

The threatened medicines information pharmacist!

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EJHP is the European platform to publish your manuscript addressing all practical and innovative aspects of hospital pharmacy practice research. Just looking at the current issue of the journal a lot of interesting stuff is being published, covering clinical pharmacy research, addressing medicines safety aspects and answering production-related research questions. One could say, all aspects of the broad discipline of hospital pharmacy are covered and represented in the sense of a carefully balanced potpourri. There's something in here for everybody!

Look carefully though. Is anything missing? Are there black spots not covered in the journal, not addressed by authors? We hypothesise: Yes, there are. Presumably, several areas of hospital pharmacy are under represented, but we would like to point a finger at one core discipline and one core competence of hospital pharmacy. That is the ability to provide adequate answers to clinical queries – whether they are basic or highly complex – on all aspects of medicines use.

We deliberately stated adequate answers, as in clinical reality the attribution of right or wrong to an answer to a complex clinical query is most of the times not straightforward and sometimes even not

possible. Most of the time it is a decision between several potential options, each of them having pros and cons. Providing medicines information is considered an art and the hospital pharmacist artist needs to comprehensively understand and research the clinical context of a clinical query. The pharmacist has to find and extract the best available evidence out of the vast amount of biomedical and pharmacological information out there and apply the information found to the individual patient and the clinical situation in question.

Consider this futuristic scenario: The possibility that medicines information pharmacists who provide high-quality medicines information for the sake of better patient care and better medicines use will become extinct. And the reason for this extinction is simple: We don't need them anymore since *en vogue* artificial intelligence tools will do their job instead.¹ AI will be much faster, more efficient and always correct!

We are not at that point yet and in our opinion it is not a desirable scenario. In fact, it is not a question of one *or* the other. It is more about a fruitful coexistence of both, and of the clever and responsible use of available tools to assist in providing the best possible answer to a clinical query for an individual patient. What's more, for the part of applying information to an individual patient's needs, we will always need the interpretative skills of a qualified healthcare professional.

Did you know that *EJHP* is the only journal giving you the possibility to publish your clinical queries in medicines information in its special

submission section 'Hands on medicines information'?² Pharmacists are trained to be scientifically and clinically curious and love nothing more than answering a question with a question! So, we encourage you to submit your complex or unusual cases and showcase to the readers of the journal, and your colleagues, how you dealt with certain medicines information problems, supported by scientific evidence, and with the patient's outcome included too.

We are convinced that there is vast material out there meeting the criteria of this submission type. In fact, we are curious to see the capabilities of hospital pharmacists in this area, especially with regard to the mentioned futuristic scenario. Let's prove it wrong!

Competing interests Both authors are editors of *EJHP*.

Provenance and peer review Not commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

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To cite Stemer G, Williams SD. *Eur J Hosp Pharm* 2024;**31**:187.

Published Online First 19 March 2024

Eur J Hosp Pharm 2024;**31**:187.

doi:10.1136/ejhp-2024-004133

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