

The iSIMPATHY Approach to Polypharmacy and Adherence - Pharmacist and GP Experience

(iSIMPATHY : implementation of Stimulating Innovation Management of Polypharmacy and Adherence Through the Years)

Authors

Emma Jane Coyle, Clare Kinahan, Jacqueline Treacy, Leon O'Hagan, Ciara Kirke, Celine Croarkin, Trevor Hunter, Joanne O'Brien

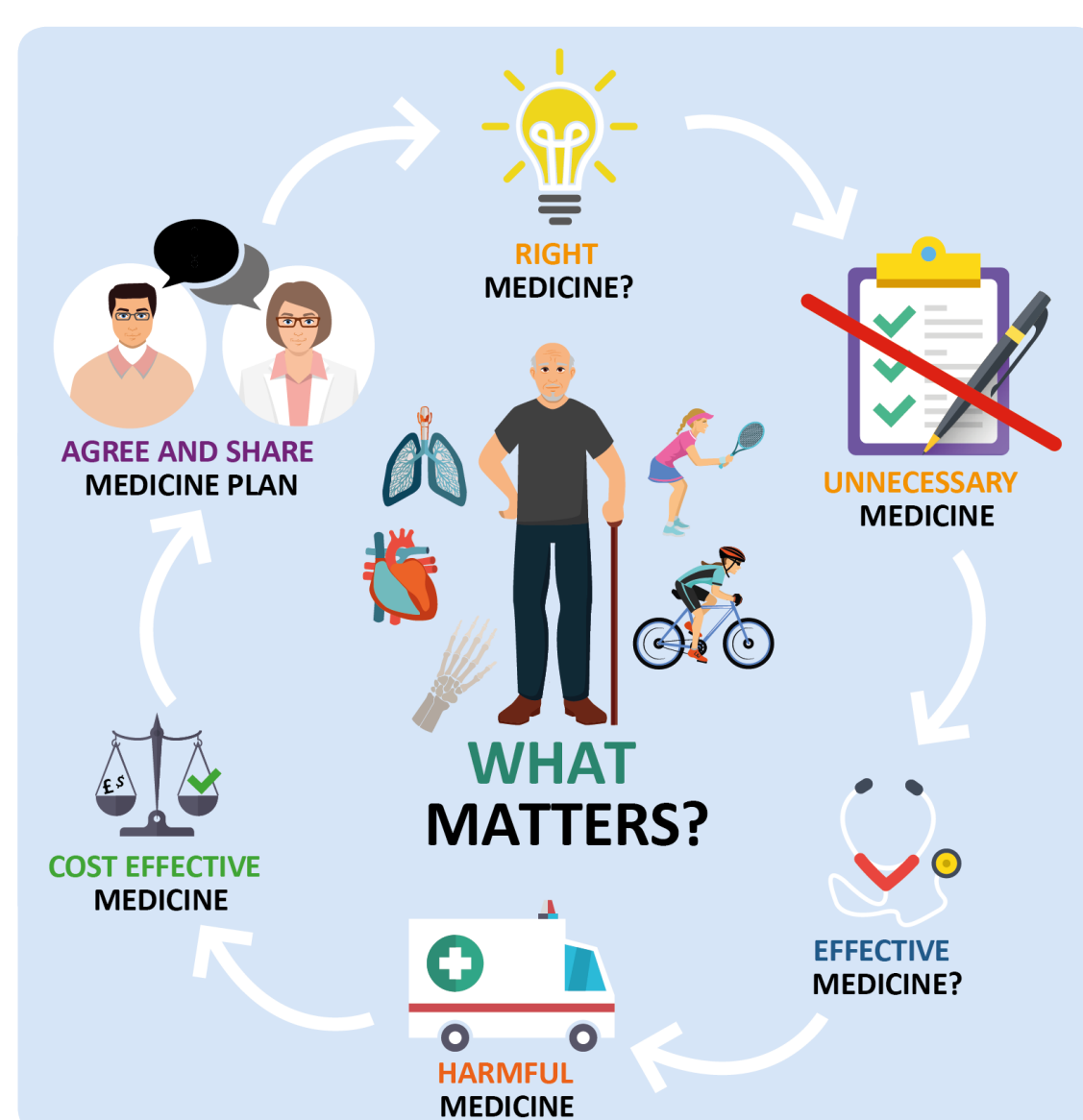
Introduction

iSIMPATHY is an EU INTERREG VA funded project, delivering quality clinical care in primary and secondary care. The project is led by the Scottish Government and works in partnership with the HSE and Northern Trust.

