

# The Implementation And Evaluation Of "Lightning Talks" For Pharmacy Assistants

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## Background

The role of the pharmacy assistant is expanding to take on more clinical tasks such as solving problems with prescription/medication orders and working clinically on the ward assisting the pharmacist. As a result the knowledge required by pharmacy assistants is increasing.

Although formal training programs are starting to become more common, integrated work place education sessions to improve clinical knowledge are vital. To address this increasing need for education, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital dispensary implemented lightning talks aimed to improve pharmacy assistants medication knowledge. These talks cover the medication's indication, brief explanation of the condition the medication is used to treat, available formulations, usual dosing frequency and any relevant information such as storage requirements and formulary restrictions.

## Aim

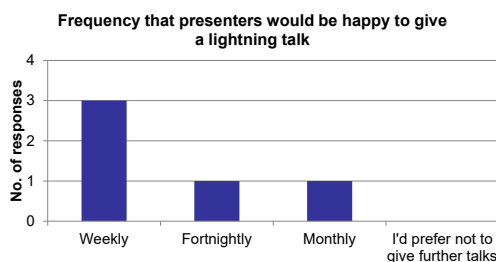
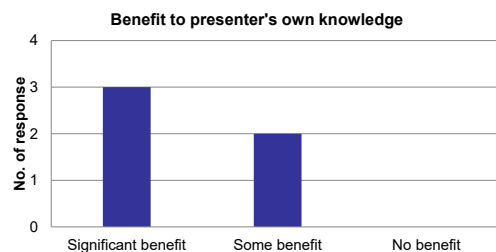
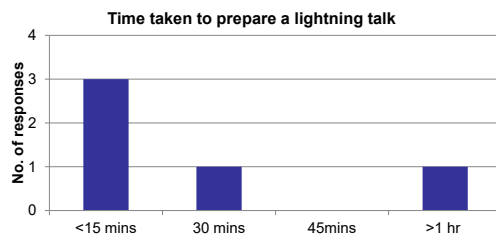
To implement and evaluate lightning talks focused on improving pharmacy assistants clinical knowledge

## Method

- All staff in the dispensary were provided with the opportunity to anonymously nominate medications they would like to know more about
- Presenters were pharmacists and intern pharmacists
- Presenters would select a drug from the nominated list and prepare a brief didactic presentation (~3-5 minutes) which was given during the morning team huddle
- Talks would occur 2-3 times per week with opportunities for questions
- The medication was passed round the audience during the talk for visual appreciation
- Two surveys were designed and distributed six weeks after the lightning talks were implemented. One survey was for the presenters (pharmacists and intern pharmacists) and the other for the audience (pharmacy assistants)

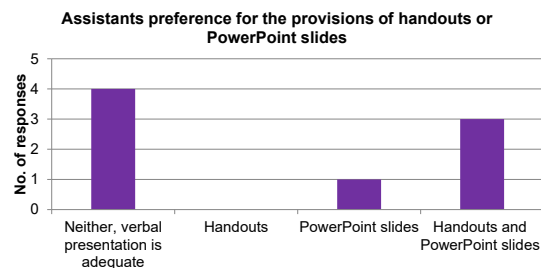
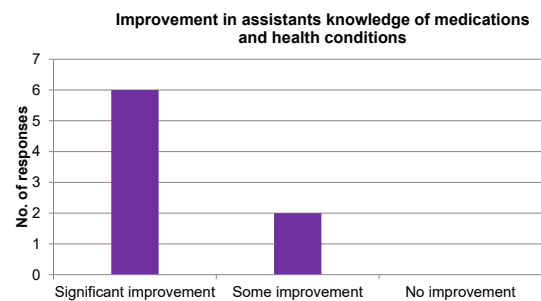
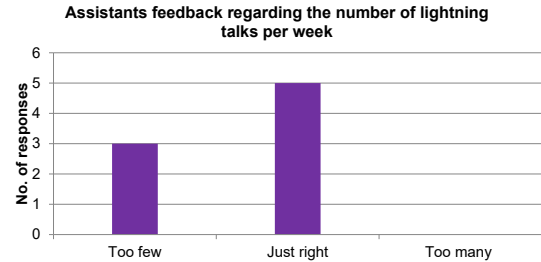
## Results

### Presenters: Pharmacists & Intern Pharmacists (n = 5)



- 100% of presenters would be happy to include brief handouts/PowerPoint slides
- 100% of presenters would be happy to offer guidance to pharmacy assistants wishing to give their own talk

### Audience: Pharmacy Assistants (n = 8)



- 100% of pharmacy assistants like the current mix of both the presenters and pharmacy assistants nominating lightning talk topics
- 7 out of 8 pharmacy assistants would like the opportunity to give their own lightning talk provided they were given some guidance.

## Discussion and Conclusion

- On average, the time taken to prepare a lightning talk would fit into a presenter's work day
- There was overwhelmingly positive results regarding improvement in pharmacy assistants knowledge of medications and health conditions
- Lightning talks provide a great opportunity for those involved to practice their presentation skills in a safe, informal environment
- Lightning talks are also a useful education tool for intern pharmacists and pharmacy students
- Majority of pharmacy assistants would be happy to present lightning talks in the future with guidance from a pharmacist or intern pharmacist
- Assistant-lead lightning talks could be considered for inclusion in advanced practice accreditation
- There is opportunity for lightning talks to cover topics other than medications, such as discussing an interesting case or how a complex enquiry was handled
- Moving forward, the provision of PowerPoint slides and handouts should be evaluated