

SCHOOL OF LIFE & HEALTH SCIENCES

Title: An examination of the effectiveness of community pharmacists in reducing dispensing errors.

Full-Time PhD Studentship (3 years)

Applications are invited for a three year research studentship in the field of Pharmacy Practice at the School of Life and Health Sciences at Aston University, Birmingham, UK.

The Project:

The core function of the community pharmacist is and always has been the safe and effective supply of medicines to patients although recent policy has attempted to direct the activity of pharmacists away from this 'supply function' and towards involvement in harm-reduction and health-improvement services. Previous research has suggested that dispensing errors by community pharmacists are very rare (as low as 4 errors per 10,000 items). While such errors do not uniformly result in patient harm, they do have the potential to cause deleterious effects to patient health. Where an error has occurred, the pharmacist committing the error is liable to investigation by his/her employer, the local NHS organisation in which the error took place and/or the profession's regulatory body (the General Pharmaceutical Council). In more serious or complicated cases, a pharmacist committing an error may be the subject of a civil complaint or, *in extremis*, criminal investigation.

This important project will examine the role of the pharmacist in ensuring patient safety and the extent to which the continued involvement of the pharmacist in the supply function is of value in terms of patient benefit and safety. This is a unique opportunity for an enthusiastic candidate who will employ a mixed-methods approach - incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methodology - to explore this issue.

Financial Support:

The fully-funded studentship comprises of a tax-free stipend of approximately £13,590 per annum and payment of Home/EU tuition fees only. The studentship is available for three years, subject to satisfactory progress review at the end of the first year **with an anticipated start for either 1st January 2013 or 1st April 2013 Registration.**

Application Requirements:

- Eligible Applicants should have a Bachelor (Hons.) in either First Class or Upper Second Class Pharmacy Degree and be either a registrant of, or eligible for registration with, the General Pharmaceutical Council.
- You should be enthusiastic, determined and have a strong interest in community pharmacy and patient safety.
- If you are an EU Applicant, you will need to demonstrate adequate proficiency in English Language skills, with a minimum score of 620 (260 minimum in computer test) in TOEFL or IELTS with minimum marks of 6.5 in each section and an overall band of 7.0.
- Informal enquiries should be addressed to the Project Supervisor, Dr Joe Bush (Telephone: +44 0121 204 4016 or E-mail: j.bush2@aston.ac.uk).
- To apply please complete the **on-line application form** at <http://www1.aston.ac.uk/lhs/research/postgraduate-research/apply/> and please quote the Reference 'PP-Bush' on all applications.
- **The Closing Date for applications is: Friday, 30th November 2012.**