

Case study name: SCRIPT Medicines Management e-learning programme

Start and end dates of work covered by case study: April 2014 - present

Overview summary

The financial stresses and the increasing demands on health services make it urgent for the NHS to improve productivity and innovation. Medicines are the most common therapeutic intervention in the NHS, but evidence suggests that the use of medicines in the NHS is often sub-optimal.

Educating healthcare professionals is key to ensuring medicines are safely managed in the NHS and that patients know how to make the most of their treatments. Capitalising on an established successful e-learning programme designed for junior doctors, WMAHSN has commissioned the development of SCRIPT for nurses who currently make up 49% of the NHS workforce. SCRIPT is a suite of 15 e-learning modules aimed at developing and maintaining professional knowledge and competence relating to medicines specifically for nurses. The modules have been authored by specialist physicians, nurses and pharmacists in the region and six modules are ready for launch.

The web-based e-learning platform is generating a significant amount of interest and support. As such, the scale of delivery of this project has already increased to 15 modules, from the nine originally proposed by the team. Working in collaboration with a number of authors from various backgrounds and trusts across the region, SCRIPT has not only built a network of clients, but a wider regional interest in drug safety.

Challenge identified and actions taken

Medicines are the most common therapeutic intervention in the NHS: in 2014/15, the NHS spent £15.5 billion on medicines, an increase of 7.8% from the previous year. However, evidence suggests that the use of medicines in the NHS is often sub-optimal. Medication errors account for 10–20% of all adverse events in the NHS, and preventable harm from medicines is estimated to cost more than £750 million each year. Ten days after starting a new medicine, nearly a third of patients are non-adherent.

There has been substantial investment in improving the use of medicines in the NHS. This has enhanced education and training, introduced and fostered non-medical prescribing, led to digitisation of healthcare systems, involved pharmacists in clinical practice and strengthened the regulation and governance of prescribing. To address the training needs relating to medicines management and medicines optimisation, we have capitalised on an

established successful and award-winning (Patient Safety Awards 2013) programme proven to deliver education relating to prescribing and therapeutics. SCRIPT is a suite of 15 e-learning modules aimed at developing and maintaining professional knowledge and competence relating to medicines. The modules have been authored by specialist physicians, nurses and pharmacists in the region and six modules are currently in final production ready for launch.

Planned outcomes were to develop a suite of web-based e-learning modules to develop and maintain the professional knowledge and competence of qualified nursing staff relating to the safer use of medicines. This work builds on the established SCRIPT e-learning programme available for junior doctors (www.safeprescriber.org).

The modules were scoped and developed as part of a unique collaboration between Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust, the University of Birmingham and OCB Media Ltd (set up by the University of Leicester to develop medical e-learning materials, OCB are the original developers and ongoing technical lead for the SCRIPT project). The suite of 15 modules within the Medicines Management workstream was agreed as a result of feedback received at WMAHSN stakeholder events.

Impacts / outcomes

- The WMAHSN commissioned e-learning platform is available online at www.saferuseofmedicines.org
- A handy guide to SCRIPT for qualified nurse practitioners has been created
- The scale of delivery has already increased from the original proposal, from nine modules to 15 module categories finalised
- As this e-learning will be available to all nurses across the healthcare sector, it is generating a significant amount of interest and support. In addition, interest is being received from academic institutions in the West Midlands that train nurses at undergraduate level as they are keen to ensure that nursing competencies with regards to medication administration are gained prior to entry in clinical practice
- Six modules have been launched (UK Medicines Policy, Evidence-Based Practice, Introduction to Pain Management, Pharmacological Pain Management, and Adverse Drug Reactions, Anticoagulation Part 1)
- Further modules in development include Anticoagulation Part 2 and Medicines Management in Care Homes, Respiratory, Dosing and Calculation and Advanced Pain Management
- Working in collaboration with a number of authors from various backgrounds and trusts across the region, SCRIPT has not only built a network of clients but a wider regional interest in drug safety.

Supporting quote for stakeholder / programme lead

Dr Jamie Coleman, Professor of Clinical Pharmacology and Medical Education, University of Birmingham: “The administration of medicines occurs in all areas of health and social care, many of which are given by nurses and professional carers. Errors that occur at the administration stage are often not intercepted by others, unless the patient notices an error, and therefore this is an important focus for education and training. The SCRIPT project team

are excited to be working on new e-learning modules to provide for the Safer Use of Medicines for the region.”

Which national clinical or policy priorities does this example address?

From the NHS Five Year Forward View:

- As the ‘stock’ of population health risk gets worse, the ‘flow’ of costly NHS treatments increases as a consequence
- Future models will expand the leadership of primary care to include nurses, therapists and other community based professionals. It could also offer some care in fundamentally different ways, making fuller use of digital technologies, new skills and roles, and offering greater convenience for patients
- Access to GPs or nurses working from community bases equipped to provide a much greater range of tests and treatments. In partnership with local authority social services departments, and using the opportunity created by the establishment of the Better Care Fund, we will work with the NHS locally and the care home sector to develop new shared models of in-reach support, including medical reviews, medication reviews and rehab services.
- NICE guidance on medicines management, adherence and optimisation.

Plans for the future

- Completion of remaining modules
- The e-learning platform will be promoted regionally in the first instance, with the ability to expand the scope nationally
- The first six modules will be officially launched by March 2016.

Tips for adoption

- E-learning provides a flexible approach for individuals to complete the learning when and where possible. This flexibility leads to an improved learning experience with an opportunity to influence improved practice through having a better knowledge base
- The SCRIPT family addresses different learning styles through using different media and approaches, which again underpins the success of the programme.

Contact for further information

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