

NIHR Greater Manchester PSTRC

Plain English Publication Summary

Publication: [The influence of personal communities on the self-management of medication taking: A wider exploration of medicine work](#)

Publication details (Vancouver format)

Cheraghi-Sohi S, Jeffries M, Stevenson F, et al. The influence of personal communities on the self-management of medication taking: A wider exploration of medicine work. *Chronic Illness*. 2015;11(2):77-92.

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What are the most important findings/conclusions in this paper? Why are they important?

Taking medication is a common and familiar task and people take many different types for different reasons. But sometimes medication isn't taken as directed by the clinician who has prescribed it and this can happen for a variety of reasons. This is why we wanted to investigate in depth *how* people take their medicines and *who* was involved.

We found that, for people with multiple long term conditions, taking medicines is complex and that often other people are involved, for example, by collecting medications on their behalf. This work was the first to highlight the importance of a person's social network in medicine-taking.

What did you do?

We did face-to-face interviews with people living with multiple health conditions and then looked at the data using a type of social network analysis to find out who was involved in medicine-taking and in what ways.

Why did you conduct this research?

Many people do not take their medications as directed by their clinicians. We needed to understand the tasks and the people involved in medicine-taking, to find out which tasks might be problematic and who is helpful (or not).

What was known before your paper was published?

We knew that carers and health professionals may be involved in helping with medicine-taking. But no one had really looked at the range of people that might be involved, at the ways they might be involved, and what impact this had on the person taking the medicines.

What is next? What is the potential impact of the work in this paper? What will change as a result of this paper (or the study it describes)?

As care continues to be moved out of hospitals and into the community, it is important to understand how this affects the people receiving care and other people involved in their care. We highlighted how complex this can be and that people who are socially isolated may require extra support. This knowledge can be used in future healthcare planning.

Does this paper link in to a particular study / project? If so, please summarise the study and explain how this paper has improved understanding, or will move the study forward.

N/A