

# Patient Engagement in Medication Safety

## Challenges and Opportunities

Helen Haskell

Mothers Against Medical Error

Consumers Advancing Patient Safety

WHO Patients for Patient Safety Advocate

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The desire to take medicine is perhaps the greatest feature which distinguishes man from animals.

-Sir William Osler

# Patient Perspectives on Medication Harm

- Patients report errors as occurring most often at the prescription phase of the medication process.
- Minor drug reactions can cascade into catastrophic medical harm because they are not recognized as such.
- Inappropriate polypharmacy, including overuse of psychiatric drugs, is a serious problem.
- Overmedication of the elderly occurs in every part of the globe.
- Repeated adverse events from re-prescribing of the same drug are common.



# Lessons from Lewis's case

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- Anyone taking a high-risk medication is a high-risk patient.
- Patients can quickly become high-risk as their condition changes.
- Healthcare workers caring for specialized populations like children and the elderly need expertise in specialized dosing, symptoms, and vital signs.

# Patient Engagement in Medication Safety

## **Some Problems**

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Overestimation of benefit; underestimation of risk

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Belief that healthcare, especially medication, is too complicated to understand

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Excessive deference to the authority of the physician

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Fragmented healthcare system

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Burden of care & overmedication

# Patient Engagement in Medication Safety

## Some Solutions



Shared decision-making



Demystification - information about medications, especially high-risk medications



Collaborative medication review; reducing medication burden



Mapping the medication journey



Reporting adverse events



<https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-without-harm>

# WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge – Medication Without Harm



MEDICATION  
WITHOUT HARM  
Global Patient Safety Challenge

World Health  
Organization

## 5 Moments for Medication Safety



### Starting a medication

- ▶ What is the name of this medication and what is it for?
- ▶ What are the risks and possible side-effects?



### Taking my medication

- ▶ When should I take this medication and how much should I take each time?
- ▶ What should I do if I have side-effects?



### Adding a medication

- ▶ Do I really need any other medication?
- ▶ Can this medication interact with my other medications?



### Reviewing my medication

- ▶ How long should I take each medication?
- ▶ Am I taking any medications I no longer need?



### Stopping my medication

- ▶ When should I stop each medication?
- ▶ If I have to stop my medication due to an unwanted effect, where should I report this?

The 5 Moments for Medication Safety are the key moments where action by the patient or caregiver can greatly reduce the risk of harm associated with the use of their medication/s. Each moment includes 5 critical questions. Some are self-reflective for the patient and some require support from a health professional to be answered and reflected upon correctly.

This tool for patient engagement has been developed as part of the third WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm.

It is intended to engage patients in their own care in a more active way, to encourage their curiosity about the medications they are taking, and to empower them to communicate openly with their health professionals.

This tool is intended for use by patients, their families and caregivers, with the help of health professionals, at all levels of care and across all settings.

WHO/HIS/SDS/2019.6  
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For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-safety/5moments/en/>



Introducing Mobile Application on  
**5 Moments**  
for Medication Safety



WHO medsafe app

Will guide you through the 5 key moments where your action can reduce the risk of medication-related harm.

Ask your health care professional important questions, keep the answers in a structured way to better manage your medications. Stay Healthy!

# Patient Stories



<https://www.who.int/initiatives/medication-without-harm>



Giving  
patients  
the tools to  
be part of  
the safety  
system

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Expert medication reviews, especially at  
care transitions

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Information on high-risk drugs

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Signs of drug reaction or overdose

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How to access medication information

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How to report an adverse drug reaction  
or medication incident

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## Medication Overload: America's Other Drug Problem

How the drive to prescribe  
is harming older adults

April 2019

LOWN  
INSTITUTE

[lowninstitute.org](http://lowninstitute.org)

### Issue Briefs

#### Implement Prescription Checkups

Raise Awareness

Improve  
Information

Educate &

Reduce In  
Influence

## The Increasing Prevalence of Polypharmacy

From 1994 to 2014, the proportion of older adults taking five or more drugs tripled, from 13.8 percent to 42.4 percent.

1994

14% took 5 or more drugs  
60% took 1 to 4 drugs  
26% took no drugs

2014

42% took 5 or more drugs  
49% took 1 to 4 drugs  
9% took no drugs

# Deprescribing Network

[Home](#) [About](#) [Public](#) [Professionals](#) [Get involved](#) [Contact us](#)

<https://www.deprescribingnetwork.ca/>

## DO I STILL NEED THIS MEDICATION?

THE SIMPATHY PROJECT

<https://www.isimpathy.eu/>

## Please Bring ALL Your Medicines to Your Next Appointment

To keep you safe, we need to know about all the medicine you take from all your doctors.

Please make sure you bring (in the original container)...

- ☐ Prescription medicines.
- ☐ Medicines you buy without a prescription (like Tylenol® or cold medicine).
- ☐ Ointments or creams.
- ☐ Bottles of drops.
- ☐ Inhalers.
- ☐ Injections.
- ☐ Vitamins and herbal medicines.



emergency  
department admissions  
are related to an  
adverse drug event.

Your care team will go over them with you and your family to...

- Make sure you are taking your medicines in the best way for you.
- Make sure all your medicines work well together.
- See if you can take fewer medicines.
- Answer your questions.