The approach is interdisciplinary, collaborative and centered around pharmacist-led medicines reviews.

Four senior clinical pharmacists are working with 10 GP practices and carry out comprehensive medication reviews with patients, focusing on their needs & wants and clinical & safety considerations, using a methodology developed in Scotland (7 Steps). Following discussion with patients and comprehensive review of PMR, pharmacists liaise with the GPs who then action the changes as appropriate.

7 STEPS TO APPROPRIATE POLYPHARMACY



Polypharmacy

- Polypharmacy and issues with adherence contribute substantially to the risk of medication-related harm¹.
- Addressing the challenges posed by polypharmacy and adherence is recommended by the World Health Organisation.
- iSIMPATHY aims to:
 - ✓ Improve patient adherence and understanding of their medicines
 - ✓ Reduce inappropriate polypharmacy
 - ✓ Optimise medicines use
 - ✓ Reduce medication-related harm
- iSIMPATHY recognises patients as key partners in their own health.



Define

Aims and Objectives

This is the first time comprehensive person-centered medicines reviews are being delivered outside of a research in general practice in Ireland.

- Feedback from GPs at webinars, by email and to the pharmacists in person has been very positive.
- In July 2021, a survey was developed to obtain structured feedback about GPs and Pharmacists' experiences of the iSIMPATHY project in participating GP practices in Ireland.
- The survey aimed to identify barriers and facilitators to success of the project, overall impression and visions for the future for pharmacist roles in primary care were also explored.
- Survey outcomes to be used in the process of project evaluation.



Design

Methodology, Evidence and Planning

- A webinar was held with the iSIMPATHY Project Lead, ICGP representative and iSIMPATHY Project GPs and Pharmacists in attendance.
- The webinar delivered a presentation outlining project progress to date and plans for the remainder of project duration and also included plans for the future.
- During the webinar, a survey, developed using Smart Survey, was distributed to all project GPs and pharmacists by email, with two follow up reminders.



Deliver

Results, Discussion and Conclusion

10 GPs (33%) and 4 project pharmacists (100%) responded to the survey. Pharmacists and GPs agreed that iSIMPATHY delivers²:

- A positive impact on patient safety (avoidance of adverse drug reactions), patient quality of life, satisfaction, knowledge and understanding, adherence and quality of patient care.
- Improves GP job satisfaction, knowledge and understanding.
- Project facilitators: Pharmacist knowledge and skills, capacity to carry out and follow up on reviews (time available) and pharmacist communication with the patient.
- Project funding and support, including training of the pharmacists, was felt by most to be a facilitator of project success.
- GPs and pharmacists find the iSIMPATHY approach overwhelmingly positive.
- GPs' capacity (time available) to engage with the project is a challenge.
- The project is perceived to benefit patients and GPs and there is unanimity in support for the clinical pharmacist role in project practices and more broadly.
- All are in favour of the continuation of pharmacy presence in their practice beyond the life of this project and would encourage integration of more clinical pharmacy roles within the primary care setting in the future.



Outcomes

Safer Better Healthcare, and Staff & Public Value

CHANGE OUTCOMES

- Reducing medication-related harm is one of the priority areas identified in the HSE's Patient Safety Strategy 2019-2024 and in the National Service Plan 2021.
- Delivering the right care, in the right place at the right time is core to the Sláintecare implementation strategy and action plan, with enhanced community care core to this.
- Pharmacist-led, patient-centered medication reviews conducted in primary care are aligned with these visions.
- **The iSIMPATHY approach is considered acceptable by patients, pharmacists and GPs.**

References

1. Scottish Government Polypharmacy Model of Care Group. Polypharmacy Guidance, Realistic Prescribing 3rd Edition, 2018. Scottish Government.
2. iSIMPATHY Project GPs and Pharmacists Survey Report, September 2021.

For more information:

Project Management Lead, HSE iSIMPATHY: Celine Croarkin
 E: Celine.Croarkin@hse.ie Website: www.isimpathy.eu Twitter: @isimpathy



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