

# The role of Medicines Advice in managing shortages at Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust

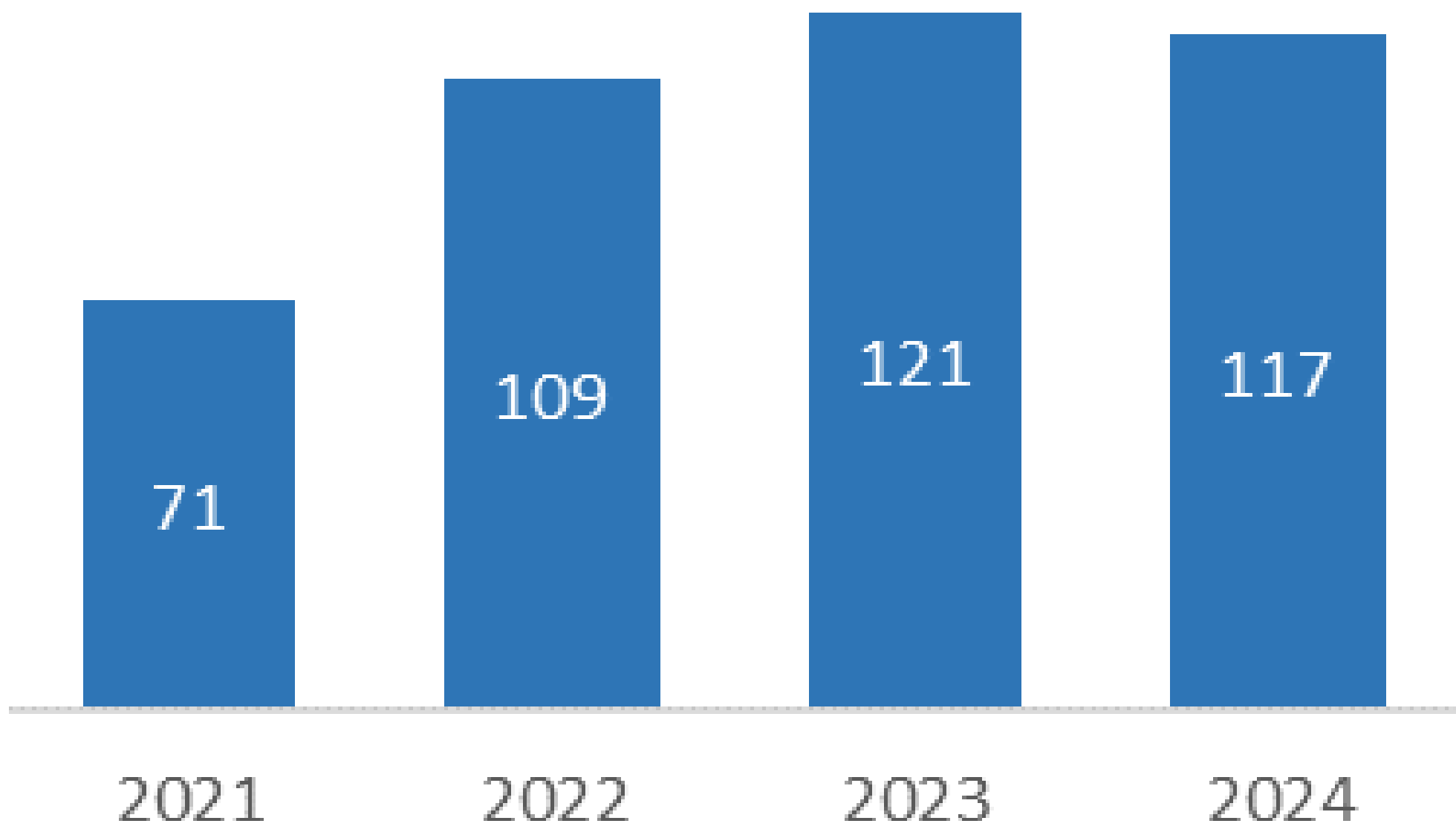
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## Background

In response to the rising number of NHS medicine shortages, a "shortages group" was established to formalise management roles and streamline processes at Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT).

Previously shortages were managed informally by the procurement pharmacist and colleagues from relevant departments. The increasing frequency of shortages however, highlighted the need for a standardised approach. This evolved into structured weekly meetings involving procurement, Medicines Advice, clinical pharmacy, and dispensaries. This poster aims to outline communication-related challenges and how the role of Medicines Advice contributes to addressing these issues.

