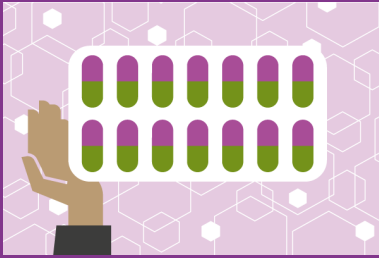


First Contact Practitioner Physio Opioid Awareness Resource



Project Dates

Project Start 01/06/2022

Project End Ongoing

Programmes

- > Community/Out of Hospital
- > Medicines Optimisation
- > Spread and Adoption

The issue of overprescribing opioids for non-cancer pain in the North East and North Cumbria requires a multidisciplinary approach. A video tool, watched 400 times to date, improved the confidence of Physiotherapy FCPs in discussing opioids, with the webpage housing the video and related resources visited 200 times.

The video tool demonstrated an improvement in the confidence of Physiotherapy FCPs to have conversations about opioids and encourage signposting patients to personalised care options. The high attendance at the launch webinar (361 registered) and survey responses indicated a strong interest from the FCP physio's to support opioid deprescribing with education and guidance. There is potential to adapt this tool for a wider audience, including other healthcare professionals and health champions. Survey results showed increased confidence among FCPs post-video, with many more likely to discuss opioids with patients.

