

West and South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Commissioning Support Unit



Unused Medicines (Carers) Engagement Report Leeds North CCG

:

February 2013



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Background	3
3. Engagement	3
4. Summary of Findings	3
5. Survey responses	4 –7
6. Conclusion	7 -8

Appendix 1 – Unused medicines Survey

Appendix 2 – Equality monitoring results

1. Introduction

NHS Leeds North Clinical Commissioning Group plans to introduce a proactive approach to ensuring people have the best support when taking medicines. People will be encouraged to return their unused medicines and, where appropriate, undertake a medicines review.

2. Background

£300 million per year is wasted in unused medicines in the UK. Within Leeds over £5million is wasted. Even if the packet/bottle is never opened once the medication leaves the pharmacy it cannot be reused and has to be destroyed.

Research has found that 70% of people stop taking medicines within the first 10 weeks but they still collect their repeat prescriptions wasting medicines which could be worth hundreds of pounds.

A pilot is currently being carried out in Otley led by the local pharmacists in conjunction with the GP practices. The CCG is currently recruiting pharmacy technicians to assist with the medicine reviews. The CCG are planning to run a local campaign to help reduce the number of unused medicines being stock piled in people's homes. In order to ensure that the campaign is meaningful, it is important to understand why people have unwanted or unused medication and to what the CCG can do to help prevent it or dispose of it.

3. Engagement

Originally a survey and engagement plan was developed by the West and South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Commissioning Support Unit (WSYBCSU) engagement team. Leeds Involving People (LIP) was provided with contact details of the GP surgeries, pharmacies, hospital, care homes, and several community groups in the Otley area and made contact with the agencies and arranged to visit them to undertake the survey with patients and /or clients.

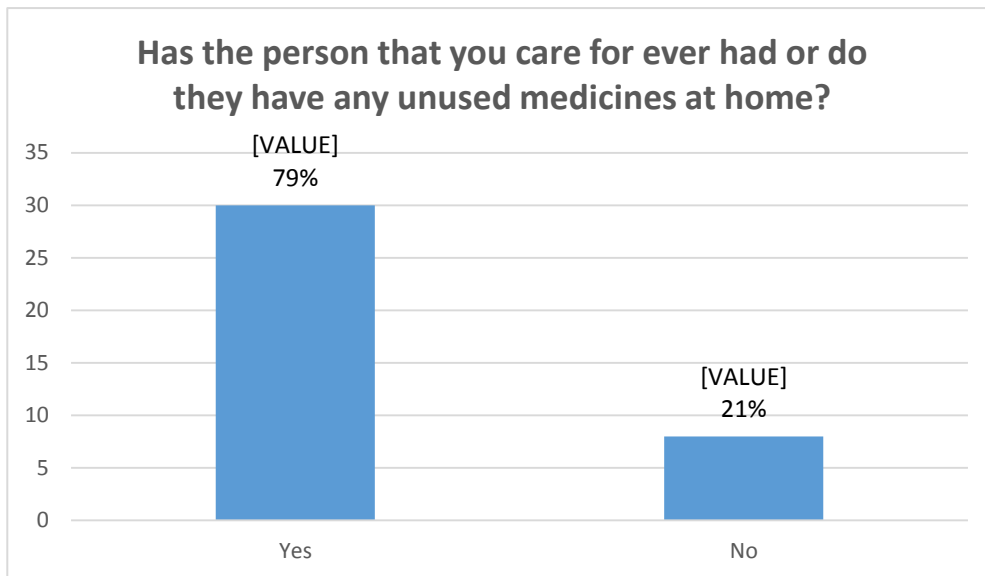
It was felt following the results of the first report that the voice of the carers was missing. We asked LIP to carry out some more work specifically with carers and the results are below. The percentages quoted in the report have been rounded up to the nearest whole number.

