

**Service users' experiences of contacting NHS patient medicines helpline services:
A qualitative study**

Interview schedule for patients

Q1	For background information, please could you tell me about your recent admission/period of care?
	For example, please could you tell me why you were admitted? / why were you receiving care? <i>Probe</i> – For how long were you admitted? <i>Probe</i> – Please could you tell me about any other hospital admissions you may have had recently? (timeframe – past 2 months)
Q2	Prior to using the helpline service recently, please can you tell me what you would typically do if you had a question or concern with your medicines?
	<i>For example, your GP, or a community pharmacist, or NHS 111 or NHS Direct.</i> <i>Probe</i> – Have you used the patient medicines helpline service in the past? If so, what was your experience of using the helpline previously?
Q3	How did you hear about the medicines helpline service?
Q4	Please could you tell me why you contacted the medicines helpline service on [date]?
	[Additional questions about the medicines issue/query...] <i>Probe</i> – Please could you tell me about the medicine or medicines you were concerned about? (e.g., what it was; what it is for; what your concerns were). <i>Probe</i> – How did you feel about your medicines before you contacted the medicines helpline service? <i>Probe</i> - What impact (if any) did this issue [<i>use their words</i>] have upon you before you contacted the medicines helpline service and spoke to a pharmacist? (e.g., Physical symptoms, Anxiety/worry/stress, Inconvenience, Not taking medicines as prescribed) <i>Probe</i> – Please can you tell me your thoughts about the seriousness of the issue/situation [<i>use their words</i>]? (and why) <i>Probe</i> – Was there anything else you contacted the medicines helpline service about? (If so, what?) [Additional questions about their circumstances...] <i>Probe</i> – Can you tell me about anyone who encouraged you to contact the medicines helpline service? For example, who this was, and why they encouraged you to do this. [Additional questions about other sources of information...] <i>Probe</i> – Please can you tell me about any other sources of information that you may have considered using? For example, what these were, and why you didn't use these. Why you contacted the medicines helpline instead. (Or if you did use any other sources of information before contacting the helpline service, what were your experiences of using them?). What are the advantages of the helpline service compared to the other options you considered?
	<i>[If a medicines-related error has been disclosed, go to Q5. If not, go to Q6]</i>
Q5	You said that there was an error with your medicines/omission/lack of information or instructions [<i>use their words</i>]. Please can you tell me about this?
	<i>Probe</i> – What was the error/omission/lack of instructions? <i>Probe</i> - How did you realise that there was an error/omission/lack of instructions?

**Service users' experiences of contacting NHS patient medicines helpline services:
A qualitative study**

	<p><i>Probe</i> – When did you realise that there was an error/omission/lack of instructions? <i>Probe</i> - How did you feel when you realised that there was an error/omission/lack of instructions? (How did you react?) <i>Probe</i> – Has this issue been fully resolved? If so, how? <i>Probe</i> - How do you feel about this issue now?</p>
Q6	Please can you tell me about the conversation you had with the pharmacist when you contacted the helpline?
	<p><i>Probe</i> - How well did you feel that the pharmacist understood your query/concern/issue? <i>Probe</i> - What did they say or do to make you feel this way?</p>
<i>[If not already known from the previous question...]</i>	
Q7	Please could you describe what information or advice the pharmacist gave you when you contacted the helpline service?
	<p><i>Probe</i> – How well did you understand the information that the pharmacist gave you during the call? (What about your understanding of the information by the end of the call?) <i>Probe</i> - Was there anything else that the pharmacist said to you? (If so, what?) <i>Probe</i> - How did you feel about the information/advice you received from the pharmacist? <i>Probe</i> – Was anything left unresolved? If so, what? Why was it left unresolved? <i>Probe</i> – How did you feel directly after using the helpline service? (e.g., worried/anxious, reassured, relieved?) If so, why?</p>
Q8	Please can you tell me your thoughts about the medicines helpline service?
	<p>For example, could you tell me about ... – what it was like accessing the service? (e.g., time taken to get through to the service; whether you had to call back? (if so, how was this?); whether you had to leave a message and someone got back to you? (if so, how was this?)) – the pharmacist? – the time taken to answer your enquiry? – the amount of information you received? (e.g., was it enough? Too much?) – the advertisements for the service?</p> <p><i>Probe</i> - Why were these particular aspects [<i>use their words</i>] <u>helpful</u> to you? <i>Probe</i> - Why were these particular aspects [<i>use their words</i>] <u>unhelpful</u> to you?</p> <p>Could you tell me about any other aspects of the service that you may have found to be either helpful or unhelpful?</p>
Q9	Please can you tell me your thoughts about <i>improving</i> the helpline service?
	<p><i>Probe</i> – If you could change the service in any way, to make it more useful for you and other people, how would you change it? (And why?) <i>[The probes for the previous question may be relevant here]</i></p> <p>Can you think about any other useful ways in which you would have liked to communicate with the medicines information service? (Why would these be useful?) For example, online chat / Skype / email.</p>
Q10	How have things been for you in the XX weeks since you used the helpline service?
	<p><i>Probe</i> – Can you tell me about any other sources that you may have used to get information or advice about your medicines, since contacting the medicines helpline service? (For example, your GP, another pharmacist, online?)</p>