Fig 1: Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Medicine Supply Notifications per year



## Communication Challenges and Solutions

DHSC information is helpful, but generic and does not cover all specialist uses

Medicines Advice provide customised local advice via shortages lists and briefings

There's so many shortages, clinical teams are suffering information overload

Emails limited to one update email a month

Key shortages that require a change in practice shared on the Leeds Formulary

Information needs to be available to everyone in pharmacy so local decisions are consistent

A summary spreadsheet of all shortages information made available and updated weekly

Resource needed to deliver this new work

Workload acknowledged from the wider pharmacy team and now included within Medicines Advice job plans

Fig 2: Information streams from Medicines Advice

Shortage Issues Wednesday, September 25, 2024			
1	Shortage Item	Description of problem	Clinical plan & actions
2			
3	Creon 10000units and 25000units capsules	Limited supply until 2026	There is the potential for different pancreatin products to be intermittently available until 2026. This includes Creon, Nutrizym and Pancrex. A National Patient Safety Alert has been issued. For further information, please see formulary. (18/9)
4	Pegasys 45/90/180 microgram pre-filled syringes	Supply constrained - unknown duration (21/8)	Reserve stock for non-cancer use. Exploring ULM options (18/9)

### Stock Shortages Summary – June/July 2024

This is a summary bulletin of resolved shortages and widespread shortages. This is not a comprehensive list of all shortages that currently affecting the Trust. For further information or if you have information that would help to manage current shortages, please touch.

#### Resolved Shortages

- Prochlorperazine 12.5mg/mL injections
- Sugammadex
- Hartmann's solution
- Cardioplegia A
- Cisplatin 100mg/100ml vials
- Cefalexin 125mg/5ml and 250mg/5ml liquid
- Isosorbide mononitrate 60mg MR tablets (Monomil XL)

Public briefings on the Leeds Formulary for shortages with a significant impact on delivering patient care

<b>Aztreonam 1g and 2g vials</b> (shortage advice)	<b>Formulary</b>	There is a temporary supply disruption to aztreonam. The 1g vials are expected to be unavailable until the end of September 2024. The 2g vials are expected to be unavailable from January 2025 for an unknown length of time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2g vials should not be routinely used to give 1g doses, as this may mean supplies of the 2g vials are depleted sooner</li><li>Unlicensed alternatives are being obtained</li><li>Unlicensed products will not be routinely stocked on wards, but can be ordered for individual patients via dispensaries</li></ul> Last reviewed 25/09/24
<b>Cyproheptadine 4mg tablets</b> (shortage advice)	<b>Formulary</b>	There is a temporary supply disruption to cyproheptadine 4mg tablets until November 2024. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There are no readily available alternative manufacturers to source supplies from</li><li>If no stock is available, alternative treatment options will need to be explored</li></ul> Last reviewed 25/09/24
<b>Gastrografin</b> (shortage advice)	<b>Formulary</b>	There is a temporary supply disruption to Gastrografin until November 2024. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Remaining licensed Gastrografin stock should be reserved for use by Radiology and the Cella Craven unit. If no licensed stock is available, Omnipaque may need to be used as an alternative</li><li>Other areas (including wards) where Gastrografin is supplied can be supplied unlicensed (imported) Gastrografin stock</li></ul> Last reviewed 25/09/24

RAG rated list of all of shortages affecting LTHT shared across pharmacy each week  
Email of major changes sent across pharmacy each month

## Key Learning Points:

- Medicines shortages are an ongoing issue that must be managed to minimise impact on patients.
- Often shortages affect multiple pharmacy areas and require collaboration with clinical teams. At LTHT, the shortages management group became more effective as it expanded to include more areas however, the importance of clarity of roles and responsibilities has increased.
- The Medicines Advice team provides locally customised information to support implementation of actions and contributes expertise in evidence-based decision making to the shortages management group.
- Supporting this work stream required additional resource. From Medicines Advice 0.1 WTE of a pharmacy technician's time and 0.1 WTE of a senior Medicines Advice pharmacist's time was allocated to the project.

*"Shortages are an increasing challenge for patients. The national information is helpful, but we need local guidance so that we can make sure our advice matches our stock holding and is best for our patients. Local communication of advice is key!"*

[Clinical Pharmacy Services Manager]



The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust