

# Your Medicines, Your Health

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## People urged to help cut £13.3m medicine waste



GETTY IMAGES

People in Coventry and Warwickshire are being told to return any unused medicine to a pharmacist by NHS bosses

**Clare Lissaman**

West Midlands

2 February 2026

**NHS bosses in Coventry and Warwickshire are urging people to only order the medicines they need as they claim wasted medication is costing about £13.3m a year in the county.**

# the PHARMACEUTICAL JOURNAL

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Medicines shortages

04 February 2026



By **Carlotta Eden**

## Medicine shortages are 'national security issue', says Lords committee report

The House of Lords Public Services Committee also recommended that medicines supply risks should be added to the National Risk Register, which outlines the most serious risks facing the UK



## Holding the NHS to account for wasteful use of resources

Funding and finances

12 Dec 2025

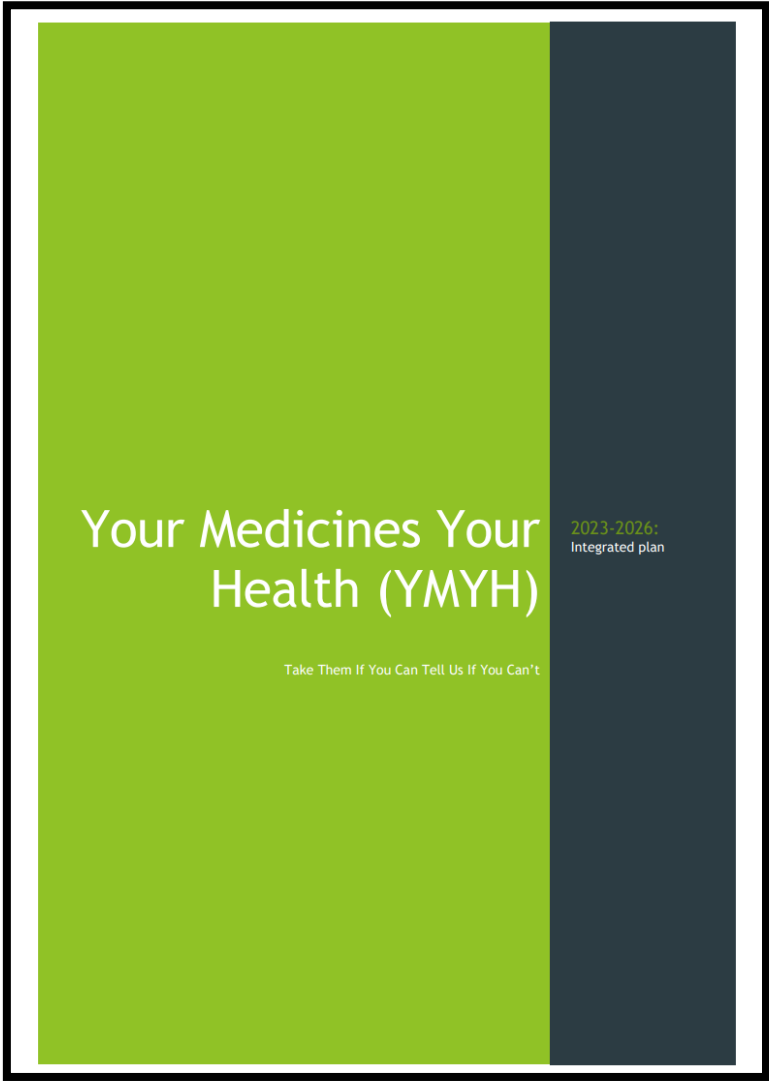
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Authors



**Chris Naylor**  
Senior Fellow

Take medicines waste. The NHS in England spends at least £300 million each year (probably significantly more) on medicines that end up being thrown away. There are multiple causes but a key underlying issue is that it is not sufficiently clear who is responsible locally or nationally for measuring, monitoring or addressing the problem. As a result of this lack of clarity, medicines waste remains largely invisible to the people



