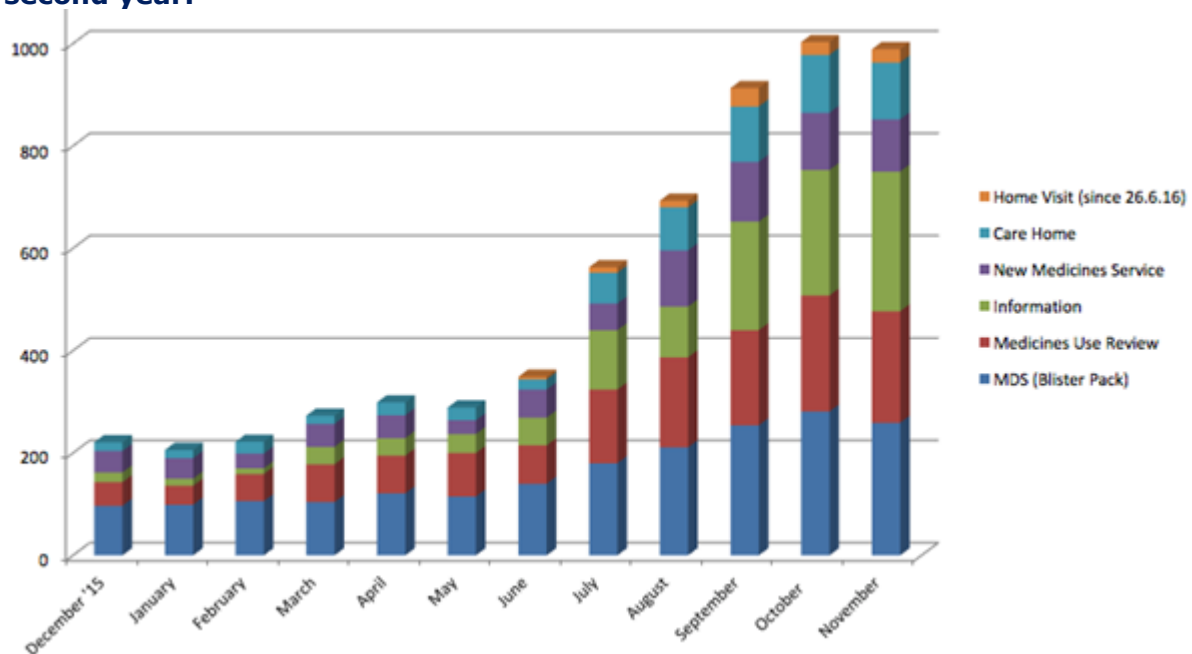


Welcome to the December 2016 Refer-to-Pharmacy newsletter; as ever feel free to pass it on within your networks.

The pharmacy team here at ELHT recorded 989 referrals in November 2016; a little less than 1003 of October... but with one day less the daily average has increased. Here's how it compares with previous months as we enter our second year:



We'll be rolling out the Hospital Admission Notification part of the system sometime this month and if you'd like a sneak peek at both the hospital *and* community pharmacy ends [click here](#) to see it on the test server (or follow <https://youtu.be/Mqspnv5IBH4>).

The rest of this month's newsletter is really about my experiences attending this month's American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) mid-year conference in Las Vegas, and as I'm writing this in the skies of Nevada I've reworded my fore-namesake and calling this *Alistair Gray's Letter from America*.

To paraphrase an American saying *this was my first rodeo*. Not only had I never been to an American pharmacy conference before, this was also my first time in America. I *have* been to one or two conferences in the UK but this was in another league in terms of

scale. The Mandalay Bay Conference Centre is bigger than a Boeing hangar, is over three floors and only one word sprung to mind when I entered it on Monday, possibly the Americans' most cherished adjective: awesome! Just check out the conference centre's escalators.



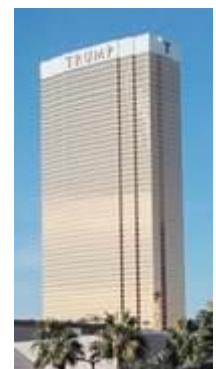
I'd been invited to speak about Refer-to-Pharmacy at a session entitled **Pharmacy Practice Pearls from around the Globe** and was in the company of some great presenters from Spain, China, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Abu Dhabi... and Kent (I wasn't the only Brit speaking!). It felt like the talk went well, although there was a slight technical hitch when I started my live Refer-to-Pharmacy demonstration, but I was saved by the technical savviness of Eric Maroyka from the ASHP who'd pulled together the whole session over the preceding months.



The session opened with the Donald E. Francke Medal Lecture by a pharmacist from Kentucky, Lee Vermeulen. His talk, *Transcending Borders, Surpassing Boundaries*, made me want to find out an awful lot more about the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP).

Every American I spoke to was at pains to point out that Las Vegas was *not* typical America. Vegas was big, bright, brash and exceedingly clean.

I was fortunate enough to be accompanied by my wife who met up with her American penfriend of the last 32 years while I was in the conference, which meant we had a local guide. So we tried Du-par's (a classic American diner) and Peppermills (the modern equivalent as well as getting out of town and visiting Red Rock Canyon).





There's a lot of similarities between the US and UK but it's the little differences you notice: the extra flavours of M&Ms, the explosion of pumpkin products, the pronunciations (the US ant-eye-microbial stoo-wardship vs the UK an-tee-microbial st-you-wardship); real cowboys (the rodeo finals were in town); and curiously (but shouldn't have been surprised) No.7 products in Walgreens (Boots' current owners); oh, and 'English Muffins'... we just call them muffins!



So, until next time...

Many thanks,

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