Figure 1. Video Evaluation Results

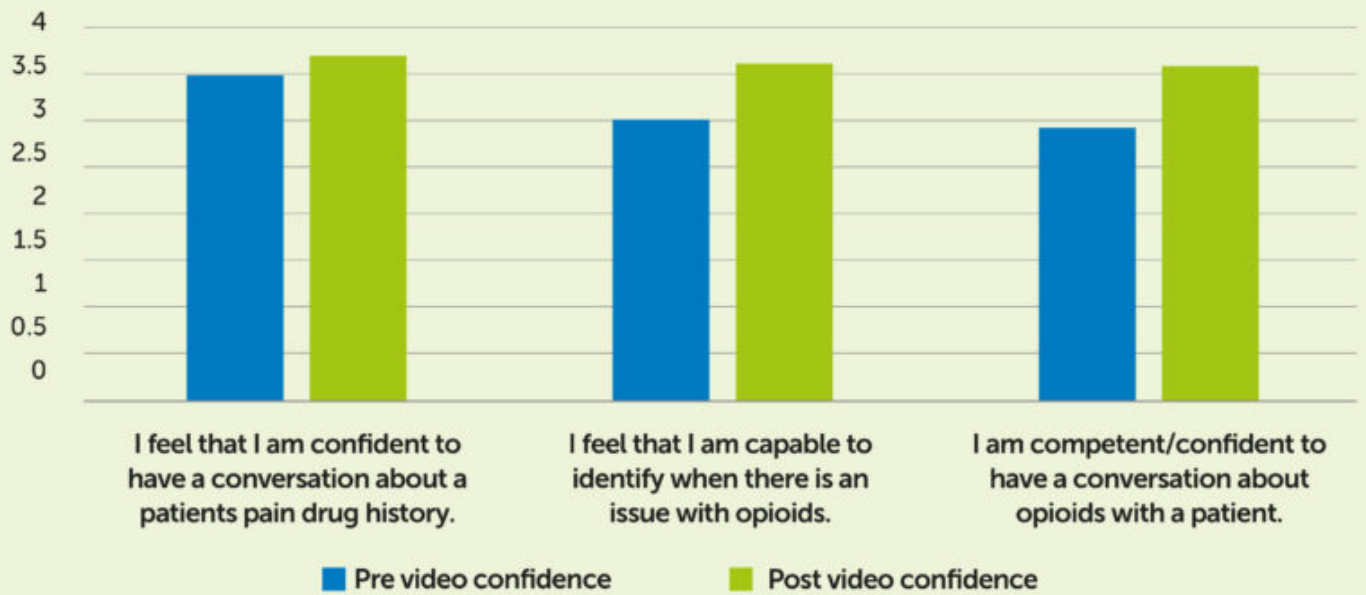
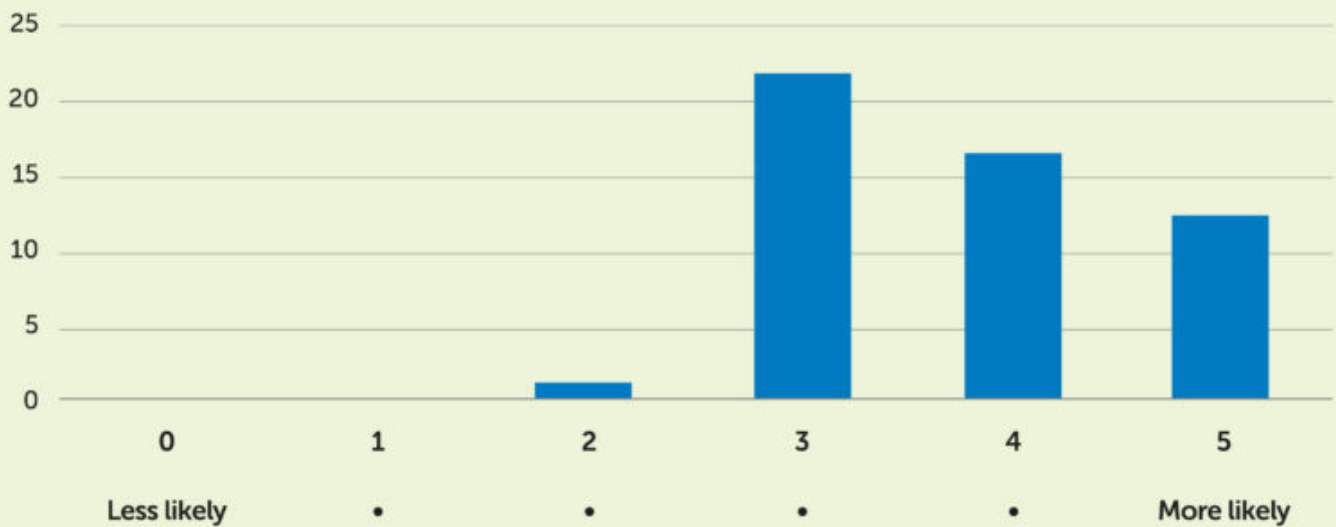
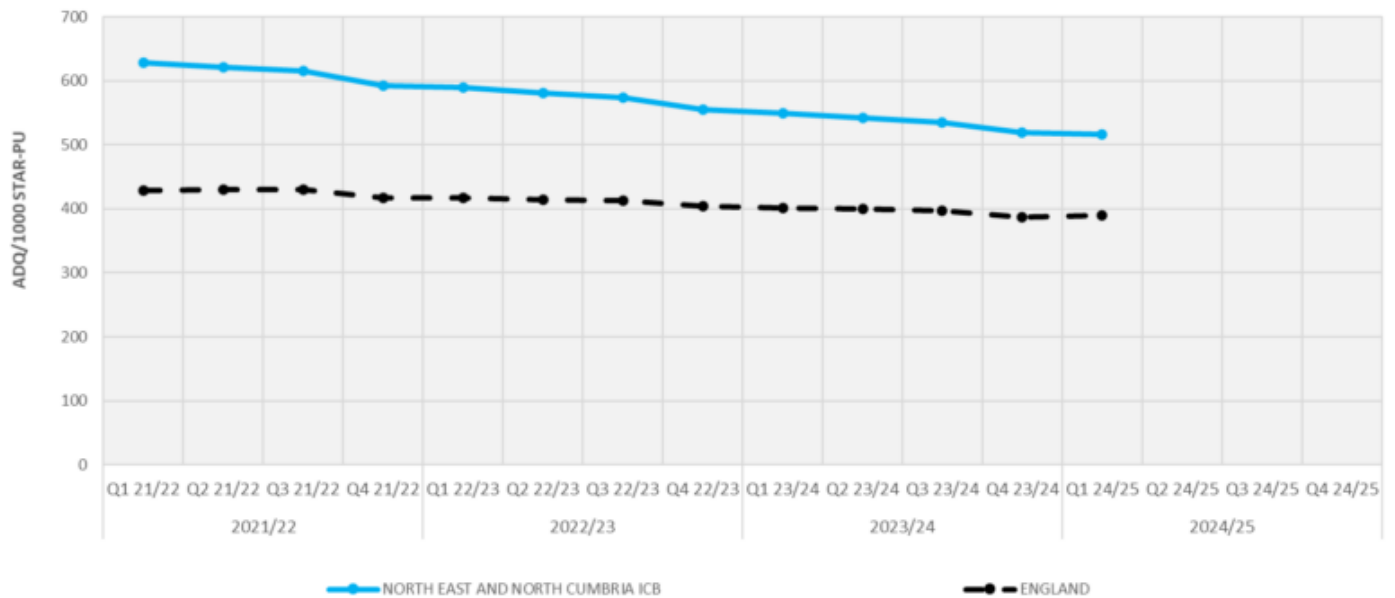