<https://bevancommission.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Your-Medicines-Your-Health-Plan-LNW-Wales.pdf>

# Your Medicines, Your Health

- *Everyone in Wales who uses medication, takes and manages it in a way that maximises their health outcomes.*
- *Pharmaceutical waste is minimised and disposed of through the appropriate channels or recycling schemes*

# Areas of Focus



**Conversations about medication**



**Adherence to medication**



**Ordering medication**



**Disposal of medication**

# Implementation

Support the strategic group in adopting a SCALE approach to comms development



Cline, Gould, Thomas & Griffiths, 2025. <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Developing-Behaviourally-Informed-Communications.pdf>

# Implementation

Support the strategic group in adopting a SCALE approach to comms development



Specify



Consider



Assemble



Layout



Evaluate

Cline, Gould, Thomas & Griffiths, 2025. <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Developing-Behaviourally-Informed-Communications.pdf>

# Implementation

Behavioural specification workshop & prioritisation matrix

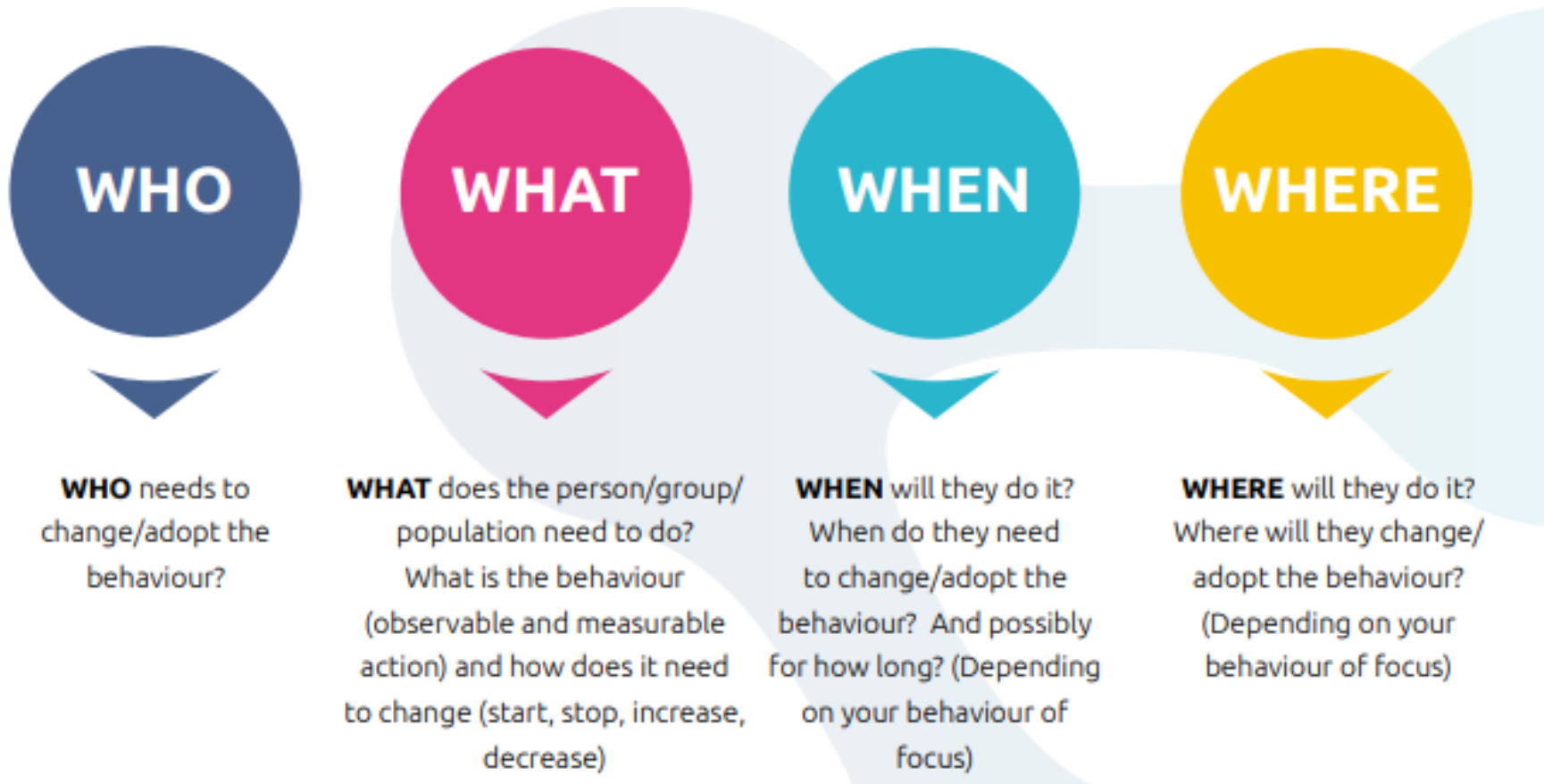


Specify

Cline, Gould, Thomas & Griffiths, 2025. <https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Developing-Behaviourally-Informed-Communications.pdf>

# Implementation

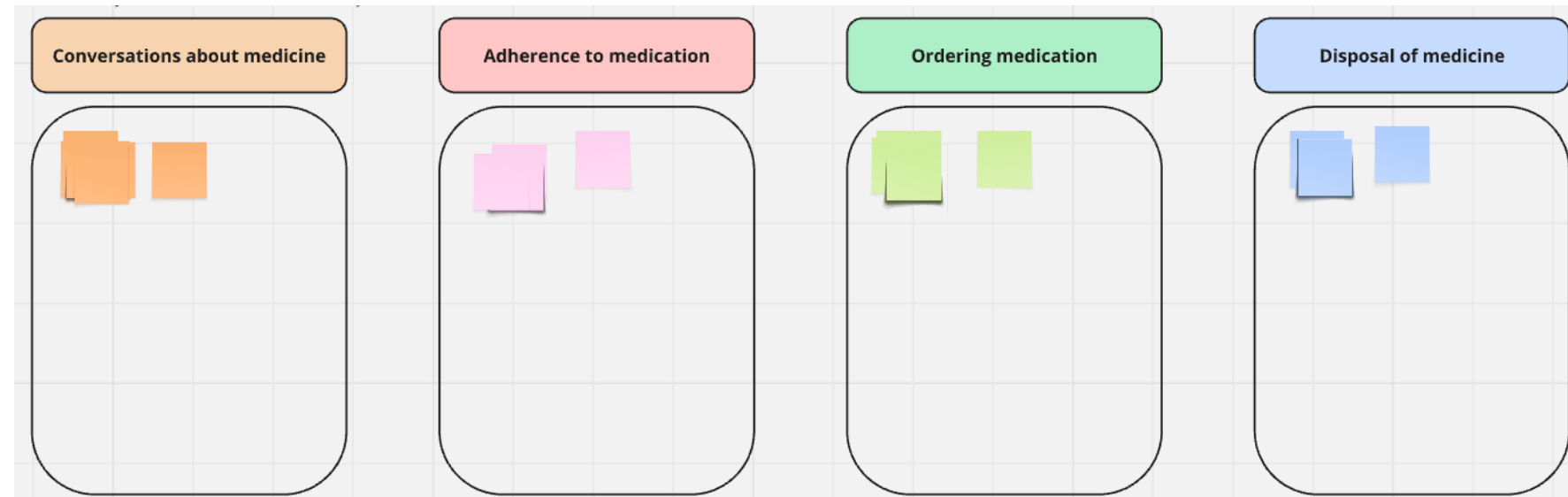
## Behavioural specification workshop & prioritisation matrix



