

Impact of the Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) articles on the UK Drugs in Lactation Advisory Service (UKDILAS)

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Background

- UKDILAS is a national service providing advice on medicines use during breastfeeding by highly experienced Medicines Information pharmacists.
- UKDILAS have comprehensively reviewed evidence based information from multiple sources, pharmacokinetic principles and expert opinion to develop and publish the SPS medicine use in breastfeeding articles.



46 articles have been published on the safety of medicines in breastfeeding on the Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website

Aim

- To evaluate the impact of publishing the first 15 SPS medicine use in breastfeeding articles on the UKDILAS service.

Objectives

- To establish the total number of enquiries received, total time taken, and enquirer type, 12 months prior to and after each publication.
- To assess single versus multiple drugs enquiries.

Methods

First 15 SPS articles were selected, published between November 2021 and June 2023. This allowed the 12 months prior and post data to be extracted from MiDatabank by utilising keywords (**Breast feeding** and **Lactation** with **drug names** included in the article). The following data were collected :

- number of enquiries
- time taken to complete
- enquirer type

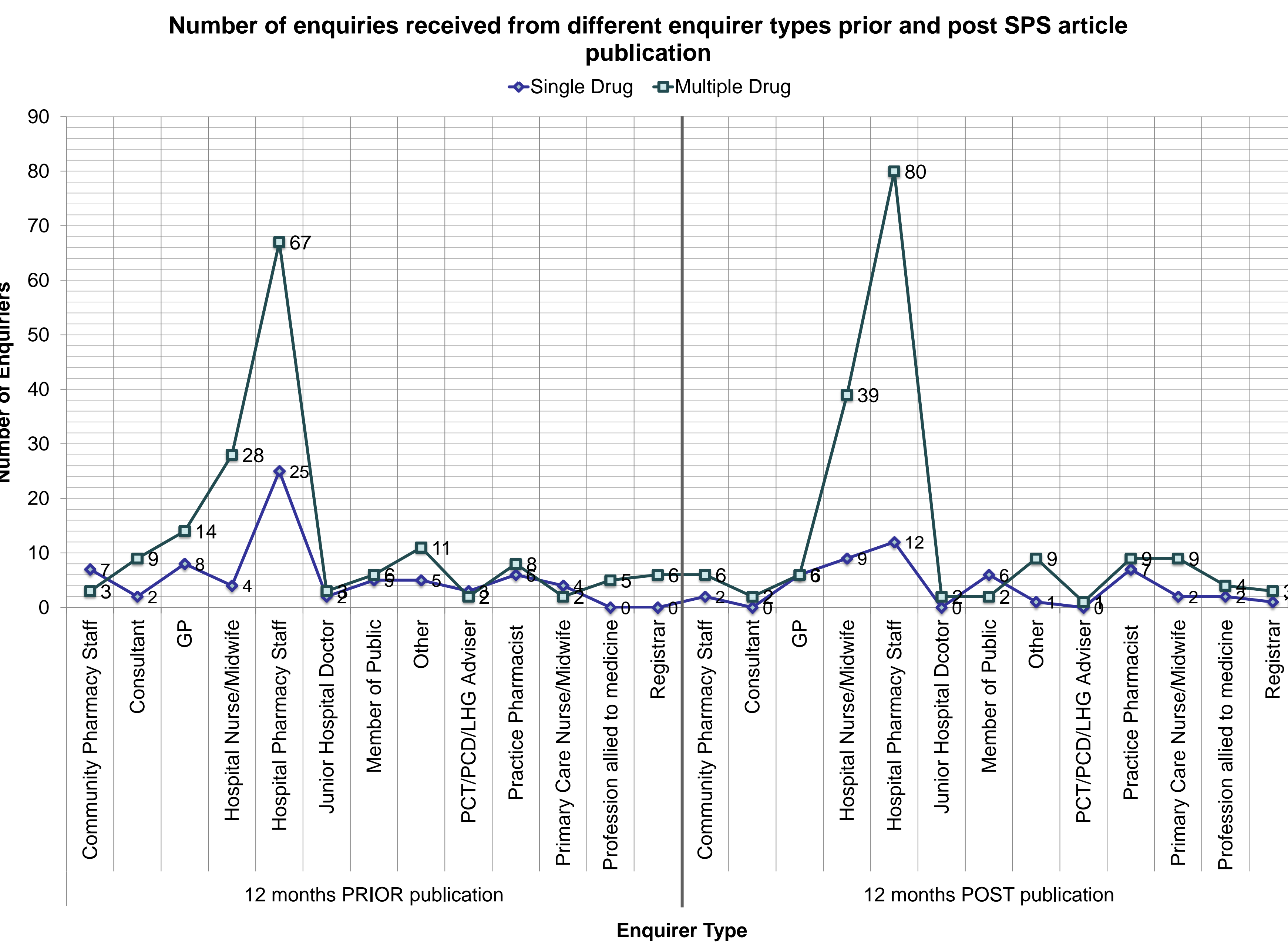
SPS articles evaluated: oral anticoagulation, antihistamines, gabapentin/pregabalin, SSRI and TCA antidepressants, chloramphenicol, urinary disorders, strong and weak opioids, antidiabetics, ACE inhibitors, ARBs, calcium channel blockers, beta blockers, and lipid lowering medicines.

