

## Helping the NHS make robust decisions about medicines

UKMi is the *United Kingdom Medicines Information* network. We are a pharmacist-led service that helps healthcare professionals treat patients safely and effectively. We also provide a portfolio of innovative products to keep clinicians, managers and commissioners updated with developments involving medicines and assist with delivering quality and cost-effective services.

*“The service is easily accessible, staff are always helpful and I consider the information received makes my practice safer and better informed.”*

**Dr Amanda Poynton, Consultant Psychiatrist, Manchester**

## Patient Safety

**We advise doctors, nurses and pharmacists in primary and secondary care.**

Any healthcare professional in the UK can contact us for expert advice about a patient they are caring for. For example, they may ask which treatment to use when standard options have failed, how to manage side effects, the correct dose for a child, or whether a medicine is safe in pregnancy. This service prevents errors and patient harm, and helps patients receive the best treatments. We also provide specialist advice to NHS Direct callers.

On our website we publish answers to clinical questions that we are asked frequently. See [www.nelm.nhs.uk](http://www.nelm.nhs.uk). We also provide resources to support NPSA patient safety alerts.

## New Medicines

**We evaluate medicines in development, and newly launched medicines for the NHS.**

Our regular publication *Prescribing Outlook* supports local decision-making by helping commissioners and providers budget for new medicines, for new uses of existing medicines, and new national guidance. We also maintain the NHS database about new medicines called *New Drugs Online*. This describes clinical trials, safety concerns, and likely launch dates and is available via *NHS Evidence Online*.

We also write detailed reviews of medicines for various organisations such as the London New Drugs Group, and the National Prescribing Centre. See [www.nelm.nhs.uk](http://www.nelm.nhs.uk).

## Using the Evidence

**We help professionals find and interpret the information they need.**

Our website provides an individualised daily email news service to keep managers and clinicians up-to-date about medicines. You can register for free at [www.nelm.nhs.uk](http://www.nelm.nhs.uk). We also provide website content for NHS Evidence, a portfolio of clinical governance materials, and a comprehensive national training programme for all new hospital pharmacists.

We provide evidence-based materials to:

- Promote NICE implementation
- Support national health promotion campaigns such as pandemic flu.
- Assist local decisions concerning Individual Funding Requests (IFRs).

*“I contact the Medicines Information team on many occasions and always find them extremely helpful. All queries are answered promptly with helpful, clear and appropriately detailed advice.”*

**Dr Mike Donnan, GP, Southampton**

## Our Next Five Years

UKMi will continue to lead initiatives concerned with the safety and effectiveness of medicines. For example, we are already planning the following innovations:

### Quality

- Developing targeted support to improve patient safety for e.g. care home staff, patients recently discharged from hospitals, new prescribers.
- Introducing an online index of medicines management initiatives, to enable sharing of best practice across the NHS.

### Innovation

- Delivering a UKMi national research strategy targeting, for example, the most economic methods of sourcing information and methods to enhance patient safety.
- Establishing a website for sharing evidence-based approaches to Individual Funding Requests.

### Productivity

- Advising the NHS on opportunities for disinvestment in medicines.
- Creating an electronic network of UKMi centres via the NHS net so that all outputs can be shared and efficiency maximised.

### Prevention

- Promoting UKMi as a contact point for reducing medication errors.
- Supporting 24hr NHS services with information to prevent patient harm.

## Contact Us...

UKMi is locally responsive, but nationally coordinated. To contact the UKMi centre nearest you, please go to [www.ukmi.nhs.uk/ask](http://www.ukmi.nhs.uk/ask)

**All UKMi centres are subject to regular external audit and operate according to nationally approved governance standards**

**350,000 clinical enquiries answered per year**

**38 million web pages accessed per year on our website, NeLM**

**200 detailed online answers to common clinical questions about medicines**

**40,000 documents on our website to assist decision-making about medicines**

**11,000 subscribers to our daily news email**

*"The quality-productivity challenge provides further opportunity for UKMi to show leadership, for example, advising on disinvestment opportunities, but also to look at partnerships with other NHS organisations to minimise duplication".*

**Tom Gray**

**Pharmacy Lead NHS East Midlands and Chief Pharmacist, Derby**

*"I contact medicines information on a frequent basis for information on medications in relation to our patient group. The service has always been prompt, providing detailed information with references. In short, a wonderful service!"*

**Marion O'Connor**

**Lead Specialist Nurse for Inflammatory Bowel Disease, London**

*"UKMi is a critical resource for medicines management at patient, organisational and health community levels."*

**Martin Stephens, National Clinical Director for Hospital Pharmacy, Dept of Health**