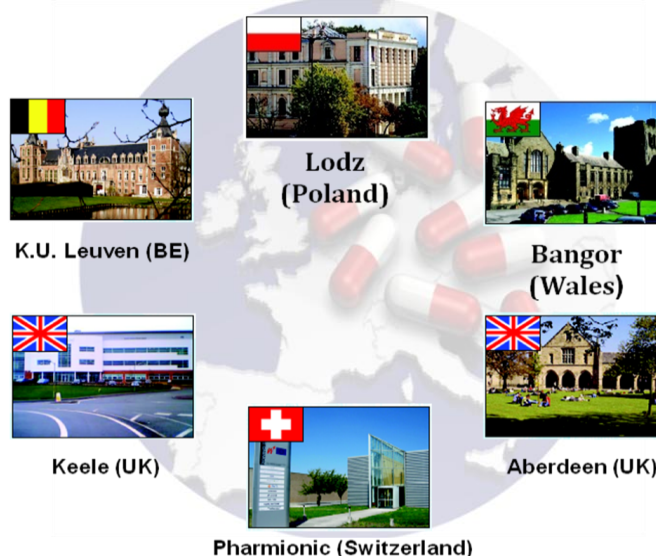


Ascertaining Barriers for Compliance: policies for safe, effective and cost-effective use of medicines in Europe

The **ABC Project** is the EU-funded research initiative to improve patient compliance to medication in Europe. The strategic goal of the project is to produce evidence-based policy recommendations for improving patient adherence, and thus raising the effectiveness of medications use by Europeans. The project's findings are expected to help health policymakers take right decisions to minimize the negative impact of non-adherence. ABC Project was launched on January 1, 2009 and will run until December 31, 2011. www.ABCproject.eu



WP 2 objective

To find out the determinants of non-compliance with short-term and long-term treatment for different clinical sectors, health care settings and population segments

ABC's work package 2 news

This WP aims to create a complete inventory of determinants of patient adherence throughout the European Union, taking into account the natural variation for different clinical sectors, health care settings and population segments. In order to enable classification and in-depth analysis of these determinants, not only will the data from available research publications and other public resources be analysed, but also those collected especially for that purpose, by means of innovative techniques (e.g. discrete choice

experiment). In order to make this inventory complete, the whole range of possible determinants of adherence will be covered, including patient-prescriber communication and interaction, legislation, market regulation, etc. across a range of drugs in use. In pursuit of this research objective, the following activities are planned: 1. To perform a systematic review to identify the determinants of patient adherence with both short-term and long-term therapies in Europe 2. To design and execute a panel of research tools, including international survey and discrete choice experiment, in order to identify the factors which influence patients' decisions in relation to the process of execution of short-term treatment and continuation with long-term treatments and patients' preferences relating to the

decision-making process of being compliant or non-compliant 3. To create a complete inventory of determinants of patient adherence throughout the European Union. 4. To critically analyse the inventory of determinants of patient adherence with short-term and long-term treatment for different clinical sectors, health care settings and population segments in Europe in order to make priorities for further use of this data in the process of preparation of adherence-enhancing policy.
[/www.ABCproject.eu/](http://www.ABCproject.eu/)



Adherence: a human factor

From Assoc. Prof. Przemyslaw Kardas MD, PhD, Scientific Director of the ABC Project

Non-adherence has a number of serious health and economic consequences. If one takes into consideration how clear these consequences might be for the patients, non-adherence seems to be illogical. Just a typical *human factor* in a perfect machinery of medicine, one could say.

More and more people start to have chronic conditions in our societies.

This is a simple consequence of demographic changes. Therefore, every day more and more money is spent on both screening, and treatment of these conditions. However, these money come from the sources that are not endless. The more we spend on the healthcare, the less may be used in the other sectors of the economy. With recent worldwide economic crisis, this seems to be extremely challenging. And here we come to adherence: this is one of the major barriers to more effective use of the resources that we possess. One could even say that the more costly the medical procedure under question is, the more important the role of (poor) adherence. This simple human factor could turn any evidence-based

health intervention into cost-ineffective one!

