

Introduction and aim

- Independent Prescribing Pharmacists (IPPs) can prescribe autonomously within their scope of practice (SoP). The Welsh strategy: Delivering a Healthier Wales envisages at least one IPP in each community pharmacy by 2030.
- In 2020, an Independent Prescribers' Service (IPS) pilot was delivered in 13 pharmacies across six of the seven Health Boards (HB) in Wales.
- IPS allowed patients to access advice, and, where relevant, be treated in the community pharmacy setting, rather than the GP surgery.
- **Aim:** To explore the views of community IPPs delivering the IPS on the service.

Methodology

- Semi-structured interviews, via telephone or MSTeams were conducted with community IPPs practising in the thirteen commissioned pharmacies, and who had completed at least one IPS consultation.
- Participants were informed of the study and written; informed consent obtained.
- Interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed via deductive and inductive thematic analysis.
- All identifiable information were removed to ensure anonymity.

Results

- **Nine** interviews were conducted, with participants from all HBs in the pilot.
- The IPPs' scope of practice included acute minor ailments, contraception, urinary tract infections and asthma. **Four** themes were identified:

01 Impact of the IPS

Participants believed the service had impacted on the wider healthcare setting, patients and themselves. Patients had improved convenience and accessibility to a healthcare professional to manage their condition. Patient safety was of a high standard.



02 Relationship with GP

Positive relationships with local GPs was believed to be critical to the pilot's success.



03 Future delivery

This will rely on support, funding, and ongoing review. A 'blended approach' whereby patients are seen with or without an appointment was believed to provide the flexibility that patients want.



04 Remote consultations

Can have an impact on patient safety, making non-verbal communication and language barriers more challenging.



Conclusion

- Participants were supportive of the service which will potentially benefit IPPs, patients and GPs, improve patient care and make use of the skills of those working in the community.
- More information is needed to understand the impact of the service and effect on practice, from the practitioner and patient perspectives.