

# MEDICATION WASTE

Medication plays a crucial role in mental health care. However, large amounts of medication are wasted.

**50%** Non-adherence rates among certain patient groups

Medication comprises the biggest proportion of mental health's carbon footprint. Reducing medical waste can save money, carbon and improve care.

## How can medication waste be reduced?

**Reducing prescribing costs:** certain drugs have low cost alternatives that can often replace more expensive, intensive medication prescription. The Better Care Better Value indicator can be used to prescribe low cost statins



**Screening drugs to avoid drugs with adverse effects.** Screening tools can reduce use of drugs with adverse effects. Tools, such as the STOPP tool allows doctors to easily identify potential adverse effects.

**Evidence based prescribing:** checking the evidenced effective dose for drugs can be crucial in ensuring over-prescribing does not occur.



**Phone calling patients** 2 weeks after medication is prescribed to ensure or remind the patient to adhere to the recommended dose.

## Can it be done?

**University of Manchester Hospital** called patients 2 weeks after prescribing medication. This reduced non-adherence rates from 16% to 9%, and reduced the number of GP visits and A&E appointments. Estimated savings of £90 and 212kgCO<sub>2</sub>e per patient in 2 months.

**Rochdale Primary Care Trust:** used the Better Care, Better Value indicator, alongside training pharmacy technicians, GPs, and writing letters to patients. Prescribing low cost statins increased from 19% to 45% with care levels maintained, but efficiency savings made.

At the **Imperial College Health Trust**, 52% of the 1600 patients over 70 using the STOPP tool led to a reduction, or change of medication

A **study on the long-acting drug** flupentixol decanoate found prescribing practices were often at a higher dosage than is evidenced to be effective. Estimated savings for England are £300,000 and 170,000 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Find out more: