

# De-prescribing within the East Kent Community Frailty Team: assessment of medication review processes and potential cost-savings

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## Introduction

Older people living with frailty are often prescribed many medications exposing them to potential medicine-related harm. Pharmacists are a new addition to the East Kent Community Frailty Team, which otherwise consists of doctors and advanced clinical practitioners at various levels of training. Pharmacists are ideally placed to develop medication review processes and support fellow clinicians with deprescribing efforts in frailty. This audit set out to determine current levels of medication review and associated cost-savings through deprescribing.

## Method

All patients admitted to the frailty team caseloads in the month of May 2023 had their notes manually reviewed for evidence of medication reconciliation, review, and deprescribing. Medicines were assigned a cost price based on the NHSBSA Drug Tariff (May 2023).

# Deprescribing is more likely as part of multi-disciplinary discussions.

# Standardisation of records and improvement of skill mix is needed to further address polypharmacy.

## Results



192 records reviewed  
170 patients were **acutely unwell**



8.2 medicines per patient



62% had medicines clearly documented



29% had at least one medicine stopped  
Average 0.7 medicines per patient



Rolling average £8,000/month savings  
in medicines cost alone



93% of deprescribing occurred in caseload  
with MDT board rounds

## Conclusion

Rates of deprescribing are low compared to published studies (Ibrahim et al, *BMC Geriatr* 21, 258 (2021)), although still represent a rolling saving of approximately £8,000 per month on cost of medicines alone, assuming a twelve-month average life expectancy. Lack of standardisation of clinical notes and documentation made data collection difficult and has the potential to lead to transfer-of-care errors. Further work needs to be undertaken to optimise the medication review process and address inappropriate polypharmacy and will be the focus of efforts over the coming year.

## Future Work...

- *Causative factors – further work needed*
- *Staff development*
- *Standardised forms for reconciliation and review*
- *Linking of forms to discharge paperwork*
- *Triage reviews to appropriate staff*
- *Re-audit in 6-12 months*
- *Pharmacy team expansion*