4. Summary of findings

- The majority of respondents (79%) currently had or had had unused medicines in their homes for the person that they care for.
- 35% of the respondents said that this was because the medicine was changed by the doctor. 23% of the respondents said that the medicines caused unwanted effects for the person that they cared for.
- The majority of respondents (76%) said that they usually take the unused medicines of the person that they care for back to the pharmacy.
- 87% of respondents said that they are aware that pharmacies will take unused medicines and dispose of them.
- 74% of respondents said that there is nothing that would make it easier for them to take their unused medicines back to the pharmacy, as they already do it. From the 26% of respondents who answered that something could make it easier for them, 13% said that a labelled bag given to them at the time of collection would make it easier for them.

5. Survey responses

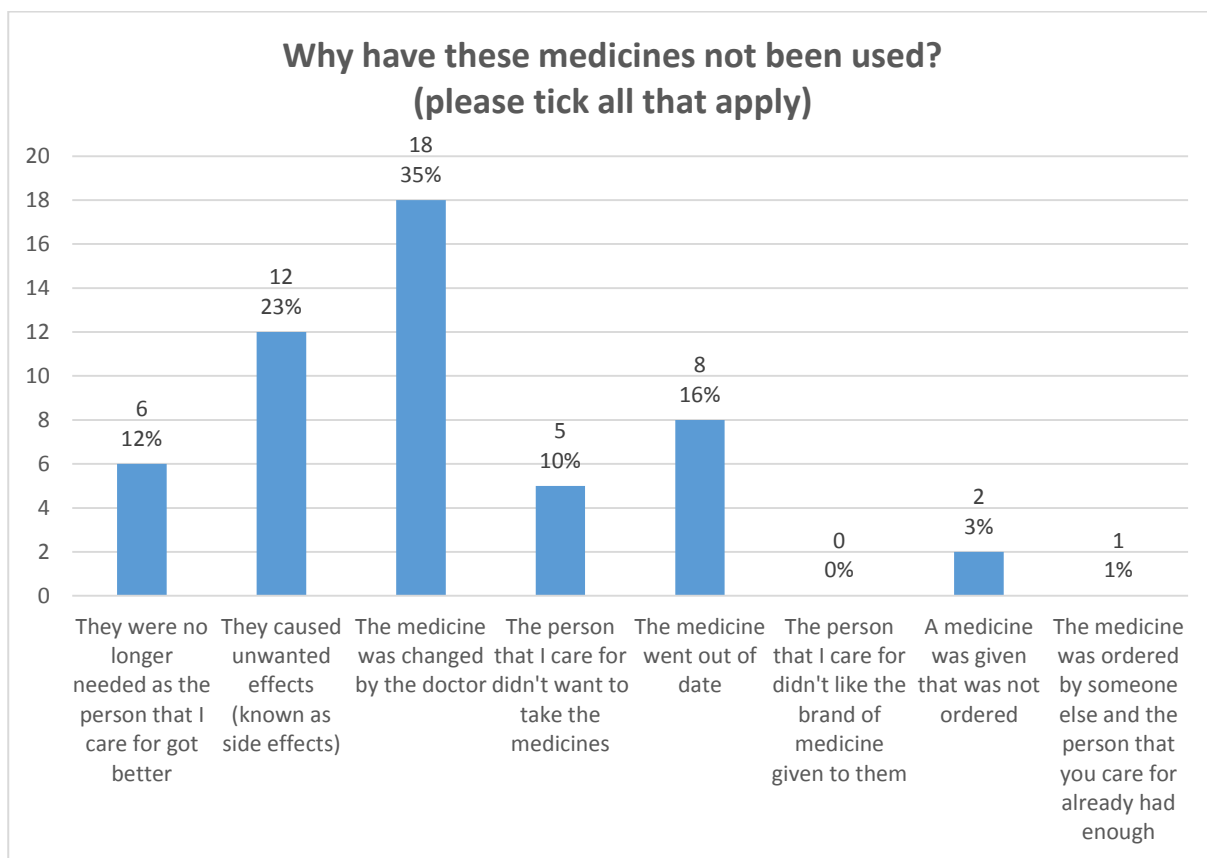
Has the person that you care for ever had or do they have any unused medicines at home?



