

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** The community is often naive in relation to potential harm of medications. The educative role of the pharmacist is often underutilized. Educating children and carers is a strategy that may raise awareness of pharmacists' roles, and reduce risks and social stigmas associated with medicines. Standardised education packages should be developed to minimise misadventure and promote the pharmacist role.

**Aim:** This initial phase of research aims to gauge the needs and types of medication education that should be delivered for children aged 0 -14 years.

**Methods:** The methods are divided into three sections. Part 1 involves the pilot of a survey instrument (The Children's Medicine Use Questionnaire), utilised in Finland and translated into English. This survey will be completed by parents to collect data on common ailments and parents attitudes to medications. Part 2 involves focus groups with parents to gather information on what the Australian audience feel are pertinent issues regarding medicating their children. The pilot survey and the qualitative focus groups will enable this questionnaire to be modified and validated for an Australian audience. Part 3 will involve the survey being sent to a large cohort of parents to capture representative data of children's needs. Based on the information gained, strategic education material can be developed matched to the needs of this cohort of children.

**Progress:** The survey instrument has been translated into English, ethics approval has been obtained and this instrument is currently undergoing pilot testing with 45 returned surveys to date. Focus groups will be conducted in September.

**Conclusion:** Research-led development of educational packages for children, may improve medication safety in the long term, and appropriate tools should be developed for the Australian Community. If these methods are deemed appropriate, this tool should be used in other countries so future educational resources for this cohort can be developed in collaboration.