

PHARMACISTS IN RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE FACILITIES STUDY



WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?¹

> 95%
of residents living in aged care facilities have medication-related problems

> 50%
of residents living in aged care facilities take a Potentially Inappropriate Medicine

18%
of residents' unplanned hospital admissions are due to taking a Potentially Inappropriate Medicine

20%
of residents living in aged care facilities take antipsychotic medicines

WHAT DID THE STUDY DO?

Registered pharmacists were integrated into residential aged care facilities to improve medicine management quality and safety.

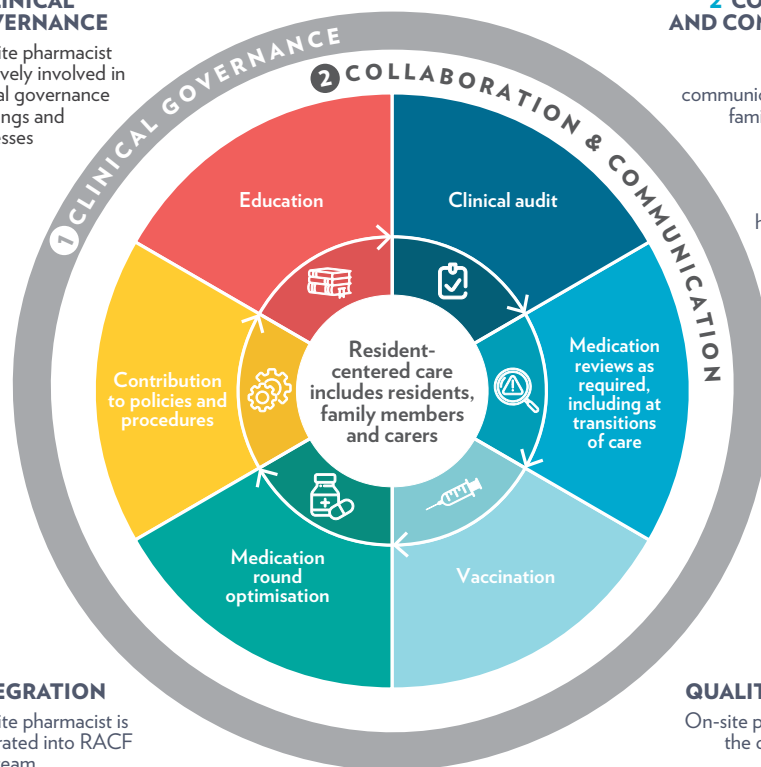
On-site pharmacists were employed on a part-time basis by residential aged care facilities for 12 months to conduct a range of medication management activities (see Figure 1). They worked as part of facilities' care teams, working and collaborating with residents, family members, carers, general practitioners and other prescribers (nurse practitioners, geriatricians, and other specialists), allied health professionals, and community and hospital pharmacists.

1 CLINICAL GOVERNANCE

On-site pharmacist is actively involved in clinical governance meetings and processes

2 COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

On-site pharmacist collaborates, and communicates with residents, family members, carers, facility staff, GPs, prescribers, health care professionals, community and hospital pharmacists



INTEGRATION

On-site pharmacist is integrated into RACF care team

QUALITY AND SAFETY

On-site pharmacist improves the quality and safety of medicine use

FIGURE 1 On-site pharmacists in residential aged care facility (RACF) model of care

FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

Having an on-site pharmacist in residential aged care facilities:

1



REDUCED the proportion of residents taking potentially inappropriate medicines

2



REDUCED the anticholinergic drug burden of medicines prescribed for residents — anticholinergic burden is associated with cognitive decline, delirium and increased risk of falls

3



REDUCED the dose of antipsychotic medicines prescribed for residents

4



ESTABLISHED POSITIVE COLLABORATIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

between on-site pharmacists, GPs and prescribers, RACF managers and staff, and residents and family members

5



WAS SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED and became a part of routine practice

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations from the study are to:

- **ROLL OUT THE ON-SITE PHARMACIST MODEL NATIONALLY** to improve medication management for residents living in residential aged care.
- **PROMOTE AN UNDERSTANDING** of the on-site pharmacist role among stakeholders, including residents, families and carers, pharmacists, general practitioners and prescribers, health care professionals, and residential aged care organisations and staff.
- **ENSURE** that the on-site pharmacist and facilities are provided with on-going support to orient pharmacists and residential aged care staff to the activities and role of the on-site pharmacist.
- **EXPLORE AND ADDRESS** workforce issues that arise from the need to train and recruit pharmacists.
- **EXPLORE OPTIONS** for a nationally recognised professional pharmacy body to coordinate, upskill and train pharmacists to enhance their clinical skills and knowledge about residential aged care facilities' operations and processes.
- **EXPLORE MODELS** of pharmacists using telehealth for residential aged care in rural and remote areas.
- **CONDUCT FURTHER STUDIES** to examine implementation of this model. In particular, the full-time equivalent required, effective inclusion in clinical governance processes, appropriate evaluation and quality indicators, and role development and integration require further investigation.
- **UNDERTAKE FUTURE ECONOMIC EVALUATIONS** to determine if integrating on-site pharmacists into RACFs is cost effective.

➔ Resources to support RACFs and pharmacists to implement the service and the study evaluation report can be found at:
www.chnact.org.au/for-health-professionals/pharmacists-in-residential-aged-care-facilities-study

➔ Further details about the study, including publications can be found at:
www.canberra.edu.au/research/institutes/health-research-institute/pharmacists-in-residential-aged-care-facilities

Contact

e racfstudy@canberra.edu.au

e piracf@chnact.org.au



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