

New Medicine Service *Intervention* Interview Schedule

1. Have you had the chance to start taking your new medicine yet?

If the patient has not started taking the medicine then explore the reasons for this by moving to the non adherence issues below. The pharmacist can then go back and address other reasons / concerns / need for information at the end of the interview.

2. How are you getting on with it?

This is an open question to get the patient talking and bringing out any issues which are important to them. These can be dealt with here rather than waiting until the appropriate question below.

3. Are you having any problems with your new medicine, or concerns about taking it?

4. Do you think it is working? (Prompt: is this different from what you were expecting?)

This gives a chance to discuss that some patients will not feel any different if some of these drugs are working.

Do they know what it is for?

It would be useful to say a little about how the drug works. Some patients may feel happier and more content to take the medicine if they have a rational explanation of how the drug helps their condition.

5. Do you think you are getting any side effects or unexpected effects?

If the patient feels different it may lead them to change their behaviour, even though it is not a side effect of the drug. This may also be an opportunity to fill in a Yellow Card.

This is an opportunity to discuss whether side effects are likely to be transitory and what can be done to minimise them. If severe, the pharmacist could suggest a return to the prescriber and possibly cessation of the drug.

This could also alert to serious side effects that may occur and would involve an immediate need to take action.

6. People often miss taking doses of their medicines, for a wide range of reasons. Have you missed any doses of your new medicine, or changed when you take it? (Prompt: when did you last miss a dose?)

This question may be a bit challenging so is further down the interview schedule - however on the other hand it may not need to be asked as the issues may already have emerged. It is necessary to explore the reason(s) why this has happened. Was it intentional or not? Was it appropriate (e.g. missing a morning dose of a diuretic because they had a long bus journey)?

Does the patient understand why the medicine is necessary?

The pharmacist will work to solve the issue if there is one to be solved.

7. Do you have anything else you would like to know about your new medicine or is there anything you would like me to go over again?

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Follow up Interview Schedule

Depending on the conversation between the pharmacist and the patient at the intervention, not all the questions in the interview schedule for the NMS follow up may be necessary.

1. How have you been getting on with your new medicine since we last spoke? (Prompt: are you still taking it?)

This is a general question to open up a natural dialogue and to see whether patients are still taking the new medicine.

2. Last time we spoke, you mentioned a few issues you'd been having with your new medicine. Shall we go through each of these and see how you're getting on?

Use the pharmacy records to refer to each of the issues that arose from the initial contact with the patient at the intervention stage. Issues may have arisen from any of the questions at the initial contact (e.g. problems/concerns, information needs, side effects, adherence issues).

**3. A) The first issue you mentioned was [*refer to specific issue*] - is that correct?
B) Did you try [*the advice / solution recommended at the previous contact*] to help with this issue?**

Use the pharmacy records to refer back to the advice or solution recommended to the patient. This question should be phrased according to the specific advice, information or solution offered to the patient at the intervention stage.

4. Did you try anything else?

This allows you to check whether patients received help or advice from elsewhere.

5. Did this help? (Prompt: how did it help?)

Document the outcome from the issue.

6. Is this still a problem or concern?

The question above may give you the answer to this already but if not, it allows you to clearly establish whether or not the problem/concern is still an issue.

If the problem/concern is still there then the patient will need to be referred appropriately before exiting the service.

Repeat Questions 3-6 for each issue that the patient discussed at the Intervention stage

7. Have there been any other problems/concerns with your new medicine since we last spoke?

If new problems exist then the patient will need to be referred appropriately, as mentioned above.

8. People often miss taking doses of their medicines, for a wide range of reasons. Since we last spoke, have you missed any doses of your new medicine, or changed when you take it? (Prompt: when did you last miss a dose?)

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Notes for the Interview Schedule

Although the questions for use during the intervention and follow up are in a structured format, the style of delivery will be key in making sure the patient feels relaxed and that they will not be judged by their responses.

It may be that a patient gives a response which prompts the pharmacist to ask a question which is further down the list. Pharmacists should use these questions to shape their conversation with the patient; there is not an absolute requirement to use the questions in a rigid manner, as this may prevent the patient from obtaining the maximum benefit from the discussion. However pharmacists should be aware that the questions have been carefully structured, with academic input from the fields of pharmacy and psychology, in order to enable the pharmacist to obtain the maximum amount of information from the patient's perspective as is possible.