

Pharmacy-based management for depression in adults



1. Research Context

Pharmacies might be able to support people with their depression medicines.

Some people with depression find it difficult to take their depression medicines (often called 'antidepressants') as prescribed by their doctor. This can mean that the medicines do not work properly and people might not get better or might even get worse.

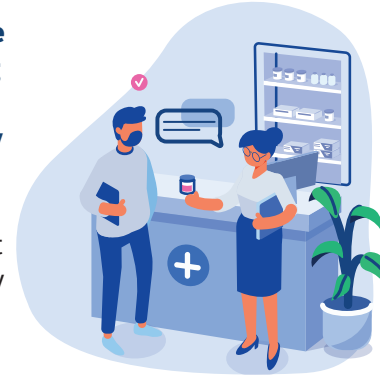
It could be that pharmacists and their teams can help people with their depression treatment in ways that their family doctor (GP) cannot.

Pharmacies are based within the community, easier to get to and people may feel more comfortable telling a pharmacist about their mood.

2. Why is this important?

Depression is a common problem worldwide and often has a serious impact on people's social lives and their ability to look after themselves and go to work.

Antidepressants are effective in treating depression but it is important that they are taken as prescribed by the doctor. People might not take them as they should because they are worried about side effects or becoming addicted.



3. What does the evidence tell us?

In this Systematic Review, we summarised high quality studies that **compared a group of depressed adults who received additional help with their depression medicines from their pharmacy, with a group of depressed adults who received their treatment as usual.**

We found 12 studies with over 2000 people taking part. They compared pharmacy-based support with treatment as usual, like basic information about their medicines or signposting to other services.

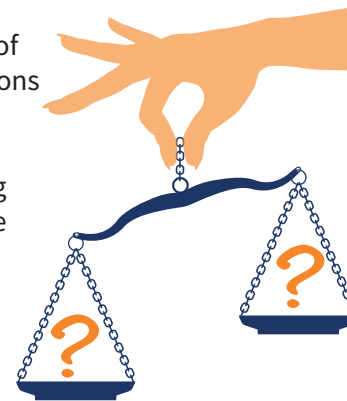
We found that additional support given by the pharmacy was no better at reducing people's depression than their treatment as usual. The studies did show that people who received support from their pharmacy were more likely to take their antidepressants as prescribed.

4. Can we trust the evidence?

The quality of the evidence was varied which means we have to be cautious when drawing conclusions from our findings.

The studies we included used lots of different interventions and comparison treatments which made it challenging for us to summarise their results.

We did not find any completed studies from the UK.



5. How does the research help?

Our systematic review shows some **clear gaps in the evidence** - for example, about whether pharmacist-based support for depression could save money and free up GPs' time.

Pharmacy-based management might be a promising alternative to usual depression care but there is not enough evidence to draw definitive conclusions at this time.



Read the full review on the Cochrane Library www.cochranelibrary.com | Brown JVE, Walton N, Meader N, Todd A, Webster LAD, Steele R, Sampson SJ, Churchill R, McMillan D, Gilbody S, Ekers D. Pharmacy-based management for depression in adults. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2019, Issue 12. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD013299.pub2. Creative work by Nifty Fox Creative 2020.

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