



## The Patient Medicine Bag (PMB)

### The Background

Mary Green the innovator behind the Patient Medicine Bag was seconded into Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust (formerly Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust) in June 2004 to manage the Hospital Medicines Management Collaborative (HMMC) programme of work where the trust had recently embarked on the programme.

The HMMC programme was directly funded by the DH using the National Prescribing Centre and the overriding aim of the programme is and remains *“to promote and support high quality cost-effective prescribing and medicines management across the NHS, to help improve patient care and service delivery”*

The team introduced change cycles around standardisation of pre-packs, medication changes stickers introduced, audits of drug charts, audits of TTOs Vs Drug Charts, counseling PDSAs, review of recorded medication errors, introduction of heparin charts with protocols to support, process mapping exercises, analysis of available information, time and motion study in pharmacies.

### The Issues

The team's main objectives were to focus on the following:

- Reduce delays in discharges due to TTO (To Take Out prescriptions)
- Increase the number of complete and recorded drug histories
- Increase communication of medication changes to GPs on discharge
- Increase communication of medication changes to patients on discharge
- Reduce drug related errors
- Reduce turnaround time of work through the dispensary

### The Solution - The Patient Medicine Bag

As a result of the programme, Mary decided that if there was one thing the team could do during the programme, it would be to introduce consistency to the way in which patient's own medicines presented with the patient at the hospital.

After a reconnaissance of the hospital and viewing the ways and means through which patient's own drugs (PODS) presented at hospital, either as an emergency or electively, the PMB was born.

The innovation is a simple yet durable, sealable bag produced specifically for patients to keep all their medications – both prescribed and 'over the counter'. The bag is also suitable for elective and emergency admissions.

Prior to full implementation, the PMB went through several research, trials and development stages. The final version has been approved by the Plain English Forum and approved by the Caldicott Guardian. The bag comes with full guidance notes for healthcare professionals and patients. Message Cards were also designed for use by ambulance teams. Both notes and cards have been translated into 10 languages including Urdu and Chinese.

NHS Innovations East Midlands assisted Mary with the copyright and IP protection relating to the innovation. The hub also sponsored the cost of promotion as well as the cost of the second version.

### The Benefits

The PMB is the winner of several prestigious awards and it has since been successfully implemented in over 40 trusts in England and Wales. It is a very good example of how a very simple idea can make such a significant difference in terms of cost saving as well as proving to bring considerable improvements to staff and patients. More importantly, the PMB solved all of the aforementioned issues.

**For further information follow this link:**

[www.medicine-bag.co.uk](http://www.medicine-bag.co.uk)