Figure 2. Likelihood of having a conversation about opioids with a patient following the video.



Opioids (Including Non Opioid Combination Products) (ADQ/1000 STAR-PU)



Opioids (Including Non Opioid Combination Products) (ADQ/1000 STAR-PU)

SICBL	2021/22				2022/23				2023/24				2024/25				Q1 24/25 vs Q1 23/24
	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23	Q1 23/24	Q2 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q4 23/24	Q1 24/25	Q2 24/25	Q3 24/25	Q4 24/25	
COUNTY DURHAM SICBL	710.8	704.7	693.5	664.6	664.8	658.6	645.4	623.2	612.5	607.9	600.1	586.7	585.4				-4.4%
NEWCASTLE GATESHEAD SICBL	611.0	604.9	598.6	578.4	569.4	569.9	554.5	522.7	510.1	497.9	484.9	470.3	459.9				-9.8%
NORTH CUMBRIA SICBL	474.6	464.9	466.8	452.3	453.0	444.5	442.1	433.0	427.1	424.9	420.6	398.8	401.8				-5.9%
NORTH TYNESIDE SICBL	561.0	555.5	552.8	527.2	518.1	506.5	492.2	487.6	477.3	470.8	462.6	447.9	444.5				-6.9%
NORTHUMBERLAND SICBL	506.3	495.9	482.3	469.8	463.4	455.1	451.3	429.1	426.7	418.7	413.1	396.7	395.3				-7.3%
SOUTH TYNESIDE SICBL	616.6	630.2	621.2	600.3	606.5	587.4	581.1	549.0	557.5	535.4	521.2	500.0	486.5				-12.7%
SUNDERLAND SICBL	627.3	622.8	623.2	597.7	587.6	577.6	568.3	553.6	551.9	540.7	543.7	516.8	509.2				-7.7%
TEES VALLEY SICBL	725.1	713.2	712.3	687.5	683.6	676.6	676.1	664.1	658.0	654.3	644.0	640.1	636.8				-3.2%
NORTH EAST AND NORTH CUMBRIA ICB	627.5	620.4	615.1	592.8	588.8	581.4	573.8	555.3	548.9	541.8	534.2	519.5	516.2				-6.0%
ENGLAND	429.1	429.3	429.6	417.1	417.4	414.3	412.8	404.6	401.0	399.8	397.1	387.1	389.8				-2.8%

Contact Details

- Victoria Strassheim - Programme Manager
- HI NENC
- victoria.strassheim@healthinnovationnenc.org.uk

“ All the speakers were brilliant and had immense knowledge of their field. It was great to get the perspective and experience from a patient who has lived through it all.

— A DELEGATE

Challenge/Problem Identified

The North East and North Cumbria (NENC) are outliers in prescribing opioids for non-cancer pain (see graph below re NENC vs England), largely due to wider health determinants affecting the population. Recognising the harms of long-term opioid use, efforts are underway to reduce prescribing rates. Primary Care Networks and Additional Role Re-imburement Schemes (ARRS) were established to address health inequalities by creating bespoke multidisciplinary teams, including First Contact Practitioners (FCPs).