**Service users' experiences of contacting NHS patient medicines helpline services:
A qualitative study**

<i>[If not already known from the previous questions...]</i>	
Q11	Please can you tell me about any changes to your medicines since you contacted the helpline service?
	<p>For example, can you tell me about how you were taking your medicines before you contacted the helpline? Can you tell me about how you are taking your medicines now? <i>[Check if changes are in accordance with the advice from the pharmacist. If they aren't, check why].</i></p> <p><i>Probe</i> – What were your reasons for making this change?</p> <p><i>Probe</i> – What effects (if any) has this change to your medicines had? (e.g., any positive effects; any downsides as a result of the change)</p> <p>Please can you tell me what you think about the safety of your medicines? (<i>Probe</i> how this was before the helpline use compared to afterwards)</p>
<i>[If not already known from the previous question...]</i>	
Q12	Please can you tell me about any changes to your health since you contacted the medicines helpline service?
	<p><i>Probe</i> for any positive and negative changes</p> <p><i>Probe</i> - If so, what changes? (If not, do you think there will be changes on your health? If so, in what ways?)</p>
<i>[If not already known from the previous questions...]</i>	
Q13	Please tell me about any other changes you may have experienced since you contacted the medicines helpline service?
	For example, regarding your understanding of your medicines.
Q14	How do you currently feel about your medicine/s?
Q15	How do you currently feel about the hospital or NHS Trust where you recently received care?
<i>(If not already known...)</i>	
Q16	What would you have done about this issue <i>[use their words]</i>, had the helpline service not been available?
	<p><i>Probe</i> – Please can you tell me what you think would have happened had you not contacted the helpline service? (Try to probe for their thoughts about avoided harm).</p> <p><i>Probe</i> – Please could you tell me the reason why you would've instead <i>[use their words, e.g., 'gone to your gp']</i> about this particular issue rather than any other source of support?</p> <p><i>Probe</i> – What would you have done if the helpline service was operated from another NHS Trust in the region to the one where you recently received care? (<i>Probe</i> why)</p> <p><i>Probe</i> – What would you have done if the helpline service was a national helpline, instead of local to you? (<i>Probe</i> why)</p>
Q17	Those are all of the questions that I have about your recent use of the patient medicines helpline service. Although, is there anything else which you would like to say about your use of the medicines helpline service, which you feel would be important to share at this point?

**Service users' experiences of contacting NHS patient medicines helpline services:
A qualitative study**

Interview schedule for carers

Q1	Prior to using the helpline service recently, please can you tell me what you would typically do if you had a question or concern about medicines?
	<i>For example, a GP, or a community pharmacist, or NHS 111 or NHS Direct. Probe – Have you used the patient medicines helpline service in the past? If so, what was your experience of using the helpline previously?</i>
Q2	How did you hear about the medicines helpline service?
Q3	Could you please tell me why you contacted the medicines helpline service on [date]?
	[Additional questions about the medicines issue/query...] <i>Probe – How did you feel about the medicines before you contacted the medicines helpline service? Probe – What impact (if any) did this issue [use their words] have before you contacted the medicines helpline service and spoke to a pharmacist? Probe – Please can you tell me your thoughts about the seriousness of the issue/situation [use their words]? (and why) Probe – Was there anything else you contacted the medicines helpline service about? (If so, what?)</i> [Additional questions about other sources of information...] <i>Probe – Please can you tell me about any other sources of information that you may have considered using? For example, what these were, and why you didn't contact these. Why you contacted the medicines helpline instead. (Or if you did use any other sources of information before contacting the helpline service, what were your experiences of using them?). What are the advantages of the helpline service compared to the other options you considered?</i>
	<i>[If a medicines-related error has been disclosed, go to Q4. If not, go to Q5]</i>
Q4	You said that there was an error with the patient's medicines/omission/lack of information or instructions [use their words]. Please can you tell me about this?
	<i>Probe – What was the error/omission/lack of instructions? Probe - How did you realise that there was an error/omission/lack of instructions? Probe – When did you realise that there was an error/omission/lack of instructions? Probe - How did you feel when you realised that there was an error/omission/lack of instructions? (How did you react?) Probe – Has this issue been fully resolved? If so, how? Probe - How do you feel about this issue now?</i>
Q5	Please can you tell me about the conversation you had with the pharmacist when you contacted the helpline?
	<i>Probe - How well did you feel that the pharmacist understood your query/concern/issue? Probe - What did they say or do to make you feel this way?</i>
	<i>[If not already known from the previous question...]</i>
Q6	Please could you describe what information or advice the pharmacist gave you when you contacted the helpline service?
	<i>Probe – How well did you understand the information that the pharmacist gave you during the call? (What about your understanding of the information by the end of the call?)</i>

