

# PharMED

*Inter-disciplinary Pharmacy based research with a focus on  
Medication use*

**We will start this issue off with some fantastic news!**

**Our RESOLVE study has been published in Obesity Reviews!**

A huge thank you to the Project team: Maura MacPhee, Jo Howe, Hafsah Habib, Emilia Piwowarczyk, Geoff Wong, Amy Ahern, Gurkiran Birdi, Suzanne Higgs, Sheri Oduola, Alex Kenny, Annabel Walsh, Rachel Upthegrove, Katherine Allen, Max Carlish, Justine Lovell and Ian Maidment.

As a reminder, RESOLVE (REalist Synthesis Of non-pharmacological interVENTions for antipsychotic-induced weight gain (RESOLVE) in people living with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)) looks to understand how we can limit and manage weight gain associated with antipsychotics in people with severe mental illness. This is a two part project consisting of a review and an evaluation. The review involved us looking at secondary data i.e. into the literature to see what has already been found. The evaluation involved us collecting our own data via interviews with healthcare professionals (HCPs), service users (SUs) and carers to obtain their views on the topic (known as primary data).

Have a read by clicking here: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/obr.13962>

## Where are we at: Ola and the INTEGRATE project



Hello again! I'm Ola Amr, a realist researcher based at Aston Pharmacy School and the lead on the INTEGRATE project: a realist review exploring how independent prescribing (IP) works (or doesn't), for whom, and under what circumstances in Community Pharmacy. Though my background is in organisational health and well-being, this project has been a fascinating entry point into pharmacy research, and I've been pleasantly surprised by the many overlaps between the two fields.

Since my last newsletter feature, we've completed the scoping phase and are now well into the synthesis stage. We've analysed 96 articles to date, with a focus on commissioning as a key enabler (or barrier) to IP implementation. Our preliminary findings have surfaced seven interconnected themes. These include the importance of integrating IP into the existing Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework with clear eligibility criteria, role definitions, and accountability mechanisms. A strong emphasis has emerged on the need to collaboratively develop the scope of practice with general practice, primary care networks and multidisciplinary teams to ensure safe and effective patient care. Digital infrastructure also plays a critical role, systems that support secure communication, shared patient records, and clinical decision-making are essential for continuity and quality. Alongside this, robust clinical governance, ongoing supervision, and quality assurance frameworks are vital. Supporting workforce development through structured mentorship and CPD opportunities remains a consistent theme. Public awareness also surfaced as a key issue, many patients remain unaware of IP services, highlighting a need for greater engagement. Finally, we identified a lack of evidence in areas like cost-effectiveness and real-world feasibility, pointing to future research priorities.

We'll soon move into theory refinement and testing, continuing to engage with practitioners, educators, and service users. I'm also thrilled to share that the INTEGRATE project will be presented at the SAPC Conference in Cardiff, the FIP World Congress in Copenhagen, and the International Realist Conference in Atlanta.

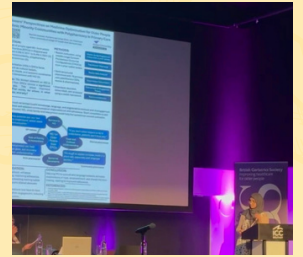
If you're curious about the project or want to join our stakeholder meetings, feel free to get in touch: [o.abdelfatah@aston.ac.uk](mailto:o.abdelfatah@aston.ac.uk). I'd love to connect!

## PhD updates from Pharmacists Nesrein and Ruman

Hi, I'm Nesrein a Community Pharmacist and PhD candidate at Aston University. My work builds on the NIHR-funded MEMORABLE study, which explores medicine optimisation for older people from ethnic minority communities with polypharmacy in primary care.

It's been an exciting few months for my PhD project, I've now completed data collection and am currently analysing the findings using realist approaches. Realist research aims to understand what works, for whom, in what contexts, and why, it's especially useful for exploring complex issues like medicines use in real-life settings. The interviews with older people, informal carers, and primary care practitioners have provided rich insights into how culture, trust, communication, and previous healthcare experiences shape medicines optimisation.

A recent highlight was presenting my early findings at the British Geriatrics Society Conference, where I was truly honoured to have my abstract selected as one of the Top 10 Best Abstracts for the Presidential Round, and even more thrilled to be awarded the Fergus Anderson Prize for Best Scientific Poster.



Nesrein presenting at the British Geriatrics Society conference

Ruman's PhD research investigates the potential role of community pharmacies in preventing cardiovascular disease (CVD) among minority ethnic groups.

Ruman presenting at the Society for Academic Primary Care conference



In the first year, a systematic review of existing literature was conducted, identifying five key themes that shape pharmacy-based CVD prevention in these communities: trust, systemic barriers, culturally tailored language, cultural and religious influences, and the role of family and social networks. Cultural competence emerged as a foundation for building trust between healthcare professionals and patients, while systemic constraints—such as limited time and resources—were found to impede the delivery of tailored care. Although international perspectives offered valuable insights, UK-specific evidence remains scarce, underscoring the need for further qualitative exploration. Emerging findings were disseminated at two academic events: a presentation at Sikhs in Academia (University of Warwick) and a poster at the Society for Academic Primary Care (SAPC) conference in Cardiff. Both platforms facilitated meaningful engagement and constructive feedback from peers and experts.

The next phase of the research involves conducting in-depth qualitative interviews with minority ethnic patients, informal family carers, and healthcare professionals. With ethics approval now secured, the study is advancing towards participant recruitment. Insights from these interviews will be synthesised to develop actionable, evidence-based recommendations for pharmacy practice and patient care.

### The PharMED team



**PROFESSOR IAN MAIDMENT**  
**Chief Investigator**

Academic Clinical Pharmacist leading on the RESOLVE project



**DR JO HOWE**  
**Research Associate**

Chartered Psychologist with a background in healthcare research and realist methods currently working on the RESOLVE project



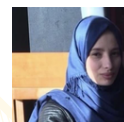
**HAFSAH HABIB**  
**Research Assistant**

Pharmacist working in research and academia, currently working on the RESOLVE project



**DR GURKIRAN BIRDI**  
**RESOLVE 2 Research Associate**

Healthcare researcher with a background in Health Psychology



**NESREIN HAMED**  
**PhD Student**

Pharmacist undertaking a PhD involving exploring medicines optimisation in ethnic minority elders



**RUMANVEER DULEY**  
**PhD Student**

Pharmacist undertaking a PhD exploring the potential role of community pharmacy in the prevention of cardiovascular disease in minority ethnic groups



**DR OLA AMR**  
**Research Associate**

Realist researcher working on the INTEGRATE project focusing on Independent Prescribing in Community Pharmacy

**Keep your eyes peeled for the next issue for updates on our work. For regular updates follow us on twitter at @PharMED\_**

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