based on all in each staff group unless otherwise stated

Data are unweighted

All figures are presented as percentages

An asterisk represents a figure smaller than 0.5%, but greater than 0

Where percentages do not sum to 100, this is due to computer rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of 'don't know' categories

When I ask about medicines, I mean all kinds of medicines, including vaccines.

PERCEPTIONS OF RISK OF MEDICINES

Q1 **How much, if anything, do you feel you personally know about the risks from medicines which you... prescribe (for GPs and Hospital Physicians)/ dispense or sell (for pharmacists). Would you say.....? READ OUT A) –D). REVERSE ORDER ON ALTERNATE INTERVIEWS. SINGLE CODE ONLY**

		GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
		%	%	%
A)	A great deal	22	50	38
B)	A fair amount	77	47	50
C)	Not very much	1	2	5
D)	Nothing at all	0	0	1
	Not stated	0	0	0
	Don't know	0	1	6

Q2a is for GPs & Hospital Physicians only

Q2a **Thinking now about a new medicine which has just come onto the market, how often, if at all, would you say you weigh up the risks and benefits to a patient before deciding whether to prescribe it or not?**
 READ OUT A) -E). REVERSE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY

		GPs	Hospital physicians
		%	%
A)	Always	75	67
B)	Usually	16	14
C)	Sometimes	5	6
D)	Rarely	2	2
E)	Never	0	2
	Have never prescribed a new medicine which has just come onto the market	2	8
	Don't know	0	1

Q2b is for Pharmacists only.

Q2b **Thinking now about a medicine that has just been downgraded from POM to pharmacy status but not to GSL; how often, if at all, would you say you weigh up the risks and benefits to a customer of such a medicine before you decide whether or not to sell it? Would you say.....? READ OUT A) -E). REVERSE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY**

		Pharmacists
		%
A)	Always	61
B)	Usually	21
C)	Sometimes	1
D)	Rarely	1
E)	Never	0
	Have never sold a medicine which has just been downgraded from POM to pharmacy status	16
	Don't know	0

ADD PRE-AMBLE: Now thinking in general about ALL medicines, and not just new medicines. (for GPs and hospital Physicians)

ADD PRE-AMBLE: Now thinking in general about ALL medicines, and not just those that have just been downgraded (for pharmacists)

Q3a **Is there any medicine that you are particularly concerned about? IF YES Which? OPEN-ENDED.**

		GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
		%	%	%
Yes		52	51	28
No		45	48	68
None		3	1	2

Q3b Why do you say that? DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK

Base: All worried about at least one medicine

	GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
	(52) %	(51) %	(28) %
Side Effects/Interactions	63 54	47 37	86 68
Side-effects/Worried about potential side-effects on patients			
Seen a bad reaction in a patient/patients	15	2	4
Too risky	13	12	18
Interactions (with other medicines)	6	6	11
Insufficient Benefits	23 15	2 2	7 7
Risks outweigh benefits			
Not (clinically) effective/ Not effective enough/ Isn't any good	13	0	0
Understanding instructions	17 2	4 4	0 0
Confusing for patients/Patients can't understand instructions			
Confusing for health professionals/Health professionals can't understand instructions	17	0	0
Cost and Availability	0 0	2 2	7 7
Cost/Too costly/Not cost-effective/Can't afford it (from our budget)			
Product discontinued	0	0	0
Health Warnings	10 10	4 0	0 0
Read or heard something worrying about it (not from an official source)			
Seen an official health warning	2	4	0
Impact on daily life	0 0	0 0	0 0
Interferes too much with patients' daily lives			
Patients' attitudes and actions	8 6	4 0	0 0
Patients not keen to take/use it			
Patients forget to/how to take/use it	2	4	0
Patients prefer alternative medicine e.g. herbal remedy	0	0	0
Dependence/Addiction/Risk of suicide	12 10	16 16	0 0
Possibility of dependence/addiction			
Risk of suicide	2	0	0
Clinical trials	4 4	0 0	0 0
General concerns about medicine(s)/drug(s) involved in clinical trials			
Human volunteers became ill//Northwick Park Hospital volunteers became ill/trials involving volunteers/humans/ Problem with the company Parexel/ TeGenero / German company's drug	0	0	0
Problems with pharmaceutical companies	0 0	0 0	0 0
Companies promoting their products with lack of accountability			
Internet supply/illegal supply/counterfeits	2 2	0 0	0 0
Illegal supply of medicines			
Worry about counterfeit medicines	0	0	0
Availability over the internet	0	0	0
Other			
Inappropriately used by the public	2	12	0
Inappropriately sold over the counter	0	8	4
Be careful with prescribing the right dosage	0	8	4
Not regulated enough/over-prescribed	4	6	0
Patients need to be regularly checked/monitored	10	2	7

