

## Refer to Pharmacy – Geloo Pharmacy Millhill



Tahira is a locum pharmacist at the Mill Hill Branch of Geloo Brothers Chemists chain and has been involved in the Refer-to-Pharmacy scheme since 2015.

Referrals are made for patients who have been discharged from hospital to a pharmacy of their choice. A referral-notification alert is faxed. Occasionally faxes are received when the shop is closed and are dealt with swiftly when the shop re-opens.

The patients Tahira has dealt with whilst working within the Refer-to-Pharmacy scheme have, in the

majority, required blister packing of their medications, others required a Medicines Use Review (MUR) or a New Medicine Service (NMS). Some have been hospitalised from, and then returned to, care homes.

Patients are contacted by telephone following referral and Tahira feels that those patients that are existing customers of the pharmacy have built up trust and so do listen to what she has to say about medicines and the changes sometimes made to prescriptions on discharge from hospital.

There have been a few patients who have refused to take part in the scheme but this is in the main due to the fact that they were too ill at the time.

Patients referred from care homes are mainly for information only as the care home takes control of the medication for the patient. Tahira makes a note of all changes on the system to ensure medication details are up to date.

Tahira feels that the system saves time and money. In one case a female patient had been prescribed two different indigestion medicines. The patient preferred one and so took this one and not the other. On admission to hospital the patient did not feel able to tell staff that she did not take one of the medicines and so the hospital unknowingly, stopped the one she preferred. Following a referral for an MUR, via the Refer-to-Pharmacy scheme, the patient explained the situation telling Tahira that she did not like the medication that was to be continued. Tahira informed the patient's GP (via an MUR) and the medication was changed to the one the patient preferred, thereby improving compliance. The preferred tablet was also cheaper which meant a saving of NHS money. The trust between the patient and Pharmacist is key!

Tahira has used the helpline when referrals were coming in for other branches and for referrals which did not have any required actions specified. Once informed these problems were quickly dealt with by the Refer-to-Pharmacy helpline and problems rarely happen now.

**Tahira said 'This is an absolutely fantastic service for those patients discharged from hospital and who do not know what to do with their medication. Their trust in us is vital for this scheme. It is good for people who want continuity with a familiar face. The hospitals information makes my job easier'**