**Service users' experiences of contacting NHS patient medicines helpline services:
A qualitative study**

	<p>Probe - Was there anything else that the pharmacist said to you? (If so, what?)</p> <p>Probe - How did you feel about the information/advice you received from the pharmacist?</p> <p>Probe – Was anything left unresolved? If so, what? Why was it left unresolved?</p> <p>Probe – How did you feel directly after using the helpline service? (e.g., worried/anxious, reassured?) If so, why?</p>
Q7	Please can you tell me your thoughts about the medicines helpline service?
	<p>For example, could you tell me about ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what it was like accessing the service? (e.g., time taken to get through to the service; whether you had to call back? (if so, how was this?); whether you had to leave a message and someone got back to you? (if so, how was this?)) – the pharmacist? – the time taken to answer your enquiry? – the amount of information you received? (e.g., was it enough? Too much?) – the advertisements for the service? <p>Probe - Why were these particular aspects <i>[use their words]</i> <u>helpful</u> to you?</p> <p>Probe - Why were these particular aspects <i>[use their words]</i> <u>unhelpful</u> to you?</p> <p>Could you tell me about any other aspects of the service that you may have found to be either helpful or unhelpful?</p>
Q8	Please can you tell me your thoughts about <i>improving</i> the helpline service?
	<p>Probe – If you could change the service in any way, to make it more useful for you and other people, how would you change it? (and why?)</p> <p><i>[The probes for the previous question may be relevant here]</i></p> <p>Can you think about any other useful ways in which you would have liked to communicate with the medicines information service? (Why would these be useful?)</p>
Q9	How have things been in the XX weeks since you used the helpline service?
	<p>Probe – Can you tell me about any other sources that you may have used to get information or advice about the medicines, since contacting the medicines helpline service? (For example, a GP, another pharmacist, online?)</p>
<i>[If not already known from the previous questions...]</i>	
Q10	Please can you tell me about any changes to the medicines since you contacted the helpline service?
	<p>Probe – What were the reasons for making this change?</p> <p>Probe – What effects (if any) has this change to the medicines had? (e.g., any positive effects; any downsides as a result of the change)</p> <p>Please can you tell me what you think about the safety of the medicines? (Probe how this was before the helpline use compared to afterwards)</p>
<i>[If not already known from the previous questions...]</i>	
Q11	Please tell me about any other changes you may have experienced since you contacted the medicines helpline service?
	For example, regarding your understanding of the medicines.
Q12	How do you currently feel about the medicines being taken by <i>[the person you care for]</i>?

**Service users' experiences of contacting NHS patient medicines helpline services:
A qualitative study**

Q13	How do you currently feel about the hospital or NHS Trust?
<i>(If not already known...)</i>	
Q14	What would you have done about this issue [<i>use their words</i>], had the helpline service not been available?
	<p><i>Probe</i> – Please can you tell me what you think would have happened had you not contacted the helpline service? (Try to probe for their thoughts about avoided harm).</p> <p><i>Probe</i> – Please could you tell me the reason why you would've instead [<i>use their words, e.g., 'gone to your gp'</i>] about this particular issue rather than any other source of support?</p> <p><i>Probe</i> – What would you have done if the helpline service was operated from another NHS Trust in the region to the one where you recently received care? (Probe why)</p> <p><i>Probe</i> – What would you have done if the helpline service was a national helpline, instead of local to you? (Probe why)</p>
Q15	Those are all of the questions that I have about your recent use of the patient medicines helpline service. Although, is there anything else which you would like to say about your use of the medicines helpline service, which you feel would be important to share at this point?