Other	10	2	7
Don't know	0	0	0

Q4 Who, if anyone, do you think regulates medicines to make sure they work and are acceptably safe? DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK

	GPs %	Pharmacists %	Hospital physicians %
Committee for the Safety of Medicines (CSM)/ Commission for Human Medicines (CHM)	25	12	18
MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency)	21	52	11
NICE (National Institute for health and Clinical Excellence)	21	12	16
A Government body/quango/department/agency	13	11	14
Pharmaceutical Companies/ Industry	9	11	22
MCA (Medicines Control Agency)	5	15	6
Medicines Watchdog	5	0	0
DH (Department of Health)	2	2	1
GMC (General Medical Council)	2	0	0
Research Council	1	0	0
The EU (European Union)	1	1	0
BMA (British Medical Association)	1	0	3
NHS (National Health Service)	1	1	0
Campaign groups	0	0	0
Charities	0	0	0
Environmental groups	0	0	0
Shareholders	0	0	0
The Healthcare Ombudsman	0	1	0
Risk Assessment department at hospital/dinic	0	0	4
It varies	0	1	0
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN)	9	10	9
PCT (Primary Care Trust)	3	0	0
BNF (British National Formulary)	2	0	3
DTB (Drugs & Therapeutic Bulletin)	2	0	3
Yellow card scheme	1	0	1
SMC (Scottish Medical Consortium)	1	0	2
FDA (Food & Drug Administration)	1	0	3
NPSA (National Patient Safety Agency)	0	2	0
Don't know	9	4	15

Q5 **Who, or which organisation, if any, would you contact if you wished to report an adverse drug reaction? DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK.**

	GPs %	Pharmacists %	Hospital physicians %
Would use a "Yellow Card"	82	66	55
The Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)	7	22	5
The British Medical Association (BMA)	3	0	1
A doctor/GP/physician/surgeon	1	5	5
A pharmacist	1	0	16
Medicines Control Agency (MCA)	1	2	0
National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)	1	3	1
The local health authority/the Trust	1	0	3
A nurse	0	0	0
Hospital where patient received treatment	0	0	1
A Government body/quango/department/agency	0	1	2
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)	0	1	0
The NHS	0	0	0
A central monitoring or liaison officer in the Trust	0	0	0
The relevant professional body/council	0	2	1
The Health Professions Council (HPC)	0	0	1
The Department of Health (DH)	0	1	1
The Healthcare Commission	0	0	0
The Healthcare Ombudsman	0	0	0
The General Medical Council (GMC)	0	0	1
Medicines Watchdog	0	1	0
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN)	2	2	9
CSM (Committee for the Safety of Medicines (CHM)/ Commission for Human Medicines)	5	10	5
BNF (British National Formulary)	2	1	3
The Pharmaceutical/Drug companies	1	6	1
None – I would not know who to contact	0	0	0
None – I would not report it	0	0	0
Don't know	0	0	5

Q6 I'm going to read out a list of some healthcare organisations. For each one I'd like you to tell me whether you have heard of it before, or not. READ OUT A) –E). ROTATE ORDER. MULTICODE

