



# tippa

## A 4-YEAR JOINT PROJECT TO IMPROVE PATIENT COUNSELLING FROM COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

TIPPA is a 4-year national joint project to improve patient counselling from community pharmacies that was started in January 2000. The aims of the project are:

- 1) to promote rational use of medicines
- 2) to decrease negative effects of inappropriate use of medicines, including self medication
- 3) to decrease costs by enhanced patient counselling

Reaching the goals requires an extensive development process at the pharmacy level that focuses on leadership, attitudes, behavior patterns, communication and professional skills.

The development process is supported by several ways: by leadership training, continuing education on pharmacotherapy and communication skills, and by providing practical resources for drug information and self assessment of counselling practice. The progress will be evaluated.

The project is operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the National Agency for Medicines, the Social Insurance Institution, the Association of Finnish Pharmacies, the Finnish Pharmacists' Association, the Universities of Helsinki and Kuopio, the Finnish Centre for Continuing Pharmaceutical Education, and the Kuopio University Centre for Training and Development.



## THE PROCESS OF ACTIVITIES

The TIPPA Project consists of planned and coordinated activities that form the following process:

### Phase 1 (period 2000 - 2001)

- Baseline assessment
- Marketing the project
- Assessment of patient counselling skills
- Development and implementation of resources

### Phase 2 (period 2001 - 2002)

- Assessment of progress after one year
- Self audit of counselling practice in pharmacies
- Pharmacy-based long-term development plans
- Training (national, local, in-house)
- Report on progress after two years

### Phase 3 (period 2002 - 2003)

- Assessment of progress after two years
- Implementation of pharmacy-based development plans
- Quality assurance of performance after implementation of development plans
- Identification of needs for further development

#### Phase 4 (period 2003)

- Assessment of the progress after three years
- Integration of interest groups
- Final evaluation
- Final report

### RESOURCES

TIPPA has developed several resources to facilitate patient counselling in pharmacies.

**Tietotippa** is an easy-to-use computerised database to improve oral counselling on prescription medicines. The database is integrated in the prescription processing systems. The database summarises key information in lay language that the customer should know when using a prescription medicine. It works as a reminder for the pharmacist standardising minimum information to be discussed with the customer. The database was launched in February 2000.

**Trained external auditors** (n=10) help pharmacists in assessing needs for development in patient counselling practice and in making long-term development plans.

**www.tippa.net** is an evaluated collection of web site links for pharmacists. It includes more than



1,600 closely evaluated links to medical and drug information in Finnish, Swedish and English.

**Manual on Good Patient Counselling Practice** provides pharmacists a checklist of minimum actions to be taken to assure quality of patient counselling.

**Handbook on self-medication (part I and II)** provides pharmacists guidelines for evidence based practice with OTC customers. The guidelines are based on current medical knowledge and are presented in a way that makes their application easy. The handbook is also available in a consumer version in paper and cyber (<http://www.itsehoito-opas.net>).

**Handbook on communication skills** is targeted to update pharmacists' knowledge on two-way communication and customer-oriented patient counselling. The handbook combines communication theory with pharmacy practice. It introduces principles of self evaluation of communication skills through several assignments added in the end of each of the 12 chapters.

### EVALUATION OF THE PROGRESS

Progress in TIPPA will be evaluated in co-operation with the Universities of Kuopio and Helsinki. Several research methods and approaches will be applied in the evaluation.

Patient counselling practice (performance) will be regularly evaluated by a mystery shopper study. The study will be repeated annually after the baseline measurement in January 2000.

Receipt of drug information will be studied among different patient groups (e.g., those on antibiotics, asthmatics) and among the public (nationally and regionally).



The implementation of the TIPPA strategy in daily practice will be evaluated by follow up studies assessing to what extent the resources provided are actually used

- Tietotippa and other drug information sources
- Resources for assessment of counselling practice
- Resources for developing long-term plans

## PUBLICATIONS

During the year 2000, TIPPA published more than 60 publications, mostly in national pharmaceutical journals. The publications made known to pharmacists the TIPPA project, principles of two-way communication and principles of strategic planning in developing patient counselling services. Active publicising will continue throughout the project.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

**For further information, please contact any of the members of the executive committee of the TIPPA:**

Marja Airaksinen, Project Manager, TIPPA Project  
email: [marja.airaksinen@uku.fi](mailto:marja.airaksinen@uku.fi)

Sirpa Peura, Director of Pharmaceutical Affairs, Association of Finnish Pharmacies  
email: [sirpa.peura@salnet.fi](mailto:sirpa.peura@salnet.fi)

