

MI Keeps its Cool and Saves over £47K!

Sarah Cavanagh, Marianne Eve, Natasha Gearing, Alex Gunn, Alex Hammond, Tim Meadows, Abigail Scott, Monika Sznura
East Anglia Medicines Information Service, The Ipswich Hospital Site of ESNEFT, Heath Road, Ipswich IP4 5PD, UK

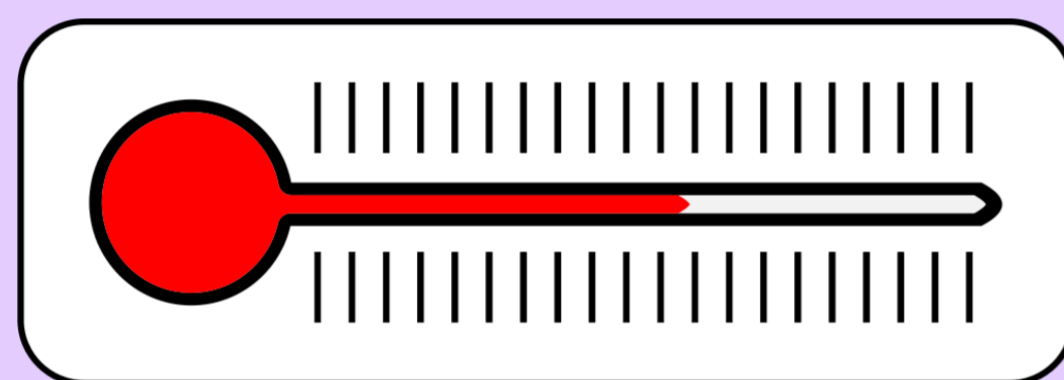
Introduction

- ❖ An estimated £300 million in medicine waste is lost by the NHS per year [1].
- ❖ Incorrect storage of medicines is a part of this waste.
- ❖ Some medicinal products require refrigeration between 2-8°C ('fridge items').
- ❖ Inappropriate storage of 'fridge items' can result in the affected products being disposed of, thus wasting money.



Objectives

To investigate the cost implications when 'fridge items' were inadvertently stored above 8°C or below 2°C.