	YES %	NO %	DK %
A) MHRA – the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency			
GPs	62	37	1
Pharmacists	92	8	0
Hospital physicians	44	55	1
B) NICE – the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence			
GPs	100	0	0
Pharmacists	97	3	0
Hospital physicians	99	1	0
C) MDA – the Medical Devices Agency			
GPs	67	31	2
Pharmacists	72	28	0
Hospital physicians	61	38	1
D) NPSA – the National Patient Safety Agency			
GPs	50	47	3
Pharmacists	74	26	0
Hospital physicians	63	37	0
E) MCA – the Medicines Control Agency			
GPs	74	24	2
Pharmacists	93	7	0
Hospital physicians	52	47	1

INFORMATION ON MEDICINES

ADD PRE-AMBLE: Now, thinking about the risks and benefits of medicines again...

Q7 I am going to read out a list of information sources. For each one, could you tell me whether you generally use it to obtain information about the risks or benefits of medicines? READ OUT A) -Q). CODE ALL THOSE THAT APPLY. MULTICODE OK.

INSERT 'ANOTHER' WHERE APPLICABLE i.e. WHEN INTERVIEWING GPs & HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS , CODE A SHOULD BE 'ANOTHER DOCTOR'; AND WHEN INTERVIEWING PHARMACISTS CODE B SHOULD BE 'ANOTHER PHARMACIST'

		GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
		%	%	%
A)	(Another) Doctor	88	48	86
B)	(Another) Pharmacist	84	89	96
C)	Pharmaceutical companies' websites or written communications	46	81	55
D)	Other Internet searches	69	61	80
E)	Patient information leaflets or pack inserts	69	90	66
F)	Patient organisations or campaigning groups	11	18	11
G)	Medical charities	16	8	16
H)	The general media (i.e. TV, newspapers, radio, etc)	24	15	21
I)	The specialist media (e.g. <i>GP magazine</i> (for GPs); <i>The Pharmaceutical Journal/Pharmacy Magazine</i> (for pharmacists); <i>Hospital Doctor Magazine</i> (for Hospital Physicians))	93	93	75
J)	Current Problems in Pharmacovigilance	41	58	31
K)	Alerts about specific problems from the Department of Health, the NHS or MHRA	93	94	86
L)	Other official sources of information	72	87	61
M)	Drugs and Therapeutics Bulletin	94	75	76
N)	University Scientists	12	9	25
O)	BNF, Martindale, or other reference works	96	98	97
P)	National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)	92	71	85
Q)	National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)	11	43	30
	I don't use any sources to obtain information	0	0	0
	None of these	0	0	0
	Don't know	0	0	0

TRUST IN INFORMATION SOURCES ON MEDICINES

Q8 I am now going to read out a list of sources of information again. For each one I read out could you tell me whether you would generally trust that source, or not, to give you accurate information about the risks and benefits of medicines? READ OUT A -O). CODE ALL THOSE THAT APPLY MULTICODE OK

INSERT 'ANOTHER' WHERE APPLICABLE i.e. WHEN INTERVIEWING GPs & HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS, CODE A SHOULD BE 'ANOTHER DOCTOR'; AND WHEN INTERVIEWING PHARMACISTS CODE B SHOULD BE 'ANOTHER PHARMACIST'