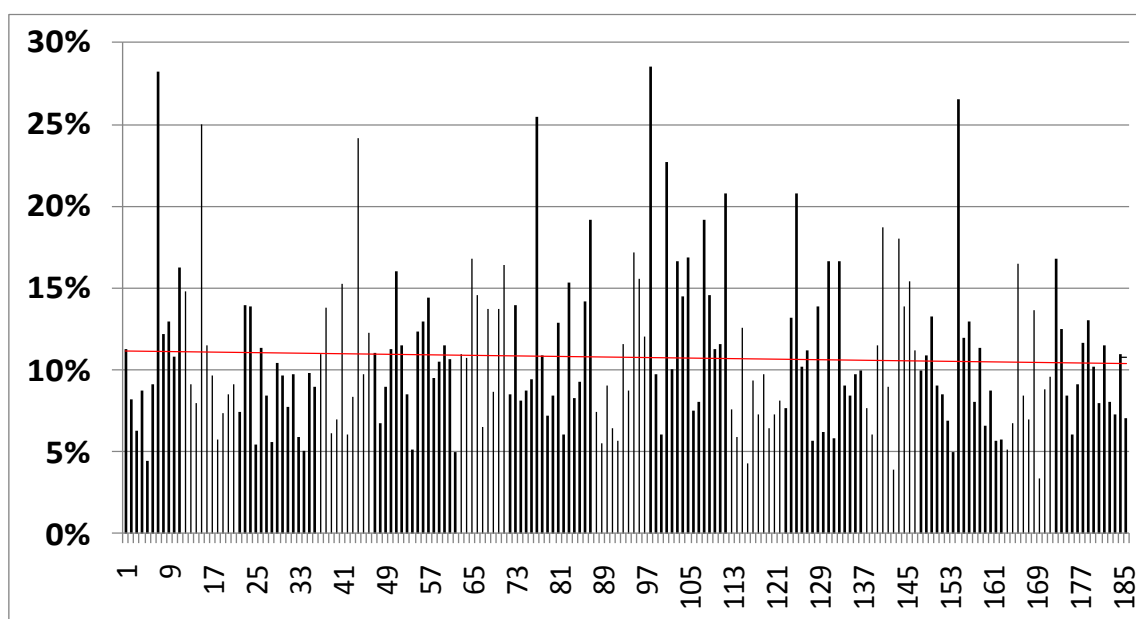


People used to expect

the scientists to develop the new, more effective therapies for their conditions. For several decades, these expectations have been met. Now, we are in possession of very effective therapies for the number of conditions. And what the compliance has to do with it? Well, a lot! Pharmaceutical industry has its own priorities, not always being completely equal to our expectations. That is why the new antibiotics may not be expected for the next number of years (simple: the new ones would be only used in a third-line therapy, and the investments would be never returned). At the same time, we are losing the potency of the existing antibiotics. Partly, due to common non-adherence with anti-infectiveness... Human behaviour: people do not wish to complete their course of treatment, as soon as they feel better. That is, after just three days!

Recently, The Foundation for the Development of Polish Pharmacy and Medicine released a report on non-adherence, based on the survey in Polish patients. Not surprisingly, 1/3 of the patients taking their drugs for chronic conditions claimed not to take at least some of the doses prescribed. An interesting finding was a strong association between the level of adherence, and trust in the doctor: the higher the trust, the better the adherence. And what about doctors? They are humans, as well. Let's have a look at the diversity of the levels of non-adherence among different GP practices' patients in one of the Polish regions (figure). It is highly possible that the human factor – adherence - is affected by another human factor: human-to-human relationship.

Graph 1.1: % of patients with hypertension, not taking their drugs in 2009 in Opole region, by GP practice (red line represents linear trend). [Courtesy by Kolek R, personal communication]



ABC consortium meeting in Sion

On 21st and 22nd of January 2010 a 3rd ABC Project Consortium Meeting was held in Sion, Switzerland hosted by one of the Project Partners - Pharmionic Systems. The meeting was devoted to coordination and planning of the work. Partners discussed about the survey which will be used to identify the determinants of non-adherence, methods of survey participants recruitment and coordination of ethical approval in the EU countries. Also, the agreement on taxonomy

and terminology of patient adherence was reached, and the plans for subsequent publication was scheduled. Partners exchanged their opinions on interventions review and adherence management. The meeting ended with an invitation to an upcoming ESPACOMP 2010 conference which will be held in Lodz, Poland on 17-18th of September 2010. www.abcproject.eu

ESPACOMP Symposium – 17-18 September 2010, Lodz, Poland

ESPACOMP (European Society for Patient Adherence, COMpliance, and Persistence) is a non-profit association in the sphere of public health, established to promote the science concerned with the quantitative assessment of what patients do with medicines they have been prescribed. Both the reasons for, and the clinical and economic consequences of differences between caregivers' prescriptions and patients' execution of those prescriptions are the principal topics of research with which the Society is concerned, along with facilitation of the translation of this research into information that is useful to patients, healthcare providers, healthcare policy makers, and pharmaceutical researchers. ESPACOMP yearly symposium has become the meeting place for an increasing number of international adherence researchers, pharmacoepidemiologists, statisticians and industry people interested in compliance and persistence. This year's meeting will be held in Lodz, POLAND on September 17, 2010. [/www.espacomp.eu/](http://www.espacomp.eu/)



As many as 50% patients do not take their medicines as prescribed.
Join the annual symposium
of the European Society for Patient
Adherence, Compliance, and Persistence
- ESPACOMP 2010
to discuss causes and possible solutions
of this problem.
Be sure to register today at:

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**Announcing
the 14th annual**

**European Symposium
on Patient
Adherence,
COMpliance and
Persistence**

**ESPACOMP
2010**

**17-18 September
2010
Lodz, Poland**

ABC at European Society of Cardiology Cardiovascular Nursing Spring Meeting 2010, 12-13.03.2010 Geneva, Switzerland

Todd Ruppert representing the Katholieke Universiteit in Leuven presented the results of the ABC project - the proposed new taxonomy in the field on patient nonadherence to medication in Europe - in a moderated poster format at the European Society of Cardiology's Council on Cardiovascular Nursing and Allied Professions' Spring Meeting. The poster entitled "A New Taxonomy for Patient Adherence and Compliance" received a 2nd award for the best moderated poster abstract.