

# Communicating with colleagues

So far in this series of modules, we've focused on the service you provide to customers and patients, but the same communication skills are also required in other aspects of your job

**During the average day in a pharmacy,** you will engage in conversations with a wide variety of people in many different situations and it is important that you deal with them efficiently and effectively, which may require you to adapt your communication style. For instance, you may talk to a customer very differently to how you would talk to a member of the sales department at a wholesalers. Think about who you communicate with on a regular

basis, in addition to customers and patients. It probably includes:

- Your pharmacist
- The pharmacy team
- Receptionists at local GP surgeries
- Wholesalers and sales reps.

Whether you're talking to a customer or colleague, the same principles of effective communication apply:

**01** **If you contact someone with a question or query** (for example, someone at the GP surgery with a question about a patient), be sure to have all the information you need to hand, and organised in a logical way, so that you can get the answers or solutions you need.

**02** **Speak clearly and at the right speed and volume** otherwise the listener may miss an important point.

**07**

**If discussing a patient or customer** with a team member or your pharmacist, make sure other customers can't hear you.

**03** **Communication is a two-way process, so talk to the person – not at them.** And make sure you listen, allowing the person a chance to speak and respond.

**06**

**Don't interrupt or talk over a person** when they are talking to you. Listen carefully so that you understand everything they say and are able to work out how you can best help them.

**04**

**Check the person has understood you** by asking: "Is that okay?" or "Do you have any questions?" Similarly, if you don't understand someone's request then ask for clarification, for example by saying: "Let me check I have understood you properly..." or "What you are saying is...".

**05**

**Don't make assumptions** about the other person's situation. If in doubt, ask them for more information or clarification.

