

Community Pharmacy Case Studies

The Summary Care Record (SCR) is a secure, electronic patient record that contains key information derived from patients' detailed GP records. It is often accessed in emergency and unplanned care scenarios, where such information would otherwise be unavailable.

The core dataset contains information about a patient's medication, allergies and any previous adverse reactions to medicines. Other information such as significant medical history, care plans, patient wishes or preferences (and other relevant information) can be added with the consent of the patient.

The SCR is already accessed by staff across a number of different care settings, including hospital pharmacies, GP out-of-hours services, A&E, and many others. Community pharmacy access to SCR is currently being implemented and this document provides three case studies for community pharmacy access to the SCR and the benefits seen in each scenario.

For more detailed information on the community pharmacy rollout please visit our web page <http://systems.hscic.gov.uk/scr/benefits/community/index.html>

Case Study - Patient Safety

At Woodhouse Pharmacy in Sheffield, a patient contacted the pharmacy outside their GP's opening hours to ask the pharmacist about which medication she was meant to be taking.

The patient had been prescribed two different antibiotics on the same day, but was unsure which one she was meant to be taking for her current illness. Due to the confusion, she sought advice at the pharmacy.

By accessing the Summary Care Record, pharmacist Stewart Kelly was able to see that the patient had been prescribed both Amoxicillin and Doxycycline. One course had been prescribed in the morning and another had been prescribed as a replacement later the same day, but the patient did not know which was which.

Stewart also identified that the 'Allergies' section within the patient's SCR showed an allergy to penicillin. He was therefore able to advise the patient not to take the Amoxicillin. He said "Had the patient not contacted the pharmacy, and had I not been able to access their SCR a significant patient safety incident could have occurred".

By accessing the Summary Care Record, pharmacists are more able to effectively advise patient accordingly, instead of referring patients to other care settings. This leads to a reduction in serious drug reactions and major threats to patient well-being.

Case Study - Emergency Supply

A patient came to Regent Pharmacy in Northampton on a Saturday when their GP surgery was closed, in need of an emergency supply of their medication.

The patient had an old repeat prescription slip from March 2013, but was in need of a new supply. They lived outside the area usually served by the pharmacy.

The pharmacist asked for the patient's permission to view their SCR. Once he'd done so he could see on the SCR that the patient had received a repeat prescription the day before. He was therefore able to provide the patient with an emergency supply, as well as advising on the dose and frequency with which to take their medication, as this was all available on the SCR.

Pharmacist Ashkay Patel Said "The SCR is very user-friendly and with just a few clicks the patient's record was in front of us. As a result of this service, we can help the patients, GPs, and out-of-hours, in order to improve decision-making at busy periods".

Without access to the patient's clinical information, the pharmacist would have had to refer the patient to out-of-hours, or else tell him to go back to his GP on Monday to collect his prescription. By issuing the emergency supply, the pharmacist was able to save the patient time and ease the burden at out-of-hours or the patient's GP practice.

By accessing the SCR in such scenarios, pharmacists are able to use their professional judgement with the best available information to respond effectively to emergency supply requests.

Case Study- Reduced Referrals

A patient came to Weldricks pharmacy at Darnall Primary Care Centre in Sheffield wanting to know if she was eligible for a free flu jab.

The patient was unable to give the pharmacist her full list of current medication in order to help check her eligibility, but by checking the patient's SCR, pharmacist David Mehdizadeh was able to see that she was being prescribed an immunosuppressant (Azathioprine), which meant she was indeed eligible for a free vaccination, which he was able to provide immediately.

As this pharmacy is in the same building as a GP practice, patients tend to assume their patient records are also linked. They often come into the pharmacy with queries for which they may otherwise have approached the GP practice for. Access to SCR is helping the pharmacy to immediately answer more queries from patients on the spot, facilitating more effective patient care and resulting in less referrals to other care settings, such as the local GP practice.

"On previous occasions I would have referred the patient back to their GP or I would've had to contact the GP myself to check whether she was eligible", David said. "However, with the patient's consent I was able to access their SCR within one minute to check their medications. It caused no disturbance to the running of the pharmacy and no extra waiting time for the patient. By using the NHS Number the process was really simple. The patient was extremely satisfied that I could deal with her query and did not refer her back into the community or to the GP."

Access to the SCR means pharmacists are more likely to be able to immediately deal with ad hoc or urgent patient queries, reducing the need to refer patients elsewhere or to contact the patient's GP practice for more information.

Contact us for more information

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