



The latest results from EAHP's annual

survey of hospital pharmacy practice are now available [1]. A headline result from the almost 1000 responses from 33 countries is a perceived lack of support from hospital managers for the implementation of computerised decision support systems to reduce the risk of medication errors.

"Computerised decision support systems" refers to hospital wide software applications with prescribing support software and other functionalities designed to tackle common causes of error. Such systems reduce risk by eliminating hand written transcriptions, providing semi-automated error-checking possibilities, drug dose recommendations, and alerts for serious drug-drug reactions. They can also be linked to life saving systems such as bedside scanning of medicines to reduce administration error, specialised hospital pharmacy softwares to support pharmacy preparations and compounding, and more.

The latest findings emerged as part of a report into the extent to which the 44 European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy [2] are being met in practice. Among the statements the October-December 2015 survey focused on was Statement 5.5 *"Hospital pharmacists should help to decrease the risk of medication errors by disseminating evidence-based approaches to error reduction including computerised decision support."* This topic emerged as one of the most challenging of the 23 Statements surveyed. Implementation of computerised support goes beyond the scope of what hospital pharmacies can achieve alone. Instead, a whole system project management approach is required, including prescribers (typically doctors), pharmacists and the administrators of medicines in hospital (typically nurses), as well as health system managers and budget planners, at local, national and regional levels.

Responding to the results, EAHP President Joan Peppard remarked: *"These survey results provide clear information about hospital pharmacy development and where activity must be focused in order to achieve implementation of the European Statements. It is clear much work remains to convince those with responsibility for hospital management of the safety benefit and other returns available from computerised decision support systems. When it comes to leveraging technology for patient safety, progress does not happen by itself. Hospital*

pharmacists, with support from fellow healthcare professionals and patients, must advocate for better. Knowing that technologies for reducing medication error exist, and that the evidence of their benefit is out there, the ethics of our profession demands our action."

Tony West, Statement Implementation Project Director, commented: *"It is clear from early reflections on statement implementation across Europe that hospital pharmacies face similar difficulties in securing new technology take up. Computerised decision support systems to prevent medication error are just one example. Keele University's report advises sharing business cases where success has been achieved, as well as strategies for winning hearts and minds of other clinicians and managers. EAHP's statement implementation team are already taking up these recommendations."*

ENDS

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The European Association of Hospital Pharmacists (EAHP) is an association of national organisations across 34 countries representing hospital pharmacists at European and international levels. More information about the EAHP and its history here: <http://www.eahp.eu/about-us> ^[4]

2. The 44 European Statements of Hospital Pharmacy are a set of hospital pharmacy practice standards designed to assist European health systems in ensuring safe, effective and optimal use of medicines in collaboration with multi-disciplinary teams. The statements were formulated following an 18-month review process, which included two rounds of Delphi consultation with EAHP's 34 member country associations and patient and healthcare professional organisations. More information about the statements [here](#) ^[5].

3. In order to understand the status of implementation, and where practice development efforts should be best focused, EAHP, in collaboration with Keele University's Centre for Medicines Optimisation, conducted a survey between October and December 2015 with European hospital pharmacists focused on sections 2 (Selection, Procurement and Distribution), 5 (Patient safety and quality assurance) and 6 (Education and Research). 949 responses were received from 33 countries. A summary of the overall results of this survey is available [here](#) ^[1].

4. The full text of European Statement of Hospital Pharmacy 5.5 is *"Hospital pharmacists should help to decrease the risk of medication errors by disseminating evidence-based approaches to error reduction including computerised decision support"*.

5. The survey was conducted, analysed and results published with the commissioned support of Keele University's Centre for Medicines Optimisation.

6. EAHP wishes to convey its gratitude to all hospital pharmacists who took time to complete the survey, country coordinators, and to the EAHP Survey Working Group, led by Petr Horak, for overseeing the process.

7. Requests for interviews with Joan Peppard and/or Petr Horak, can be made by contacting [info\[at\]eahp\[dot\]eu](mailto:info[at]eahp[dot]eu) ^[3] | 00 322 741 2436

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Links

[1] <http://www.eahp.eu/publications/survey/content/2015-survey> [2]

<http://ejhp.bmj.com/content/21/5/256.full.pdf+html> [3] <https://www.eahp.eu/contact/info/eahp/eu> [4]

<http://www.eahp.eu/about-us> [5] <http://www.eahp.eu/practice-and-policy/european-statements-hospital-pharmacy>