

## **SIPA2: Improving the Pharmaceutical Care of Older People with Sensory Impairment**

Professor Annetta Smith and Dr Leah Macaden are co investigators on this interdisciplinary project along with academic colleagues from the University of Strathclyde funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust.

Many older people use multiple medicines and the more medicines a person uses, the greater the likelihood of them having a medicine-related problem. In addition, many older people develop sight and/or hearing loss (hereafter referred to as sensory impairment) due to their age and struggle to identify individual medicines because they are unable to read labels and/or information sheets, or they use their medicines incorrectly because they have been unable to hear information provided about their medicines by community pharmacy personnel. The challenges of older age, multiple medicines and sensory loss are further compounded for many individuals because they live alone with no support. This combination of circumstances means that older people are at increased risk of inappropriate medicine use which could result in failing to derive full benefit from their medicines e.g. missed doses, and/or, suffering harm from their medicines e.g. unintentional overdose. There has been minimal research undertaken on these challenges and the development of solutions to address them.

This project, called SIPA2, builds upon findings from an earlier CSO funded project with Professor Smith and Dr Macaden as co - investigators which explored the challenges older people experience with their medicines, and pharmacy personnel's training on the pharmaceutical care needs of older people with sight and/or hearing loss.

SIPA 2 comprises of three components:

- 1. Product Review:** A review of existing technology e.g. devices, which are or could be used by older people with sight and/or hearing loss, to promote the safe and effective use of medicines. This review will include searching electronic databases for relevant products and conducting surveys of occupational therapists and pharmacists to identify what they currently use to help older people with sight and/or hearing loss. It will also identify gaps in the market.
- 2. Service and Product Specification:** A group of individuals, including older people with sensory impairment, and representatives from relevant organisations, will use recognised methods (workshops and interviews) to work together to derive specifications of desirable characteristics for new products (what it looks like, how it functions) which older people with sensory impairment could use easily to assist their safe and effective use of medicines.
- 3. Development of Educational Materials for Health and Social Care Providers:** The results will be used to create educational materials for health and social care providers involved with medicines management of older people with sensory impairment.