

# On-call pharmacists' perceptions of the provision of out-of-hours medicines advice using semi-structured interviews

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## Background

- On-call pharmacy services for medicines advice is almost universally provided in English hospital trusts.
- Nurses and junior doctors most frequent users. <sup>[1]</sup>
- **Aim was to ascertain perceptions of on-call pharmacists towards providing medicines advice to doctors and nurses.**

## Method

- Chief Pharmacists (n=12) from East of England consented for their on-call pharmacists to be contacted (n=106) to participate.
- Views of on-call pharmacists sought via semi-structured interviews using open questions.
- University ethics approval granted.

## Results

- 8 interviews conducted. Two major themes identified:
  1. Types of enquiry generated between nurses and doctors were similar (Table 1).
  2. Specific barriers associated with providing the service in an out-of-hours situation were identified (Figure 1).

## Discussion

- On-call pharmacists perceived the types of medicines advice questions asked by nurses or doctors out-of-hours to be similar in nature. Furthermore, enquiry themes out-of-hours were perceived to be similar to those asked in hours, particularly administration and therapeutic drug monitoring.
- Hospital pharmacy services should review availability and accessibility of information to healthcare professionals and on-call pharmacists when providing out of hours services.
- Further analysis of the perceived barriers associated with providing an on-call pharmacy service is still needed.
- This study was limited to a small number of pharmacists from a relatively small geographic area of England.

## References

1. Cheeseman MP, Rutter P. On-call hospital pharmacy services in NHS England: service provision and documentation of medicines advice calls. *Eur J Hosp Pharm* 2016; 23: 11–15.

Table 1. Enquiry Themes

Administration
Advice on safety to miss dose(s)
Dosage
Safety check
Therapeutic drug monitoring
Compatibility of parenteral medication