One respondent didn't answer the question, so they have been omitted from the data.

30 (79%) of the 38 respondents who answered the question said that the person they care for has or has had unused medicines at home. 8 (21%) of the respondents said that the person they care for hadn't had or didn't have unused meds at home

Why have these medicines not been used (please tick all that apply)?

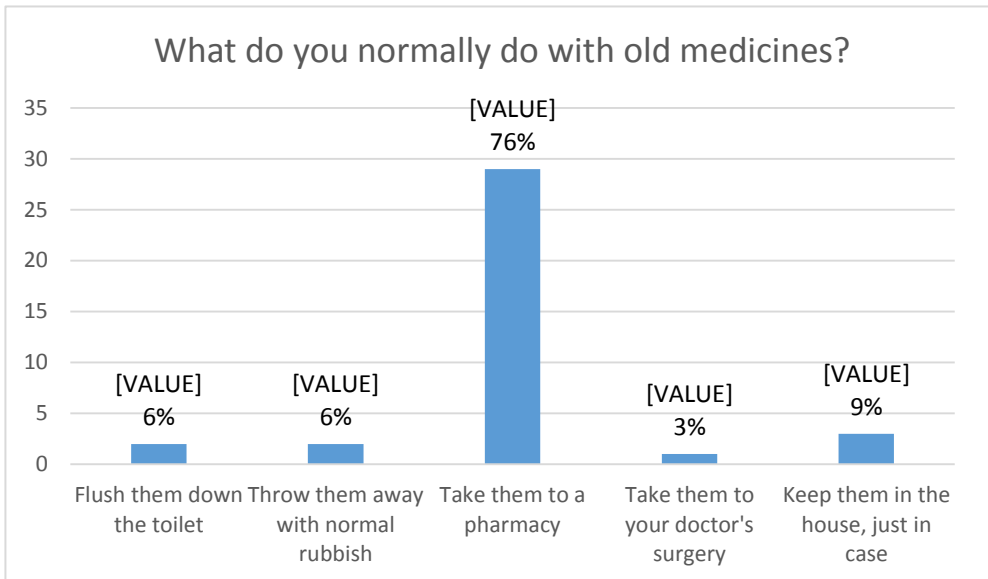


In total 33 respondents out of 39 answered the question about why the medicines had not been used. The most common answer from 18 (35%) respondents was that the medication was changed by the doctor. 12 (23%) respondents said that the medication caused side effects for the person that they care for. 8 (16%) respondents said that the medicine went out of date. 6 (12%) respondents said that the medicines were no longer needed as the person that they care for got better. 5 (10%) respondents said that the person that they care for didn't want to take the medicine. 2 (3%) respondents said that the medicine given wasn't ordered. 1 (1%) respondent said that the medicine was ordered by someone else and the person that they care for already had enough. None of the respondents said that the person that they care for didn't like the medicine that was given to them.

4 respondents left further comments in response to the above question. 1 respondent said that the person they cared for passed away, they took the unused medicines to the pharmacy. 1 respondent said that his wife has had bed sores in the past. Unused plasters, catheters and urine bags have been left behind to be thrown away, rather than taken back to give to other patients. 1 respondent said as soon as he left the pharmacy he realised that the wrong strength of medication had been given to him. He returned it immediately only to be told that it couldn't be prescribed to someone else, so he sent it away to a charity which gathers unused medicines to be sent abroad. 1 respondent said that a medication had been prescribed in case of emergency, this was never used and was returned to the pharmacy.

Unused medicine report carers

What do you normally do with old medicines?

