

Improving Over the Counter Medication Safety for Older Adults

Participatory Design: Older Adults

Meeting 1

Part I. Welcome Statement and Introduction (10 minutes)

Hello and welcome. Thanks for joining us. My name is Michelle Chui and I am a professor and researcher in the School of Pharmacy at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Also with me today are Jamie Stone and Corey Lester, researchers in the School of Pharmacy, and Cindy Phelan, a geriatric nurse. We are all part of a team whose work focuses on the safe use of over the counter medications for older adults.

Let me start by giving you some background about over the counter medications or OTCs.

- Over the counter medications are medications that are available without a prescription
- They are available in places by like ShopKo, Walgreens, convenience stores
- There is a perception among many people that all OTCs are safe to take, but they can interact with other drugs (including prescriptions and OTCs). Some are bad to take with certain health conditions, and others aren't recommended for older adults to take because for instance it can make them dizzy or sleepy which can lead to a fall.
- These reactions can be so bad they cause a person to be hospitalized.
- In our previous work we found that 19/20 older adults would take a medication that is not completely safe

Today is the first in a series of meetings in which we will ask you to be a part of an improvement process so that older adults, like you, can make safer choices with over the counter medications. We are partnering with ShopKo who is also interested in making sure the older adults they serve are taking over the counter medications that are safe for them. We are also holding a series of sessions with ShopKo pharmacists and pharmacy staff to gather input from their perspectives.

Our ultimate goal is to make improvements to the OTC and prescription areas of the store so that older adults can confidently and safely select OTC medications.

As you may know, the West Towne ShopKo has a pharmacy where pharmacists and pharmacy staff fill and dispense prescription medications. ShopKo also has several aisles of over the counter products that include medications for cough/cold, pain, allergies, and sleep. This is the picture we'd like for you to keep in mind over the next 6 sessions. [show picture of the pharmacy aisles]

Your role during these sessions will be to help inform our team so that we can make sure the changes will be helpful to as many older adults as possible.

In this first session we hope to learn about the most important problems you encounter when selecting and using OTC medications. There are no right or wrong answers to our discussion and we value all of your inputs.

We're audio recording this session because we don't want to miss any of your comments. No names will be used in any reports or publications. Your comments are confidential.

We put name tents around the table. These help me but they can also help you. If you want to follow-up on something someone has said, if you want to agree, disagree, or provide an example, please feel free to respond directly. We ask only that the conversation remain respectful and that only one person talks at a time. My role is to facilitate the discussion, keep track of time, and make sure everyone has a chance to talk.

If you have a cell phone, please put it on quiet mode. If you need to take an important call, please step out in the hall and rejoin us as soon as you're able. Feel free to get up to use the restroom or for more refreshments if you'd like.

With that in mind, let's get started by going around the table one at a time. Please tell us your first name and your favorite Fall activity.

Part II. Introduction of cards and adding cards (20 minutes)

For this part of the session, I'm going to introduce 23 cards, one by one. On each of these cards we have listed a task related to OTCs that older adults have told us they find difficult. You each have a copy of these cards. I'm going to read each of these cards out loud. We'll then talk about whether this list is complete. [hand out cards then moderator will read each card aloud while each older adult looks at their cards] Are there any problems that you want me to explain further?

Each of you received 3 blank cards. Are there any other tasks that are important that you think we are missing and should add? If so, please write them on one of your blank cards.

[If they have an addition ask if they want to share it with the group, if not, that's okay too]

Part III. Card Sort and Discussion (1 hour and 20 minutes)

Next what I would like to do is have each of you sort your cards. I will explain how I want you to sort them, in just a moment. Then we will come back together as a group and talk about how/why each person sorted the cards in a particular way. We will sort the cards two times, first by difficulty, then by how frequently you do each task. What questions do you have?

Difficulty

First you will sort by difficulty. Think about the times you have gone shopping for an OTC. For example, you had a cold and you were looking for an OTC for your symptoms. Another example might be you had problems with allergies and there were multiple medications available to choose from. Keeping this in mind, I'd like each of you to take your cards and sort them according to how difficult each task was to do.

How difficult was it to... [give question phrase and category cards to each person]

We've given you yellow cards [these will be large and stand out from the regular cards] with 5 categories on them. Please place each card in your pile under the category you think best describes how difficult this task was for you.

[not at all difficult, slightly difficult, somewhat difficult, very difficult, extremely difficult]

Next we are going to talk about how you sorted the cards. Feel free to move the cards to different categories if you'd like. Again there are no right answers. Your perspective is important to us. Sometimes questions help to clarify. So please feel free to ask the group members any questions.

Discussion Procedure:

Solicit a volunteer to share one task that they found very or extremely difficult

Probe the group for related tasks to discuss reasons why they are difficult

When discussion is exhausted ask second volunteer to share a new task and so on..

[take a picture of each person's sort at the end of the individual sort and then again after the group discussion]

Frequency

Now we'd like you think about the last year (since last Fall) as you think about this next question.

Remember that a full year includes things like colds in the winter and maybe allergies in the spring and summer. For this one you will sort the cards to answer the question

When you shopped for an OTC how often did you... [put up sign with this question on it]

We've given you cards with 5 categories. Please place the card in the pile under the category you think best describes how often you did this task in the last 12 months.

[never, rarely, sometimes, often, all the time]

Next we are going to talk about how you sorted the cards.

Discussion Procedure:

Solicit a volunteer to share one task that they do often or all the time

Probe for discrepancies between frequencies

Probe the group for related tasks to discuss reasons why certain tasks occur more frequently

When discussion is exhausted ask second volunteer to share a new task and so on..

[take a picture of each person's sort]

Part IV. Wrap Up – Plan for next time (10 minutes)

Thank you for your participation in today's session. Today our goal was to better understand the frequency and difficulty people have when selecting OTCs... [reflect back on what happened over the course of the focus group.]

Please take a moment to provide comments on things we missed and what you would like to add. Our next step will be to take the information you shared with us today and prioritize a list of problems, we will use this information to help us transition to the next phase of the design sessions, brainstorming solutions. Our team will then use these ideas to design a solution to address some of the most important problems you have identified.

Our next meeting will be at XX at XX.