

Transfer of Care around Medicines (TCAM) or Connect to Pharmacy

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the issues for patients about medicines on discharge?

Due to the nature of admissions, patients are less likely to be able to retain all the information provided to them prior to discharge. Their medicines-related problems after discharge from hospital can be addressed by more systematic involvement of their community pharmacists supporting the discharge process.

What is the key objective of the TCAM?

TCAM is intended to improve communication between the hospital pharmacy team and community pharmacy colleagues. The main focus will primarily be on patients most at risk from medication changes following hospital admission and discharge.

TCAM will improve patient pathways and become more integrated across different sectors of care [vs current practice of reliance on the use of telephone and fax to inform community pharmacy without any record of their continuity of care].

How will TCAM do this?

Having identified and selected the patient following their consent, TCAM allows hospital pharmacy team to electronically send medication discharge details directly to their community pharmacist so that they can get advice about any of the changes to their medicines.

TCAM will alert community pharmacists that their "at-risk" patients are being discharged and may need a suitable follow-up. This avoids any prescription or medication currently in the system to be intercepted and interrogated before any supply is made to the patients.

What are the key benefits to patients?

TCAM will ensure patients are supported to get the most from their medicines and remain in a better state of health through formal contact with their community pharmacist.

The pathway will result in fewer hospital readmissions or emergency department attendances as a result of medication errors in particular if their old medicines were a contributory factor to their admission to the hospital for example in drug induced AKI.

What are the key benefits to hospital pharmacy teams?

TCAM allows the hospital team to communicate in a safe and secure way with their community pharmacist colleagues around any medication issues, continuity of supply and if any follow ups need to be flagged up.

This frees up the hospital team from attempting to make a telephone communication in the knowledge that their communication is securely delivered and acknowledged by their community pharmacy colleagues.

What benefits do community pharmacists gain from TCAM?

TCAM offers community pharmacists an opportunity to use their clinical skills and to be an integral part of the patient pathway. It also facilitates a greater degree of professional relationship with their patients and allows community pharmacies to plan their workload better when patients are discharged from hospital.

What are the key benefits to GPs?

TCAM supports GPs by reducing the need for unplanned hospital re-admissions due to medication errors for patients at risk of post-discharge medicines adherence issues. Community pharmacy will be in a position to interrogate new prescriptions they have received against the discharge information and clarify any discrepancies. GPs will also benefit by knowing a patient has been through a medicines adherence programme and provides them with the added assurance that their patients are taking their medicines correctly and limiting medicine waste.

Would all patients admitted to hospital be admitted to the pathway?

No. Hospital pharmacy teams, as part of their patient medication reconciliation process during admission could decide to identify the cohort of patients based on the likely changes to their medication.

Additionally, all patients included in the TCAM pathway are required to give their consent to have their information about their admission and discharge communicated to their regular community pharmacy, unless it is considered to be in the patients "best interest".