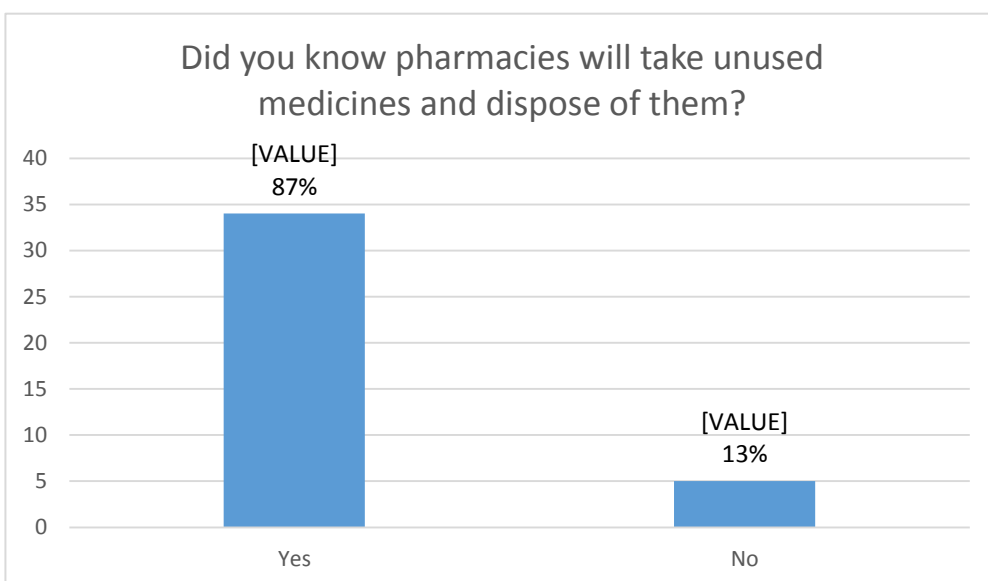


2 respondents didn't answer the question, so they have been omitted from the chart.

29 out of 37 (76%) respondents said that they take the old medicines back to a pharmacy. 3 (9%) respondents said that they keep them in the house, just in case. 2 (6%) respondents said that they throw them away with their normal rubbish. 2 (6%) respondents said that they flush them down the toilet. 1 (3%) respondent said that they take them to their doctor's surgery.

2 respondents left further comments saying that their pharmacies won't take unused medicines, one of them was named as The Croft in Horsforth.

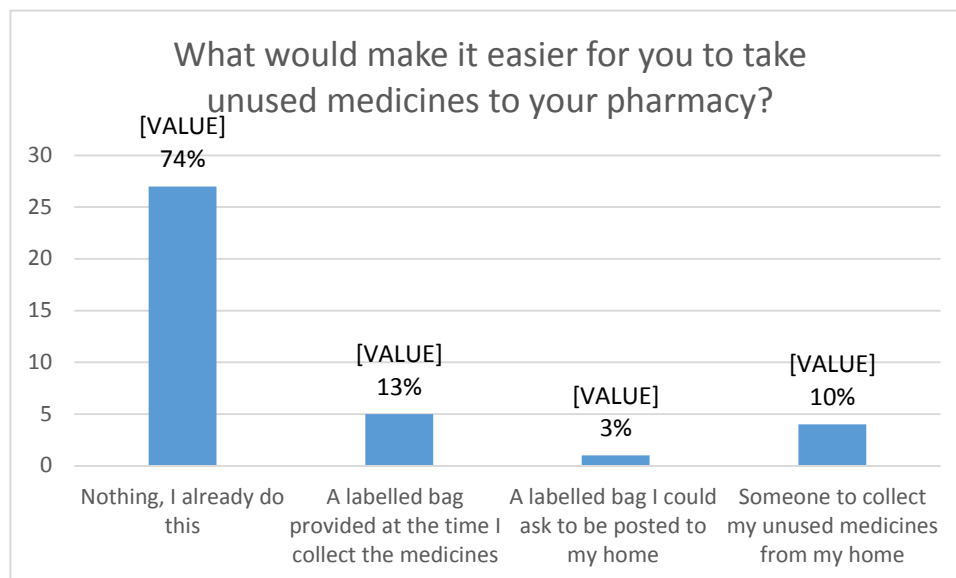
Did you know pharmacies will take unused medicines and dispose of them?



