

## Abstract

### Introduction

Clinical pharmacy service consultation records are currently recorded on paper-based forms which need to be designed, printed and delivered to each pharmacy for use. Paper records have been criticised for their limited accessibility and incompleteness with studies demonstrating that information from paper-based records can be vague, illegible, ambiguous and hard to extract. Some of the potential benefits of digitising clinical service records in community pharmacy include: improved data quality and patient safety, increased efficiencies and productivity and the ability to mine data for research purposes.

### Aims

This research aims to investigate the potential benefits and challenges of digitising clinical service record forms in community pharmacy.

### Methods

The research methods employed consisted of a comprehensive literature review, an analysis of a sample of paper-based records, a description of electronic recording systems currently used within the community pharmacy sector and semi-structured interviews. The sample of paper-based records are used to describe the type of data that is captured currently and the potential value in digitising this data. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders to gain their views and insights on digitising clinical pharmacy service records.

### Results

It is clear from the research that there are vast amounts of valuable data locked in to paper-based records in community pharmacy. However, the research also demonstrated that these paper-based records contain significant amounts of missing or incomplete data. Results from both the literature review and the interviews revealed many potential benefits but equally many challenges for digitising clinical service records.

### Discussion

It was concluded that moving from a paper-based consultation recording system to an electronic system has many potential benefits in terms of accuracy of records, electronic data capture, timely patient insights and rich datasets for research which could highlight the benefit of community pharmacy services. To successfully implement digital records, challenges such as resistance to change, integration, interoperability and cost must be appropriately addressed.