<https://www.ahrq.gov/patient-safety/reports/engage.html>





The figure displays three patient education cards for Warfarin, each with a distinct color and focus area. All cards feature the NHS Scotland logo in the top left corner and a green cross icon in the center. The cards are structured as follows:

- Antibiotics Card (Yellow background):**
  - Warfarin**
  - Did you know that you should have your INR tested 3 days after starting *any* course of antibiotics?**
  - Please speak to your pharmacist if you have any queries about your medication or how to get your INR checked.
  - Pharmacy contact details
  - Developed by SPSP-PfC, NHS File, Version 1.0
  - Antibiotics**
- Timing Card (Pink background):**
  - Warfarin**
  - Did you know that it is important to take your warfarin dose at the same time each day?**
  - This is usually around 6pm.*
  - Please speak to your pharmacist if you have any queries about your medication or what you should do if you miss a dose.
  - Pharmacy contact details
  - Developed by SPSP-PfC, NHS File, Version 1.0
  - Timing**
- Diet Card (Blue background):**
  - Warfarin**
  - Did you know that changes to your diet and alcohol intake can affect how well your warfarin works?**
  - Please speak to your pharmacist if you have any queries about your medication or to discuss which dietary changes may affect your INR.
  - Pharmacy contact details
  - Developed by SPSP-PfC, NHS File, Version 1.0
  - Diet**

## NSAIDs

### Safety Information

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are effective medicines for reducing pain and inflammation. Examples include ibuprofen, naproxen and paracetamol.

Following the advice on this card will help you take your medicines safely and make it less likely that you will get side effects.

If you are in any doubt, contact your GP or nurse.



### Medicines and Dehydration

Patient Information

This leaflet is about what actions to take if you develop an illness that causes dehydration. These actions are called 'medicine sick day rules'.

 **Scottish Government**

 **NHS**

#### Medicine Sick Day Rules

When you are unwell with any of the following:

- Vomiting or diarrhoea (unless only minor)
- Fevers, sweats and shaking (unless only minor)

**Then STOP taking the medicines ticked on the other side of this card by your healthcare professional**

Restart when you are well (after 24-48 hours of eating and drinking normally)

If you are in any doubt, contact your pharmacist, doctor or nurse

Version 2, 2016

#### Medicines to stop on sick days


- ☐ ACE inhibitors: medicine names ending in "pril"
- ☐ ARBs: medicine names ending in "sartan"
- ☐ Diuretics: e.g. furosemide, bendroflumethiazide
- ☐ Metformin: a medicine for diabetes
- ☐ NSAIDs: e.g. ibuprofen, diclofenac, naproxen

#### Other medicines to stop taking

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐


The screenshot shows the homepage of the managedmeds.scot.nhs.uk website. At the top, the text "For Patients and Carers" is on the left, and the URL "managedmeds.scot.nhs.uk" is on the right. Below this is a grid of six navigation buttons, each with an icon and a label:

- About medicines review**: Icon of a person with a magnifying glass over a list of items.
- Medicines A-Z**: Icon of a book with "ABC" on the cover.
- My medicines**: Icon of two pills, one red and one white.
- Questions for my review**: Icon of two people, one with a speech bubble containing a question mark and the other with a speech bubble containing the letter "A".
- Decision-making tools**: Icon of a yellow signpost with two arrows pointing in opposite directions.
- What to do when you are ill?**: Icon of a red stethoscope.




**ConsumerMedSafety.org**  
 PROTECT YOURSELF FROM MEDICATION ERRORS

BROUGHT TO YOU BY  
**ISMP**  
 Institute for Safe Medication Practices

ACCESSIBILITY  


Like 116

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## High-Alert Medication Learning Guides

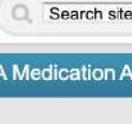
Just a handful of drugs are considered high-alert medications. These medications have been proven to be safe and effective, but serious harm can occur if they are not taken exactly as directed. This means that it is vitally important for patients to understand how errors happen with these medications, and the steps that are necessary to keep them safe while taking these medications.

[Read more...](#)


### Featured Articles



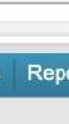
**Child Resistant Does Not Mean Childproof**



**Vitamins may be needed with some long-term medicines**




**Protect Your Pet from Errors with Medicines**



**Do not make or feed homemade infant formula to babies**

### Covid-19 Antigen Test Kit Evaluation



Which at-home tests are easiest to use?


### Over-the-Counter Medicines

- The Basics
- Safe Medicine Storage & Disposal
- Drug Interactions, Reactions, & Allergies
- Multi-Symptom & Combination Products
- Medicine for Children
- Measuring the Dose of Liquid Medicines
- Safety Tips about Medicine Labels & Packages
- OTC Drug Abuse
- Herbals, Vitamins, & Homeopathic Medicines
- OTC Pain Relievers

### Report a Medication Error

If you or a loved one have experienced a mistake with a medication or have a safety concern to share with others, we would like to hear from you. [Learn how reporting events can help others.](#)


### Top 10 List



See our **Top 10 medication safety lists**

### Check it out!

[Click here for our High-Alert Medication Teaching Sheets](#)



[More News & Articles](#)

### Medication Safety Articles

- Receiving a Prescription
- Purchasing Medications
- Taking Medications at Home
- Storing and Discarding Meds
- Receiving Meds at the Hospital
- Keeping Children Safe
- OTC Meds, Herbals & Vitamins
- Specialty Topics





Uppsala Monitoring Centre  
Getting Patients Involved in  
Medicines Safety



# A Social Movement - Barriers

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- Low uptake of materials
- Limited funding for public awareness
- Mindset that prizes innovation over safety
- Barrage of pharmaceutical advertising to both prescribers and the public
- Fear of discouraging people from taking needed medications

# A Social Movement