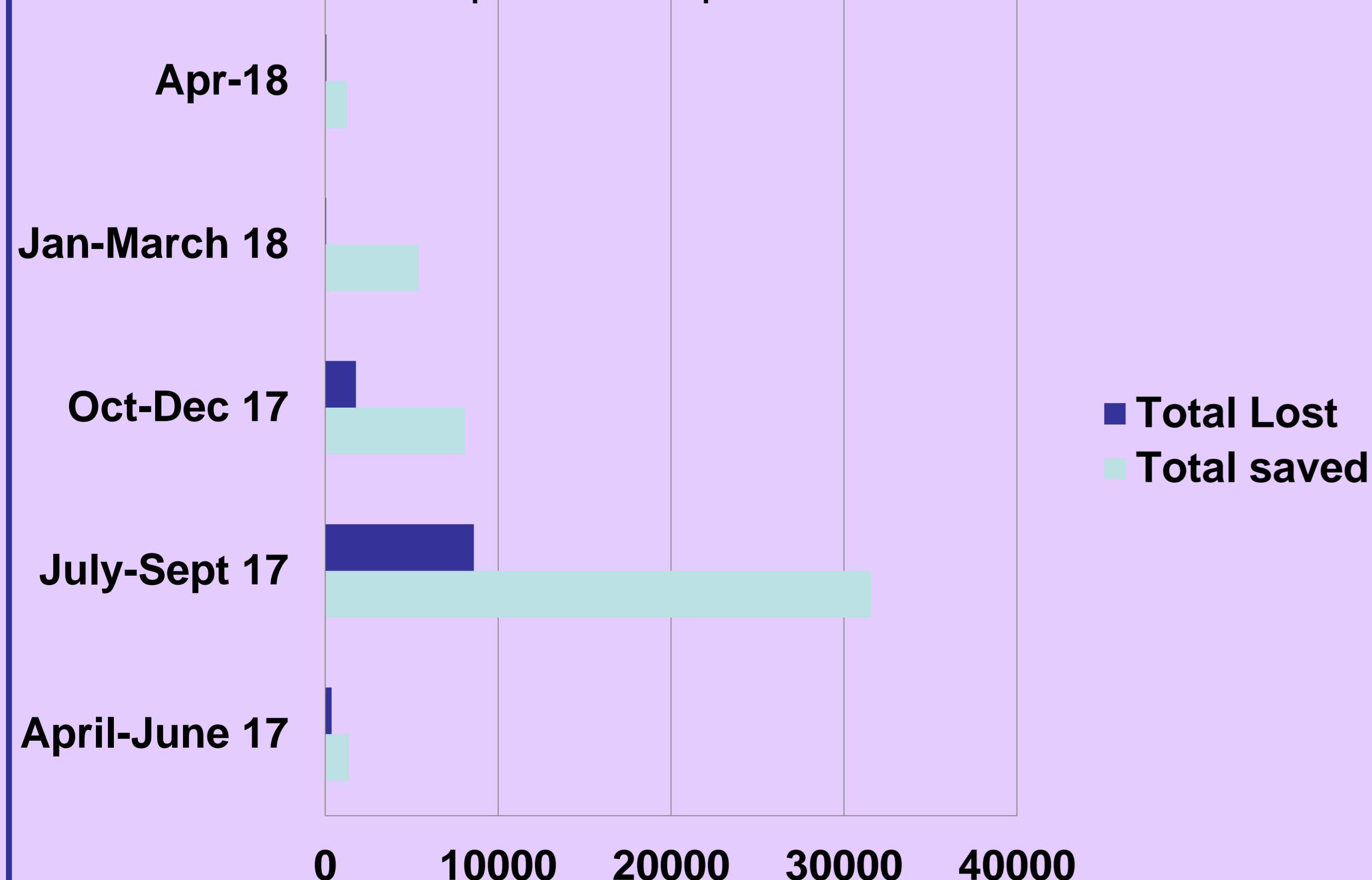


Method

- ❖ A retrospective analysis was performed.
- ❖ This covered the 12 months: April 2017 - April 2018.
- ❖ All fridge enquiries recorded on MI databank within these months were selected using the key word 'refrigeration'.
- ❖ The origin of the enquiry was documented along with the name of the products, quantity (if known) and whether the product had to be discarded or not.
- ❖ Medicines salvaged or destroyed were costed based on prices stated on our dispensing system JAC.
- ❖ Information was collected each month on a spreadsheet and total monthly costs (discarded or saved) were calculated.

