

Royal College of General Practitioners and Warwick Medical School
Annual Education, Research and Innovation Symposium
16th June 2016 - Abstract Submission Form

PRESENTER'S DETAILS – Session A. Older People		
Title (Prof, Dr, Mr, Mrs) Miss	First Name Jessica	Surname Gilbert
Department or organisation WMS Student j.m.gilbert@warwick.ac.uk		
Category Audit, Research , Education Project, Innovation Project		
Authors - Jessica Gilbert Dr Kate Owen (supervisor)		Title of Study - Lost in communication: what barriers are there to effective communication between General Practice surgeries and care homes?
What's the problem you are tackling? Population projections suggest in the next 17 years the percentage of people in the UK over 65 will increase by over 40%. Therefore the pressure on care homes and general practices will also increase. With this in mind it is important that the relationship and communication between the two services is optimal. Evidence has shown good communication helps to reduce medication errors, reduce unnecessary hospital admissions and improve end of life care.		
How did/will you do it? The research was a qualitative design, I collected data through semi-structured interviews. There were six interviews across 3 different care homes. I interviewed both GP's and care home staff in order to gather their view points on how information was communicated between the practice and the care homes. The interviews were taped with a voice recorder and then transcribed, before being coded into themes.		
What did you find? And why does this matter? Within the study 5 main themes emerged; care home staff education, communication tools, hospital admissions and discharge, visit requests and ideas for change. The study highlighted a number of areas that contributed to poor communication between care home staff and General Practitioners. A lack of staff education within the care homes often forced staff to make excessive visit requests to the GP as well as sending residents to hospital unnecessarily. These unnecessary hospital admissions were described to often be due to care staff failing to communicate to the GP practice and instead immediately escalating care to hospital. Suggestions for change included a weekly ward round at the care home, staff training sessions and a simple communication tool to use on the phone. The findings are important as it shows that there are currently areas for improvement. With pressure on both services set to increase it is vital these services are strengthened to ensure residents receive the best care.		