

Other Key Stakeholders Interview

Topic Guide

Study ID

A mixed methods study of the community pharmacy workforce's preparedness for, and response to, the COVID-19 pandemic

OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS: INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

Introduction

Hello, my name is Susan Patterson, and I am a researcher from the School of Pharmacy, Queen's University Belfast. Thank you very much for making the time to speak with me today.

Have you had a chance to read through the information sheet that was sent out to you? Would you like me to read you a short summary? Are there any questions that you would like to ask me before we start?"

Optional section to read if the participant hasn't read the information sheet

"In this research project, we are interested in finding out about the community pharmacy workforce's preparedness for, and response to, the COVID-19 pandemic. In the first part of this project, we reviewed various documents relating to structural changes to community pharmacy practice (i.e. infrastructure, funding/resourcing, legislation, policies and guidelines) in Northern Ireland in preparation for and/or in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the second part, we contacted 130 community pharmacists in Northern Ireland by telephone and asked them to complete a short questionnaire about how they prepared for and responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now we are speaking to a range of key stakeholders to further explore perspectives and reflections on the community pharmacy workforce's preparedness for, and response to COVID-19, including lessons for future public health crises. We will be exploring the views and experiences of community pharmacists in more detail and will also be interviewing representatives of patients, the pharmacy and medical professions, policy makers and service commissioners."

Explaining what will happen in the interview and afterwards

"I will be recording the interview on a digital recorder, to ensure that we have an accurate and detailed record of what you say. The recording will be saved on a password-protected computer and only those immediately involved in the research study and a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will be able to listen to it. The recording will be typed up word-for-word and any names, locations, or anything else that could identify you will be removed so that the information is anonymous. After we have conducted interviews with all of the other participants, we will analyse the information within the research team. The interview should last approximately 40 minutes. You are free to stop the interview and/or recording at any point. If there are any questions that you would prefer not to answer, just let me know and we can move on to the next question."

Other Key Stakeholders Interview

Topic Guide

Study ID

Consent

“Before we start, I need to obtain your consent to ensure that you understand what the study involves; that anything you say will be kept completely confidential, that you will not be identified in any way, and also that you are happy for the interview to be recorded.”

If the interview is conducted in person: *“Can you please read through the consent form and initial each box to indicate that you understand and agree with each statement? There are two copies: you will keep one of them and I will keep the other for our records.”*

[Turn the digital recorder on]

[Consent form – see Appendix 1]

If the interview is conducted by telephone: *“I will now read you a series of statements about the study which I would like you to respond to with either “Yes” or “No”. I will audio-record and note your responses on the consent form.”*

Other Key Stakeholders Interview

Topic Guide

Study ID

Demographic information

"I would like to start by asking you a few questions about yourself and I will note the answers on this form [show participant the demographic details form]. This form will help us describe who has taken part in this study, but you will not be identified in any way."

[If it is a telephone interview, the text above will be amended to take account of this.]

1. Can I confirm the gender you identify as?

Female

Male

Prefer not to disclose

Other (please specify)

Other: _____

2. Which of the following categories includes your age?

<25

25 - 34

35 - 44

45 - 54

55 - 64

≥65

3. What is your occupation?

Administrative Pharmacy/ Doctor / Patient representative / Other please specify

4. How many years have you been working in your current role?

≤5

6 – 10

11 – 15

≥15

Other Key Stakeholders Interview

Topic Guide

Study ID

- Focusing on your role as *[insert whatever their role is]*, can you tell me about how you would sum up your experience of community pharmacy during the pandemic?
 - How prepared do you think community pharmacists were as the pandemic started?
 - Did your experience with community pharmacy change over time?
 - What worked well?
 - What worked less well?

- In your current role, how has the nature of your interaction with community pharmacists changed as a result of the pandemic?

- What do you think were the biggest challenges that community pharmacy has faced during the pandemic?
(Prompts¹: protection of pharmacy workforce, concerns about staff illness, staff isolation, risk of pharmacy closure, financial difficulties, essential medicines stock shortages, public panic, GP closure, provision of COVID advice)

- In what areas do you think community pharmacy has made the biggest contributions to the healthcare response to COVID-19?

- In what areas do you think community pharmacy could have been more actively involved or made a greater contribution during the healthcare response to COVID-19?
 - What would have been needed to facilitate this?

