



11th March 2013

The results of a pan-European survey of community and hospital pharmacists has revealed there is still much to be done in order to achieve the vision of good inter-sector and inter-professional collaboration in the care of patients, particularly in relation to the management of changes made to a patient's medication.

Europharm Forum ^[1] and **the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists** ^[2] (EAHP) conducted a 2 month survey of pharmacist practitioners from across Europe in both the community and hospital sector. The survey focused on issues of communication between sectors and professionals and achieved over 500 responses from 35 countries. The headline results reveal:

- 50% of responding community pharmacists indicated that they considered there to be no existing professional relationship between themselves and colleagues in the hospital sector;
- Yet, 75% of respondents believed that communication between pharmacists in the hospital and community sectors is essential or important to patient care (e.g. in relation to communicating medication changes);
- 71% of respondents considered that patients were not adequately counselled about their medications on discharge from hospital
- The 3 main cited barriers to communication between hospital and community sectors were, in order: lack of electronic information sharing systems; lack of time; and, not considered a core part of current practice.

Commenting on the results, **Dr. Roberto Frontini, President of the European Association of Hospital Pharmacists**, said:

“These results indicate again the timeliness of the theme of this week's EAHP Congress, ‘Improving patient outcomes: a shared responsibility’. Study after study has revealed the value to improving outcomes from medication when professionals communicate well with each other and pharmacists become part of an integrated multi-disciplinary team, contributing the full value of their knowledge about medications and medication use. Yet our survey reveals there is still much to be done to turn the vision into reality.

In an era when the spotlight on health spending efficacy shines brighter than ever, integrating the pharmacist into processes to ensure adequate medication reconciliation and counselling can no longer be seen as optional. It is a necessity for better care and better outcomes, especially so as we embark on the collective challenge of an ageing population.”

Dr. Dick Tromp, President of Europharm Forum said:

“I find grounds for optimism that community pharmacists and hospital pharmacists have responded in similar ways to our survey on inter-sector communication. It shows that there indeed is a basis for collaboration. We share the same professionalism and concern for the patients and this is very promising for the future. However unfortunately the survey did not provide positive surprises in the sense that it confirmed suspicions about poor or non-existing relationships between pharmacists across sectors. Europharm Forum intend to work further with the EAHP to find solutions in this area and we are very pleased that so many respondents showed interest and left their contact information to assist further research.

This will certainly lead to a next phase where best practices will be used for further development of pharmaceutical care. From other studies we know that the quality of care for patients moving between the various sectors of care need much attention and improvement. Hospital pharmacists and community pharmacists belong to the same family, so it should not be too complicated.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

- 1.** EAHP is an association of national organisations representing hospital pharmacists at European and international levels. More information about the EAHP and its history [here](#) ^[3].
- 2.** Europharm Forum is the European Forum of National Pharmaceutical Associations in Europe. It collaborates with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe, and it is the first of the Regional Forums of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) covering the WHO Europe Region. More information [here](#) ^[1].
- 3.** The 18th Congress of the EAHP is taking place at Le Palais des Congrès de Paris from Wednesday 13th March to Friday 15th March. The congress theme is "*Improving patient outcomes: a shared responsibility*". The full programme of the congress, and other information, is available [here](#) ^[1].

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Links

[1] <http://www.europharmforum.org/> [2] <http://www.eahp.eu/> [3] <http://www.eahp.eu/about-us>