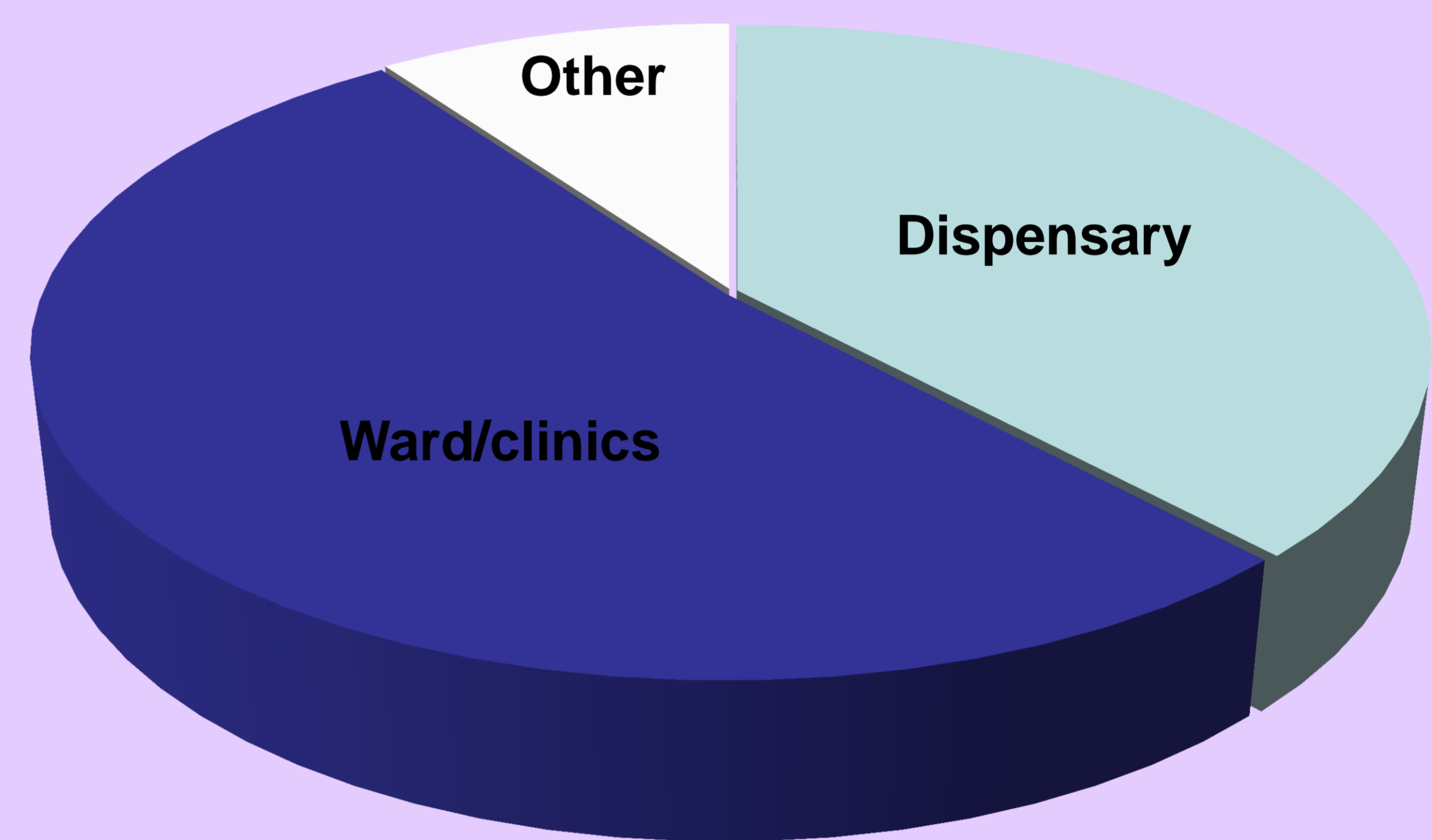
Results

Figure 1: Amount of money lost and saved from April 2017-April 2018



- ❖ A total of 71 enquiries were received between April 2017 and April 2018 concerning 'fridge items'.
- ❖ The majority of fridge enquiries came from wards (37), then dispensary (27) and lastly 'other' (7). See Figure 2.
- ❖ Information obtained from MI resources and pharmaceutical manufacturers resulted in salvaging products at a cost of over £47,625.
- ❖ The total amount wasted (products which had to be discarded) was £10,873.

Figure 2: Origin of fridge enquiries



Discussion

- ❖ The amount saved was over £47,000.
- ❖ This demonstrates that using our Medicines Information Service can save medicines, reduce missed doses and save money with regards to medicines requiring cold chain storage.
- ❖ Despite this, many medicines had to be discarded, costing just over £10,000.
- ❖ Data on reasons why fridge excursions occurred were not documented.
- ❖ Further evaluation could be done to analyse the reasons behind temperature excursions (i.e. left out of fridge or fridge errors).
- ❖ This could help with identifying practical solutions for example educating ward staff on the importance of maintaining the cold chain.
- ❖ This in turn could reduce the number of fridge enquiries Medicines Information receive.

Limitations

- ❖ The quantity of drugs involved was not always recorded, unless otherwise stated in the enquiry it was assumed one pack of each drug was present. Therefore, the costs are likely an under estimation for both saved and wasted items.
- ❖ Medicines Information speculates that not all temperature excursions occurring within our region are brought to our attention. In some cases the drugs will be discarded without Medicines Information input thus increasing the cost implications further.

References

1. Hazel B, Robson R. Pharmaceutical waste reduction in the NHS. 18 June 2015
2. Cavanagh S, Gunn A. Cost Avoidance Data: Fridge excursion: 3 months. Briefing Document for Pharmacy SMT. August 2017.