

# Be Medicine Aware

## *Teva UK Limited and NHS East Riding of Yorkshire Partnership Project*

This is a case study of how NHS East Riding of Yorkshire worked in a local partnership with the Teva Integrated Healthcare Manager and Teva UK Limited to address the issue of medicine wastage.

### Project rationale

A report by the Department of Health estimates that unused medicines cost the NHS around £300 million every year, with an estimated £110 million worth of medicine returned to pharmacies, £90 million worth of unused prescriptions being stored in homes and £50 million worth of medicines disposed of by Care Homes.<sup>1</sup>

NHS East Riding of Yorkshire identified significant areas of medicines wastage in the local area, which if it was addressed successfully could save the NHS around £500,000 per annum.

The local PCT identified that the main population groups responsible for the over ordering of medicines are younger mothers and those over 60 years of age.

- ▶ It was suggested that these cohorts do not pay prescription charges and they often order their medication on an ongoing, monthly basis
- ▶ In some cases it was noted that elderly patients do not like to tell the GP they are not taking their medication and do not like to stop ordering it for fear of being 'told-off' by the doctor

## Approach defined

It was felt that a *Be Medicine Aware* campaign targeting these cohorts would help improve the current situation and reduce local medicine wastage.

The campaign would explain that certain health services (especially those relevant to the target cohorts) could be lost due to unnecessary prescribing costs and wasting medicines.

With this local insight, this project aimed to educate appropriate patients to better manage their ordering of repeat prescriptions in order to support medicines optimisation and thus reduce the amount of medicine wastage.

## Agreed objectives

The objectives of this *Be Medicine Aware* campaign was to:

1. Reduce the amount of repeat prescribing across NHS East Riding of Yorkshire
2. Make patients aware that using their medication correctly will make them feel better
3. Encourage patients to ask themselves “do I need this medication?” before they tick the box on their repeat prescription slip
4. Increase awareness that patients can talk to their local pharmacist for help and advice

## Desired outcomes

The desired outcomes from the partnership below should help to see:

- ▶ A monthly increase in Medicine Usage Reviews (MUR) completed on patients over the age of 60, young mothers and or pregnant women aged 18 or older in NHS East Riding of Yorkshire
- ▶ A reduction in overall repeat prescriptions dispensed to patients over the age of 60, young mothers and or pregnant women over the age of 18 in NHS East Riding of Yorkshire

## Partnership with Teva UK Limited

In order to achieve these outcomes, NHS East Riding of Yorkshire worked in partnership with Teva UK Limited as they provided:

- ▶ Project management and communication skills
- ▶ Experience of delivering health awareness campaigns
- ▶ Expertise in working with creative agencies to develop the advertisements and posters
- ▶ A local integrated healthcare manager to co-ordinate the initiative and be a source of contact for all stakeholders involved

Both the NHS and Teva UK Limited abided by the relevant regulatory bodies and guidance, including the ABPI Code of Conduct.

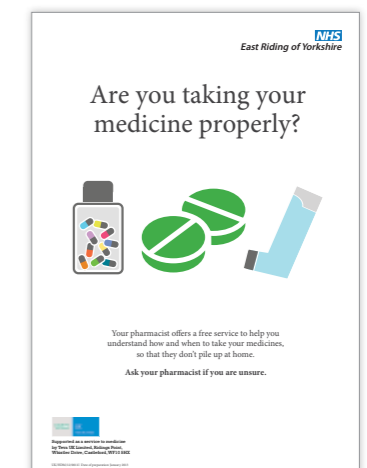
## The project

A highly-visible *Be Medicine Aware* campaign was developed targeting high users of medicines (particularly the elderly and young mothers) with messages encouraging them to take control of their and their family’s medication requirements.

- ▶ A clear, coherent and aligned targeted poster campaign was implemented locally
- ▶ Posters were placed on the lower deck of buses in Hornsea, Bridlington, Withernsea, Goole and Anlaby
- ▶ Similar posters have also been displayed in pharmacies, GP practices and A&E departments in NHS East Riding of Yorkshire

True collaboration existed throughout the project to ensure its success. This included a jointly developed working plan with regular review between both parties with a clear definition of roles and responsibilities ensuring that timelines and agreed outcomes were achieved.

This project raised awareness, understanding and communication between all parties involved in the local medicine wastage agenda through the poster campaign and associated press and radio coverage.



## Benefits of the partnership

This project demonstrated a successful partnership approach to address a significant public health issue facing the local health economy.

### NHS East Riding of Yorkshire

- ▶ A demonstrable public health campaign in the local area
- ▶ Increased awareness with target cohorts about the impact of medicine wastage
- ▶ Access to project management skills and marketing experience

### Teva UK Limited

- ▶ Opportunity to build reputation and earn trust with NHS partners
- ▶ The project offered significant learning's in the area of medicine optimisation
- ▶ The project provided a real-life example of how a partnership approach can work in the NHS to benefit public health

This partnership project provided a high profile campaign that strengthened public relations between the NHS, Teva UK Limited and local patients.

#### References

1. <http://www.medicinewaste.com/campaign> Accessed March 2013