		Trust %	Not trust %	Don't know %
A)	[Another] Doctor			
	GPs	88	7	5
	Pharmacists	64	32	4
	Hospital physicians	83	14	3
B)	[Another] Pharmacist			
	GPs	96	2	2
	Pharmacists	89	7	4
	Hospital physicians	95	4	1
C)	A Nurse			
	GPs	48	38	14
	Pharmacists	41	54	5
	Hospital physicians	32	60	8
D)	The general media (i.e. TV, newspapers, radio, etc)			
	GPs	2	96	2
	Pharmacists	3	97	0
	Hospital physicians	5	95	0
E)	The specialist health media (e.g. GP magazine (for GPs); The Pharmaceutical Journal/Pharmacy Magazine (for pharmacists); Hospital Doctor Magazine (for Hospital Physicians)			
	GPs	82	16	2
	Pharmacists	93	7	0
	Hospital physicians	78	21	1
F)	Pharmaceutical companies			
	GPs	28	65	7
	Pharmacists	77	17	6
	Hospital physicians	46	47	7
G)	University scientists			
	GPs	65	14	21
	Pharmacists	57	31	12
	Hospital physicians	61	27	12
H)	Medical charities			
	GPs	31	55	14
	Pharmacists	33	49	18
	Hospital physicians	25	58	17
I)	Patient organisations or campaigning groups			
	GPs	13	77	10
	Pharmacists	24	65	11
	Hospital physicians	14	76	10
J)	Internet searches			
	GPs	43	38	19
	Pharmacists	41	48	11
	Hospital physicians	50	36	14

K)	The Department of Health			
	GPs	96	3	1
	Pharmacists	95	4	1
	Hospital physicians	93	4	3
L)	Patient information leaflets or pack inserts			
	GPs	93	4	3
	Pharmacists	98	2	0
	Hospital physicians	81	14	5
M)	MHRA – the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency			
	GPs	83	3	14
	Pharmacists	93	4	3
	Hospital physicians	73	4	23
N)	National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)			
	GPs	94	4	2
	Pharmacists	95	1	4
	Hospital physicians	97	1	2
O)	National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)			
	GPs	61	11	28
	Pharmacists	81	6	13
	Hospital physicians	70	8	22

Q9. I'm going to read out some statements and for each one I'd like you to tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with it using the following scale: strongly agree, tend to agree, neither agree nor disagree, tend to disagree or strongly disagree READ OUT A – E. ROTATE ORDER. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH.

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor dis- agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
		%	%	%	%	%	%
A)	I know a fair amount about how medicines are regulated in this country						
	GPs	11	56	11	18	3	1
	Pharmacists	32	40	17	10	1	0
	Hospital physicians	21	50	10	18	1	0
B)	Pharmaceutical companies have too much influence over the way medicines are regulated						
	GPs	18	36	15	23	5	3
	Pharmacists	21	30	27	17	2	3
	Hospital physicians	17	31	20	23	7	2
C)	Medicines are adequately regulated at the moment in this country						
	GPs	32	55	5	6	1	1
	Pharmacists	35	45	9	8	3	0
	Hospital physicians	42	44	6	7	1	0
D)	I'd like to receive more communication about the benefits of medicines						
	GPs	20	22	13	34	11	0
	Pharmacists	27	35	15	16	7	0
	Hospital physicians	27	34	9	18	12	0
E)	I'd like to receive more communication about the risks of medicines						
	GPs	26	34	7	28	5	0
	Pharmacists	39	26	15	14	6	0
	Hospital physicians	35	35	7	16	7	0

Demographics

Gender

	GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
	%	%	%
Male	64	47	71
Female	36	53	29

Age

	GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
	%	%	%
Under 35	20	41	35
35-44	30	33	32
45-54	32	18	26
55-59	9	3	5
60-64	8	5	1
65-74	1	0	1
75+	0	0	0

Region

	GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
	%	%	%
North	37	39	34
Midlands	29	29	31
South	34	32	35

Practice Size

	GPs
	%
1-3 GPs	33
4+ GPs	67

Type of Pharmacist

	%
Hospital	25
Retail	75

Type of Pharmacy

	%
Chain	13
Independent	22
Multi	40

Grade

	Hospital physicians %
House officer	5
Senior house officer	25
Registrar	20
H. practitioner/ Clinical assistant	5
Associate specialist	3
Staff grade	6
Consultants	36

MHRA identified before interview

	GPs	Pharmacists	Hospital physicians
	%	%	%
Yes	18	2	9
No	82	98	91