Unused medicine report carers

The majority of respondents (34, 87%) said that they were aware that pharmacies will dispose of unused medicines and dispose of them, 4 (13%) said that they weren't aware of this.

What would make it easier for you to take unused medicines to your pharmacy?



2 respondents didn't answer the question, they were omitted from the survey.

27 (74%) respondents said that they already take unused medicines back to the pharmacy. 5 (13%) respondents said that a labelled bag provided at the time of collection would make it easier for them to return unused medicines to the pharmacy. 4 (10%) said someone to collect the unused medicines from their home would make returning unused medicines easier for them. 1 (3%) respondent said that a bag posted to their home would make returning unused medicines easier for them.

6. Conclusion

The majority of respondents (79%) said that they currently have or had had unused medicines for the person that they care for at home. The most common reason that respondents gave for this was that the doctor changed the medication of the person that they care for (35%). After this the most common reason that respondents gave was that the medication gave the person that they care for unwanted effects (23%). 76% of the respondents said that they take their unused medicines to a pharmacy. 74% of respondents said that they are aware that pharmacies take unused medicines back, so only 2% of respondents who are aware of this aren't taking their unused medicines to a pharmacy. As so many respondents already take their unused medicines back to the pharmacy, most of them responded that nothing could make it easier for them as they already do it. The most common answer that respondents did give, was being given a labelled bag when they are collecting their medicines to return any unused ones in.

Unused medicine report carers

The results from both reports are very similar. The main difference between the responses from carers and respondents who were answering for themselves was the reason why medication was unused and at home. The most common reason from carers was that the doctor changed the medication of the person that they care for. The most common reason for respondents answering for themselves was that the medication was no longer needed as they got better.

Unused medicine report carers

Appendix 1

Unwanted Medicines

Leeds North Clinical Commissioning Group (LNCCG) are responsible for planning and making sure local healthcare services in North Leeds meet local people's needs. As part of this ongoing work we would like to find out why people have unwanted or unused medication and what we can do to help prevent it or to dispose of it. Please note that this particular survey is aimed at either carers or those who collect medicines for someone else.

It is important for us to understand why unused medication is not returned because:

- wasted medicines cost the NHS a lot of money which could be spent on other healthcare needs;
- having lots of unused medicine at home can be dangerous if people who are not prescribed the medication take it;
- stopping taking medicines can have a bad effect on your health and wellbeing; and
- it is not safe to take out of date medicine

To help us learn more, we have put together a short questionnaire and would appreciate your help by completing it. The questionnaire should only take a few minutes and most answers just require you to tick a box. It is anonymous.

What will happen to my views?

The information will help us understand why unwanted medicines are stockpiled in homes and how we can support patient's to dispose of unwanted medicines safely.

1)	Has the person that you care for ever had or do they have any unused medicines at home? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Unused medicine report carers

2)	<p>Why have these medicines not been used (Please tick as many that apply)?</p> <p>These were no longer needed as the person that I care for got better <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>They caused unwanted effects (known as side effects) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The medicine was changed by the doctor <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The person that I care for didn't want to take the medicines <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The medicine went out of date <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The person that I care for didn't like the brand of medicine given to them <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A medicine was given that was not ordered <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The medicine was ordered by someone else and you already had enough <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other reason (please write below)</p>
3)	<p>What do you normally do with old medicines?</p> <p>Flush them down the toilet <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Throw them away with normal rubbish <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Take them to a pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Take them to your doctor's surgery <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Keep them in the house, just in case <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other methods (please write below) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
4)	<p>Did you know that pharmacies will take unused medicines and dispose of them for you?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Unused medicine report carers

5)	<p>What would make it easier for you to take unused medicines to a pharmacy?</p> <p>Nothing, I already do this <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A labelled bag provided at the time I collect my medicines <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A labelled bag I could ask to be posted to my home <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Someone to collect my unused medicines from my home <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other suggestions (please write below) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Equality Monitoring Form

So that we provide the best services for all of our communities, and to ensure that we do not knowingly discriminate against any section of our community, it is important for us to gather the following information. No personal information will be released when reporting statistical data and data will be protected and stored securely in line with data protection rules.

