



Academic excellence for  
business and the professions

# 'tic tac' medicines

Karen Rawlings-Anderson and Janet Hunter

Health Has Got Talent 2018

# Background

- Only 16% of patients who are prescribed new medication will take it as prescribed
- Approximately 30% of people are non-adherent after 10 days.
- Of these 55% do not realise they are taking medicines incorrectly, the remaining 45% make the decision not to take them as prescribed.

# Medicines and nursing

- Medicines are the most common therapeutic intervention in healthcare
- Nurses are well placed to have conversations regarding prescribed medication, but find it difficult to understand the factors that impact upon adherence

# **‘tic tac’ medicines simulation**

Week long exercise designed  
to simulate an authentic  
experience of following a  
medicines regime  
PG Dip Adult Nursing



# Simulation

Each student was asked to:

- Collect a prescription from the Myddelton St GP
- Collect prescribed medicines from Myddelton HC Pharmacy during opening times
- Take medicines as prescribed for 5 days
- Reflect upon their experiences



# Instructions



- 3 different medicines
  - different doses
  - different frequencies
  - different instructions

# Who did not take part?

25% did not collect the medication

- forgot
- pharmacy was closed
- did not give friend written permission
- lost prescription / did not collect medication
- already taking medication



# Flavour of Reflections

- Too much to remember- needed reminders from friends/partners
- Did not know why they were taking them
- Did not like taking them/ hard to swallow
- Did not like others knowing they were taking tablets
- Did not like people asking why they were taking tablets
- Did not eat 3 times a day
- Ignored the no alcohol warning or omitted them so they could drink
- Forgot to take them/ did not complete course
- Lost them
- Friends took them



## Main learning points:

- Greater appreciation that non-adherence can be non-intentional or intentional
- Identification of what can hinder obtaining medicines
- Recognised implications of polypharmacy and co-morbidities
- Emotional impact
- Need for patient education and clear instructions
- Listening to patients and involving them in the prescribing process

# Conclusions

- Students learning was transformed through this experiential learning approach
- Students feedback reflected depth of learning
- Pilot worked well and will now roll out to other cohorts
- Professional staff enjoyed supporting this initiative

City, University of London  
Northampton Square  
London  
EC1V 0HB  
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)20 7040 5060  
E: [department@city.ac.uk](mailto:department@city.ac.uk)  
[www.city.ac.uk/department](http://www.city.ac.uk/department)