Harri Ovaskainen, Director of Pharmaceutical Affairs, Finnish Pharmacists' Association  
email: [harri.ovaskainen@farmasialiitto.fi](mailto:harri.ovaskainen@farmasialiitto.fi)

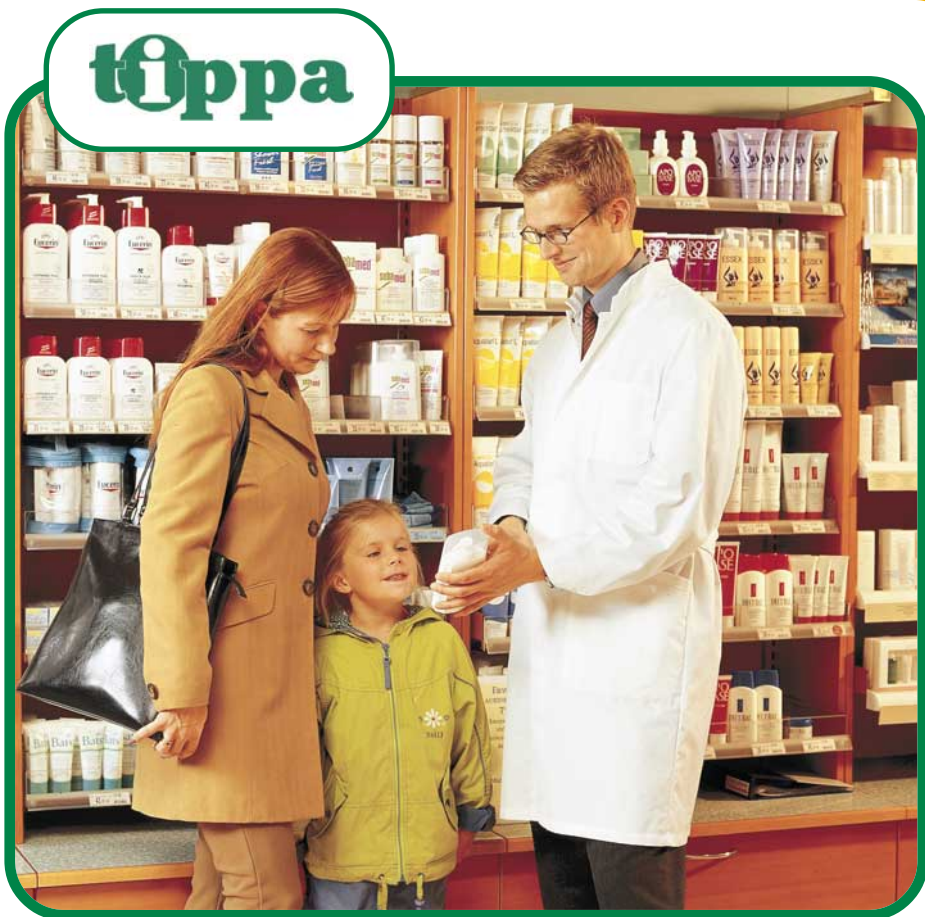
Kirsi Pietilä, Senior Lecturer, University of Helsinki  
email: [kirsi.pietila@helsinki.fi](mailto:kirsi.pietila@helsinki.fi)

Petra Vidgren, Chief Pharmacist, Kuopio University Pharmacy  
email: [petra.vidgren@uku.fi](mailto:petra.vidgren@uku.fi)

Paavo Tanskanen, Teaching Pharmacist, Kuopio University Pharmacy  
email: [paavo.tanskanen@uku.fi](mailto:paavo.tanskanen@uku.fi)

Sinikka Kesseli-Pulkkinen, Director of Training, Finnish Centre for Continuing Pharmaceutical Education  
email: [sinikka.kesseli-pulkkinen@salnet.fi](mailto:sinikka.kesseli-pulkkinen@salnet.fi)

Lea Tuomainen, Training Co-ordinator, Kuopio University Centre for Training and Development  
email: [lea.tuomainen@uku.fi](mailto:lea.tuomainen@uku.fi)



## **A national joint project to promote rational use of medicines by enhanced patient counselling by community pharmacists (2000-2003)**

**Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
National Agency for Medicines  
Social Insurance Institution  
Association of Finnish Pharmacies  
Finnish Pharmacists' Association  
University of Helsinki  
University of Kuopio  
Finnish Centre for Continuing Pharmaceutical Education  
University of Kuopio, Centre for Training and Development**