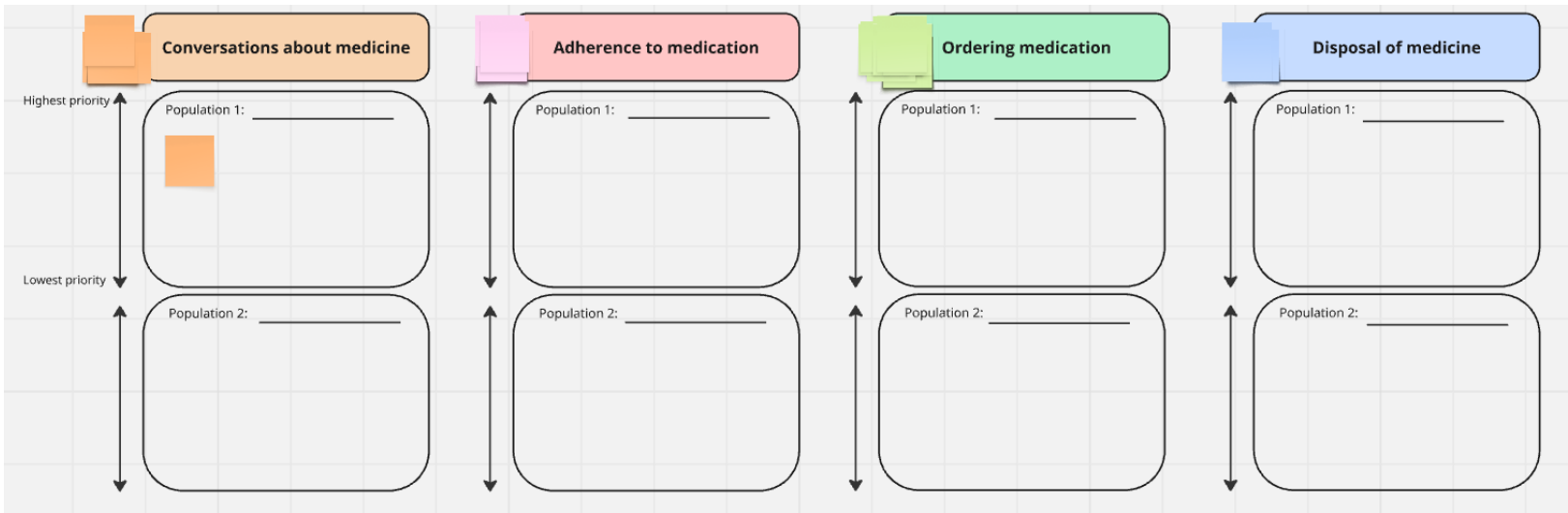
# Identifying target populations



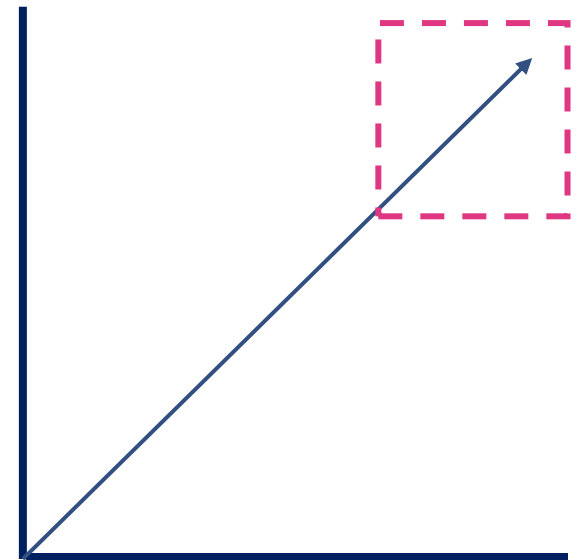
<b>Demographic</b>	Age, sex, ethnicity, socio-economic status, occupation, education
<b>Geographic</b>	County, health board area/local government area, postcode, density (urban/rural)
<b>Psychographic</b>	Values, lifestyle, personality
<b>Epidemiological</b>	Health status, risk factor status
<b>Behavioural</b>	Frequency, intensity, regularity (e.g., meat eater/non-meat eater)