Results

Table 1. Effect of SPS article publication on number of enquiries and time taken to complete enquiries (n = 445)

Enquiry categorisation		12 months PRIOR publication n (%)	12 months POST publication n (%)
Number of Enquiries	SINGLE Drug	72(60.0)	48 (40.0)
	MULTIPLE Drugs	163 (48.7)	172 (51.3)
Time taken to complete (minutes)	0-60	211 (89.8)	196 (89.0)
	61-120	21 (8.9)	17 (7.7)
	121-180	2 (0.9)	5 (2.3)
	181-240	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5)
	240+	1 (0.4)	1 (0.5)

Graph 1. Effect of SPS article on enquirer type 12 months prior and post publication



TOTAL N = 572 enquiries received

Exclusion Criteria:

- Time taken ≥ 300 minutes
- Trainee colleagues
- Request for further information from enquirer and no response provided
- SPS article would not have a direct impact (e.g. complexity, prematurity)
- Illicit substance related queries
- Milk banking enquiries

N = 455

Article publication reduced the number of single drug enquiries received into the service by 33.3%.

- In contrast, multiple medicines enquiries increased by 5.5%.
- The most impact was seen on hospital pharmacy staff (52% reduction in single medicine enquiries; 16.2% increase in multiple medicine enquiries).
- Article publication had little impact on the time taken to complete enquiries (see Graph 1).
- The articles having the most impact were:
 - Using SSRI antidepressants during breastfeeding. (27.3% reduction in single meds enquiries; 21.1% reduction in multiple meds enquiries)
 - Using beta-blockers during breastfeeding. (90% reduction in single meds enquiries; 12% reduction in multiple meds enquiries)

Discussion

- The impact of article publication in introducing efficiencies for the UKDILAS service has been very effective for single medicine enquiries.
- This confirms that SPS breastfeeding articles are more applicable in less complex enquiry scenarios, demonstrating their usability for non-specialist services across the UKMi network.
- Surprisingly, SPS article publication increased the number of multiple medicines enquiries. Article publication could have raised awareness of the UKDILAS service, therefore increasing service use.
- There was no real demonstrable change on time take to complete enquiries, indicating a need to build in effective signposting to published articles, where this is appropriate.
- Article publication had most impact on hospital pharmacy staff. There was little change across other HCPs.

Future

- Further exploration to determine if the UKDILAS team can improve efficiency by better signposting to these articles, even in complex scenarios.
- The data indicates a wider system need to promote the breastfeeding articles on the SPS website, initially targeted to the other most frequent service users – GPs and midwives/nurses.
- To encourage use of the SPS articles across the UKMi network, particularly where the most impact has been demonstrated – single medicine enquiries.