Please return the form to:

What is the first part of your postcode? e.g. LS28, LS13

Please enter here:	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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What sex are you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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Transgender - is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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Pregnancy and Maternity

<input type="checkbox"/> I am pregnant	<input type="checkbox"/> I have given birth within the last 26 weeks
<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

What is your age?

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 - 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 – 35
<input type="checkbox"/> 36 - 45	<input type="checkbox"/> 46 – 55	<input type="checkbox"/> 56 – 65
<input type="checkbox"/> 66 – 75	<input type="checkbox"/> 76 - 85	<input type="checkbox"/> 86 +
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		

What is your sexual orientation?

<input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual (both sexes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/straight (opposite sex)
<input type="checkbox"/> Gay man (same sex)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian/gay woman (same sex)
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	

Do you consider yourself to belong to any religion?

<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhism	<input type="checkbox"/> Christianity	<input type="checkbox"/> Hinduism
<input type="checkbox"/> Islam	<input type="checkbox"/> Judaism	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikhism
<input type="checkbox"/> No religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	
Other (please state)		

What is your ethnic background?

Asian, or Asian British	Black, or Black British	Mixed/ multiple Ethnic groups	White	Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> African	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian & White	<input type="checkbox"/> British	<input type="checkbox"/> Arab

Unused medicine report carers

<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> Black African & White	<input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean & White	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If any other ethnic background, please state here:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say				

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Please tick all that apply

Under the Equality Act 2010 a disability is defined as ‘a physical, sensory or mental impairment which has, or had a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’.

<input type="checkbox"/> Long-standing illness or health condition e.g. cancer, diabetes, HIV, etc.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning disability/difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical or mobility Visual
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		

Do you look after, or give any help or support to a family member, friend or neighbour because of long term physical disability, mental ill-health or problems related to old age?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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What is your relationship status?

<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Live with partner	<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Please specify:		

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

We would like to have all your views by 31 January 2014

Please return this form to:

Freepost RTEH-ZTXY-HALJ

Leeds North Clinical Commissioning Group

Leafield House

107-109 King Lane

Leeds

LS17 5BP

Unused medicine report carers

Appendix 2

Gender	Total
Female	26
Male	7
Prefer not to say	3
Unanswered	3
Grand Total	39

Religion or belief	Total
Christianity	21
Judaism	1
No religion	8
Prefer not to say	4
Unanswered	5
Grand Total	39

Ethnic Background	Total
British	30
Irish	1
Prefer not to say	4
Unanswered	4
Grand Total	39

Sexuality	Total
Heterosexual	24
Bisexual	1
Gay man	0
Lesbian/gay woman	0
Prefer not to say	6
Unanswered	8
Grand Total	39

Relationship Status	Total
Marriage/civil partnership	19
Single	6
Live with Partner	5
Widowed	2
Prefer not to say	3
Not working	4
Grand Total	39

Equality

Age group	Total
Under 16	0
16-25	0
26-35	1
36-45	1
46-55	4
56-65	11
66-75	10
76-85	8
86+	0
Prefer not to say	1
Not answered	3
Grand Total	39

Pregnancy/Maternity	Total
N/A	32
Given birth in last 26 weeks	1
I am pregnant	0
Prefer not to say	2
Unanswered	4
Grand Total	39

Transgender	Total
No	25
Yes	1
Prefer not to say	2
Unanswered	11
Grand Total	39

Clinical Commissioning Group	Total
South and East	16
West	9
North	5
Prefer not to say	6
Not answered	3
Grand Total	39

Unused medicine report carers

Type of disability	Total
Hearing	5
Physical/mobility	4
Long standing illness or health condition	4
Mental health condition	1
Learning disability	0
Visual	0
Prefer not to say	5
Not answered	20
Grand Total	39