

NIHR Greater Manchester PSTRC

Plain English Publication Summary

Publication: [Current and potential contributions of community pharmacy teams to self-harm and suicide prevention: A qualitative interview study](#)

Publication details (Vancouver format)

Gorton HC, Littlewood D, Lotfallah C, Spreadbury M, Wong KL, et al. (2019) Current and potential contributions of community pharmacy teams to self-harm and suicide prevention: A qualitative interview study. PLOS ONE 14(9): e0222132

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

We found that some pharmacy staff have helped patients with feelings and plans of suicide but none of the pharmacy staff in our study had received any training on suicide prevention. This is something that they all thought would be useful. Pharmacy teams also wanted to have a clear plan of how to refer patients to other services in the local area. They felt that they could have more of a role in suicide prevention if both the training and referral gaps were resolved. Pharmacy staff were clear that their good and longstanding relationships with patients helped them to provide support.

What did you do?

We interviewed twenty-five community pharmacy staff who worked in pharmacies across the North West of England. The roles of staff included pharmacist, pre-registration pharmacist, pharmacy technician, pharmacy assistant and driver. We had a loose series of questions that we asked staff in a private interview, and allowed them to express their opinions. There were no right and wrong answers, our aim was to learn more about their experiences.

Why did you conduct this research?

We had been involved in suicide research and realised that pharmacists were not mentioned in suicide prevention strategies. We suspected that our colleagues in community pharmacy might have helped people with suicidal thoughts and plans. We wanted to understand if they did have experience of this and how they might help people with this in the future.

What was known before your paper was published?

Very little was documented about the role of community pharmacy teams in suicide prevention. Dr Gorton, lead author of this paper, had been to Canada and America as part of a [Churchill Fellowship](#) where she met with the limited number of other people who research this. From speaking about suicide in pharmacy conferences, it was clear that pharmacy staff wanted to know more about suicide prevention.

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)?

In September 2020, NHS England announced that community pharmacies would receive payment if their staff completed suicide prevention training. The next steps are to consider the impact of this training.

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