# Identifying target behaviours



Extent to which it's driven by observable, measurable actions



Extent to which it's a priority area

# Forming behavioural specifications

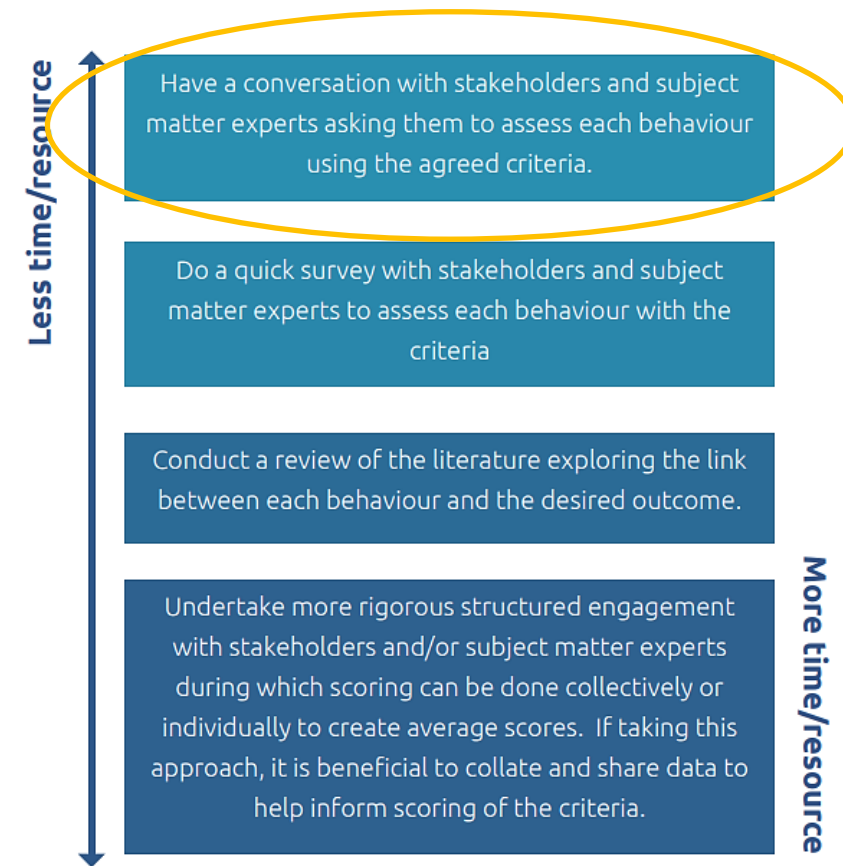
Who exactly do we want to do what exactly?

	WHO	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE
Conversations / advice about medication	Healthcare Professionals	Provide patient / carer with tools to support understanding	Every contact	Community Pharmacy / GP
Adherence to medication	Hospital Pharmacists	Ask open-ended questions about medication adherence	Every contact	Hospital
Ordering medication	Community Pharmacists	Ask patient / carer if all medicines are needed as a repeat prescription	At point of prescription	Community Pharmacy
Disposal of medication	Patients / carers	Separate pharmaceutical waste from household waste	When disposing of unwanted / empty meds	At home

# Prioritisation

## 36 Behavioural specifications developed

Potential target behaviour and target population	Impact of behaviour change on desired outcome	Likelihood of changing behaviour	Ease of measuring the behaviour
	Scoring criteria: 1 = Low 5 = High		



Adapted from Knowles & Gould, 2023.

<https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Deciding-on-Behaviours-and-Populations-Tool-v1b.pdf>

# Next steps

- Collaborative workshop led by PHW Research & Evaluation Team
- Use priority specifications to develop a **Theory of Change**
- **Who needs to do what** to reach the desired impact? What interventions will work to **overcome identified barriers?**
- What are the **mechanisms of action** through which change happens?



Grey et al. 2024

# Impact and learning



Involving the 'right' stakeholders throughout



Balancing pragmatic approach (real world) with rigour (evidence-based)



Meeting needs of a diverse group



Setting clear boundaries from the outset



Collaboration = high potential for impact

# Diolch ! Thank You!



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