

Publication: [Patient safety, self-injection, and B12 deficiency: a UK cross-sectional survey](#)

Publication details (Vancouver format)

Tyler N, Hodkinson A, Ahlam N, Giles S, Zhou A, Panagioti M. Patient safety, self-injection, and B12 deficiency: a UK cross-sectional survey. Br J Gen Pract. 2022 Jun 20:BJGP.2021.0711. doi: 10.3399/BJGP.2021.0711. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 36192360; PMCID: PMC9550316.

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

As far as we know, this is the largest study to date examining patient safety and vitamin B12 deficiency. We found that four out of 10 patients with B12 deficiency self-medicate using injections. Patients who self-medicated felt less safe when visiting their GP than those who didn't. Treating patients with B12 deficiency with dignity and respect and taking their individual needs into account should be a priority to reduce unsafe behaviours.

What did you do?

We surveyed 1297 people with vitamin B12 deficiency. We asked questions about their individual characteristics, how safe they feel when visiting their GP and about self-medication. We analysed the results to see how these factors interact with each other.

Why did you conduct this research?

One of the lead researchers has lived experience of this condition and was a member of numerous online groups where people felt unheard by GPs and so decided to self-medicate. She wanted to see how safe patients that chose to self-medicate felt compared to those who didn't and the reasons why people self-medicate.

What was known before your paper was published?

There are very few studies into vitamin B12 deficiency and safety. A small number of studies have described patient experiences and found similar results (i.e. patients describing GP visits as battles). However, there have been no large-scale studies looking at patient safety in this group of people.

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 this work was published in the British Journal of General Practice, we hope it has raised awareness among GPs of how unsafe patients with this condition often feel. We will look for opportunities in the future to explore the GPs' perspectives.

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.

This was a student project and is not linked to a GM PSTRC project.