

## House of Commons Health Select Committee inquiry into Patient Safety

### Response of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine

#### 1. What do you consider are the main risks to patients within your speciality area?

- a) The inappropriate use of medicines, whether by dose, indication or combination
- b) Not recognising side effects

#### 2. What are the principal causes of harm to patients within your speciality?

- a) The lack of knowledge and understanding of
  - Pharmacology
  - The Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPCs) of medicines, in particular their indications, warnings and contraindications
  - Interactions
  - Dosages
  - Use outside of licensed indications
  - Use in certain patient groups e.g. paediatrics, the elderly
- b) Inexperienced investigators, including principal investigators, in Phase 1 and 2 studies

#### 3. What actions should be taken to reduce harm within your speciality?

- a) Easy availability and access to SMPCs
- b) Increased pharmacology / therapeutics training at medical school
- c) Greater emphasis on good prescribing in early post-qualification years

#### 4. What would you like to see done to increase the safety of patients in the NHS as a whole?

Better training and updating on the appropriate use of individual medicines as per the responses above, but also class use, e.g. antibiotic prescribing.

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Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine

1 St Andrews Place

London

NW1 4LB

Tel: 02072240343

Email: [fpm@fpm.org.uk](mailto:fpm@fpm.org.uk)

[www.fpm.org.uk](http://www.fpm.org.uk)