

Publication title:

[Understanding procedural violations using Safety-I and Safety-II: The case of community pharmacies](#)

### **Publication details (Vancouver format)**

Jones CE, Phipps DL, Ashcroft DM. Understanding procedural violations using Safety-I and Safety-II: The case of community pharmacies. *Safety science*. 2018 Jun 30;105:114-20.

### **What was known before your paper was published?**

Before our paper was published, it was known that procedural violations (when procedures are not followed on purpose) occur in many different types of work settings. Understanding why violations happen and what they look like in the workplace is important for managing safety. Although not following procedures may sound unsafe, research has shown that at times violations are important for making sure patients are safe in certain circumstances.

Our previous work found that community pharmacy staff do not always follow procedures completely. However, little is known about specific violations and the reasons why they occur in this area.

### **What did you do?**

To explore what violations looked like in community pharmacy and the reasons why they occur we interviewed community pharmacy staff and asked them to tell us about times where they had not followed their procedures on purpose and their reasons why.

To help us to understand how violations affect safety, we used the idea of 'Safety-I' and 'Safety-II' as a useful way to think about how safety is managed. The Safety-I perspective explains violations as unwanted behaviours that are likely to risk safety. Whereas the Safety-II perspective sees violations as staff working flexibly in a busy and complicated environment.

**What did you find?**

31 violations were identified and our findings suggest that from a Safety-II perspective, staff violated to adapt to emergency or unforeseen situations and to manage safety. However, staff sometimes cut corners to manage a high workload which increased risk in some, but not all situations.

Overall, violations depend on the situation that a member of staff is working in and the violation is often felt to be rational to the person making the violation in the moment. Violations may be difficult to justify from an outside perspective, therefore it is important to think about the situation in which they occurred.

**What insights/knowledge did you add?**

Our study is the first explore why violations happen in a healthcare setting from a Safety-I and a Safety-II perspective. This is also the first study to identify violations and the reasons why they were seen to occur in a community pharmacy setting.

Furthermore, our work suggests that relying on a Safety-I approach, where all violations are deemed unsafe may no longer be appropriate as procedures may be over-restrictive at times. A Safety-II approach, which is more flexible with regards to procedures could be combined to allow staff to adopt a tailored and appropriate approach to patient safety.