- How do you think the role of the community pharmacist has changed as a result of the pandemic?
 - Do you view community pharmacists differently now compared to pre-pandemic? (If yes, why/can you tell me more about this?)

- Can you tell me about any changes to community pharmacy services as a result of the pandemic that you would like to see remain in place?
(Prompt: Flu vaccination services, COVID-19 vaccination services, text alerts, change in methods of service delivery to maintain social distance e.g. video consultations, telephone calls and medicines pick up)
 - What would you **not** like to see remain in place?

¹ The researcher will rephrase the question if necessary and not verbalise these as far as possible to avoid leading the interviewee

Other Key Stakeholders Interview

Topic Guide

Study ID

- COVID-19-related information came from several different sources during the course of the pandemic. Can you tell me about the COVID-19 information that your organisation/department provided to community pharmacies? [*may not be relevant to everyone*] (Prompts: [Quality](#), [volume](#), [frequency of distribution](#), [evidence base](#), [source](#))
 - Did your organisation coordinate information with other professional organisations?
 - What was good about the provision of information?
 - What could have been done differently with community pharmacies in respect of the provision of and the coordination of information?

- How could community pharmacies have been utilised more to disseminate COVID-19 information to the public?
(Prompts: [infection control](#), [symptoms and usual course of the disease](#), [testing](#), [contact tracing](#), [seeking help](#))
 - What could have been done differently by community pharmacy to keep the public informed? (Prompt: [about the disease and how to access their medicines](#))

- How do you think healthcare professions such as community pharmacy should prepare for a future pandemic or health care crisis?
(Prompts: [Business continuity / staffing – cross sectoral working](#), [Communication strategies](#), [Advance disaster planning](#), [Guidance for pharmacy contractors on how to manage during a pandemic](#), [Training – community pharmacists + staff?](#), [Training in locality – multidisciplinary?](#) [Modernising prescription medicines processes and structures](#))

- How can we maintain the supply of medicines to make things run more efficiently if a pandemic were to happen again? [*may not be relevant to everyone*]
 - What needs to change?
(Prompts: [Prescription review](#), [alignment of quantities on repeat prescriptions](#), [electronic transfer of prescriptions](#), [Dispensing Robots](#), [medicines adherence technology?](#))

- How much autonomy should there be for healthcare professionals such as community pharmacists to exercise their own professional judgement in the decisions or actions that they take during an emergency situation such as a pandemic?
(Prompts: [controlled drugs storage](#), [emergency medicines legislation](#))

- What do you think has been the biggest learning point for you in respect of community pharmacy from the pandemic so far?

[Other Key Stakeholders Interview](#)[Topic Guide](#)

Study ID

Closing the interview

“That brings us to the end of the interview.

Is there anything else about community pharmacy and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that you feel has not been covered or that you would like to discuss before we finish up?

Do you have any additional comments you would like to make as to the content of the interview or how it went?

Thank you very much for making the time to speak with me today.”

[Turn the digital recorder off]

Other Key Stakeholders Interview

Topic Guide

Study ID

Appendix 1: Interview participant consent form

**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST****School of Pharmacy**Medical Biology Centre
97 Lisburn Rd
Belfast BT9 7BL
Tel: 028 90972007
Fax: 028 90247794**INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM****STUDY ID****Study Title: The community pharmacy workforce's preparedness for, and response to, the COVID-19 pandemic****Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read, or had read to me, and understand the information sheet dated 10/02/2021 (version 1.0) for the above study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and these have been answered fully.

2. I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my legal rights being affected.

3. I understand, and agree to, the interview being digitally audio recorded.

4. I understand that direct quotations from the interview may be used in reports and papers, but that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained, and it will not be possible to identify me from any publications.

Other Key Stakeholders Interview

Topic Guide

Study ID

5. I understand that the researcher may share the pseudonymised audio-recordings with a transcription company for typing and that the company will destroy the recording as soon as the transcription has been checked.

6. I understand that what is discussed during the interview is confidential.

7. I understand that the study is being conducted by researchers from Queen's University Belfast and that my personal information (including consent forms) will be held securely on University premises (in the School of Pharmacy) and handled in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018).

8. I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant

(Please print)

SUSAN PATTERSON

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

(Please print)

Date

Signature

When completed: A signed copy of this form can be returned by e-mail to susan.patterson@qub.ac.uk or by post to Dr Susan Patterson, at the address above. Please retain a copy for your personal records.

Thank you for your participation in this research.