OLDER PERSONS’ PERCEPTION OF PHARMACY SERVICES

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INTRODUCTION
Pharmacists have a key role in the care of geriatric patients to optimise chronic disease management, minimise polypharmacy and improve medication adherence.1

AIM
To assess the perception of older persons about received pharmacist services and care services.

Setting: Day hospital and medical outpatients, Karin Grech Hospital (KGH) in Malta.

METHOD
• A questionnaire developed and validated in a previous study2 available in English and Maltese, was administered as a semi-structured interview to patients ≥60 years after approval from the hospital Research Committee.

• The questionnaire collected information on living situation, number of medicines taken, co-morbidities, and perception of pharmacist-patient relationship and pharmacist services.

• Descriptive statistics were performed.

RESULTS
• 200 patients were interviewed; 64% (n=127) were ≥75 years old, 67% (n=133) female, 77% (n=154) had both primary and secondary level education, 23% (n=46) lived alone.

• The mean number of co-morbidities was 2 (range 0-8) and 62% (n=123) of the patients reported to have been hospitalised once or more than once in the past year.

• 65% (n=130) of the patients take ≥4 medicines daily and 69% (n=138) have been visiting the same community pharmacy to collect their free National Health Service-entitled medicines for ≥5 years.

• 84% (n=167) of the patients have received medicine-related advice from their pharmacist.

• 31% (n=61) of the patients had a medication use review (MUR) performed by a pharmacist and 76% (n=151) were in agreement with regular pharmacist-led MUR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Patient confidence, awareness and perception of pharmacist services (N=200)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel confident that you are taking your medications correctly?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you aware of the indications of your medications?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do you call your pharmacist when you have any queries?</td>
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<td>Are your queries clarified by the pharmacist?</td>
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CONCLUSION
Patients in this study sought pharmacist advice. Patients were in favour of pharmacist-led MUR which has the potential to individualise pharmaceutical provision to improve patient safety and quality of life in chronic disease management in older persons.

REFERENCES