Overview of innovation

In order to address the challenge highlighted above, an educational video was developed by HI NENC. The 5 minute video included the issues with opioid overprescribing, the need for a whole system approach and signposting to resources. The video aimed to increase the confidence for FCPs to have conversations with patients about opioid use.

Action taken

In 2022, Health Innovation North East North Cumbria (HI NENC) evaluated the readiness of FCPs, particularly physiotherapists, to support opioid deprescribing. In order to boost their confidence in discussing opioids with patients a video was commissioned, informed by an expert panel of FCP leads and a Medicines Optimisation Pharmacist.

The video was launched via a webinar, attended by FCPs from the region. Surveys conducted before and after the video showed improved confidence among FCPs, indicating the tool's effectiveness in addressing the opioid prescribing challenge as evidenced in the graphs on this page.

Outcome

The data shows there is a reduction in prescription of opioids in the NENC ICB region of 6% year on year.

In Q1 21/22 NENC prescribed 46% more opioids adjusted by volume and list size than the England average and in Q1 24/25 this had fallen to 32% more. The rate of fall between those two time periods was 18% reduction for NENC and 9% for England.

The use of this video tool has boosted the confidence of FCPs in initiating conversations with patients about their opioid prescriptions. By adopting a comprehensive systems approach, this ongoing educational initiative has contributed to a decline in opioid prescriptions. A six-month follow-up evaluation is now underway to assess the long-term impact on practitioners' confidence.

This initiative is part of a broader goal to build a consistent message about opioids across the health, social care, and community ecosystem. By introducing this educational tool to FCPs it supports the conversation around reduction of opioid prescribing, potentially leading to improved patient outcomes and reduced healthcare costs associated with opioid misuse. The comprehensive approach aims to address the wider determinants of health, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable and effective healthcare system.

361 people signed up to the launch webinar, 261 agreed to participate in pre and post confidence level impact evaluations.

Benefit

The video enhanced the confidence of FCPs in discussing opioid use with patients. Informed by expert input, the video has been instrumental in promoting personalised care options and supporting opioid deprescribing efforts in the region. Staff feel more confident to have opioid conversations and patients are receiving a more consistent message, and being signposted to resources that can support their opioid reduction journey. In doing so, it reduces the cost of unnecessary medication that has the potential to cause harm, reducing costs to the NHS and impacts sustainability outcomes.

Support provided by HI NENC

Several focus groups were delivered by the HI NENC team with FCPs and MO leads to determine the key messages to be featured in the video.

The video was scripted, commissioned, developed and published by HI NENC; the launch webinar was chaired by a NE MSK Society member culminating in an expert panel identified by HI NENC.

Plans for the future / spread and adoption

- The video tool, initially aimed at First Contact Practitioners (FCPs), has been well received. The high attendance at the webinar and positive survey results indicated a strong interest from the wider healthcare system in supporting opioid deprescribing through education and guidance. Recognising this, the video tool has been adapted to reach a broader audience, including various healthcare professionals and health champions.
- The reach of the webinar extended beyond North East North Cumbria and is being explored by other ICB's.
- Negotiations are currently underway to have the video recognised as a Making Every Contact Count (MECC) resource, further integrating it into routine healthcare practices. Additionally, there are plans to conduct a six-month follow-up evaluation of the original FCP video to assess its long-term impact on practitioners' confidence and patient outcomes. This ongoing effort underscores the commitment to reducing opioid prescribing and enhancing patient care through innovative educational tools.

Related links, references and further resources

Please find the resources and video here:

[Health Care Professionals Opioid Awareness Resources – Health Innovation NENC](#)

Health Innovation NENC Suite A, 2nd Floor, 1 Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4WH

T. 0191 607 6350 **E.** enquiries@healthinnovationnenc.org.uk **X** @HI_NENC

© 2024 Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria