

Mapping the Effects of Disinformation on Trust in Medicines and the Pharmaceutical Sector (PHARMAFICTION) Study

Survey export

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Welcome to our survey! Imperial College London Self-Care Academic Unit (SCARU) is conducting a study to characterise the scope, narratives and impacts of pharmaceutical misinformation and disinformation across the UK, in order to generate evidence that informs industry strategy, strengthens regulatory responses, and enhances public trust in medicines. Your responses will help us better understand public sentiment and inform future healthcare innovations.

Please take a moment to review the Participant Information Sheet of our ethically approved study & by proceeding with this 10 minute survey, you agree to participate voluntarily. Your responses will be kept confidential.

By selecting “Yes” below, you consent to take part in this study, along with the following clauses:

- I confirm that I have read and understand the participant information sheet version 0.2 dated 01/20/2025 for the Mapping the Effects of Disinformation on Trust in Medicines and the Pharmaceutical Sector (PHARMAFICTION) Study and have had the opportunity to ask questions which have been answered fully.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my legal rights nor treatment / healthcare being affected.
- I consent for information collected about me to be used to support other research or in the development of a new test, medication, medical device or treatment (delete as applicable) by an academic institution or commercial company in the future, including

those outside of the United Kingdom (which Imperial has ensured will keep this information secure).

- I understand that data collected from me are a gift donated to Imperial College and that I will not personally benefit financially if this research leads to an invention and/or the successful development of a new test, medication treatment, product or service.
- I consent to take part in Mapping the Effects of Disinformation on Trust in Medicines and the Pharmaceutical Sector (PHARMAFICTION) Study)
- I give consent to being contacted about the possibility to take part in other research studies.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q3 How would you rate your overall health?

☐ Very poor (1)

☐ Poor (2)

☐ Fair (3)

☐ Good (4)

☐ Very good (5)

Q4 Do you currently live with any of the following conditions?

- ☐ Hypertension (1)
 - ☐ Diabetes (2)
 - ☐ Respiratory disease (3)
 - ☐ Mental health condition (4)
 - ☐ Musculoskeletal disorder (5)
 - ☐ Cardiovascular disease (6)
 - ☒ None (7)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (8)
-

Q5 In the past 3 months, have you taken prescription medicine?

- ☐ Yes (1)
 - ☐ No (2)
-

Q6 In the past 3 months, have you used over-the-counter medicines to self-care for a condition?

- ☐ Yes (1)
 - ☐ No (2)
-

Q7 In the past 3 months, have you used herbal remedies, traditional Chinese medicine or other self-care products or supplements?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Q8 I track symptoms or vital signs (such as temperature, blood pressure and pain levels) when unwell

☐ Strongly disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly agree (5)

Q9 I keep a basic home care kit (e.g. common medications, thermometer, first aid items)

☐ Strongly disagree (1)

☐ Disagree (2)

☐ Neither (3)

☐ Agree (4)

☐ Strongly agree (5)

Q10 I feel confident managing minor ailments at home such as (common cold, headache, etc.)

- ☐ Not at all confident (1)
 - ☐ Slightly (2)
 - ☐ Moderately (3)
 - ☐ Very (4)
 - ☐ Extremely confident (5)
-

Q11 I know when to seek professional healthcare

- ☐ Not at all confident (1)
- ☐ Slightly (2)
- ☐ Moderately (3)
- ☐ Very (4)
- ☐ Extremely confident (5)

End of Block: Block 1. Health Status & Self-Care Baseline (9 items)

Start of Block: Block 2. Self-Care Knowledge, Attitudes & Norms (12 items)

Q12 To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I know where to find trustworthy self-care guidance/content (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self-care can prevent many common conditions including some minor ailments and chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes & obesity for example (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self-care is my first step before seeing a healthcare professional (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I practice self-care regularly (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can evaluate if a self-care claim is evidence-based (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I intend to expand my self-care practices in the future (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q13 Main barriers to practicing self-care for me (select all)

- ☐ Cost (1)
 - ☐ Time (2)
 - ☐ Information overload (3)
 - ☐ Distrust of sources (4)
 - ☐ Cultural beliefs (5)
 - ☐ Availability of self-care supporting services (6)
 - ☒ None of these barriers apply to me (7)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (8)
-

Q14 Key benefits of self-care for me (select all)

- ☐ Autonomy (1)
 - ☐ Disease prevention (2)
 - ☐ Faster relief (3)
 - ☐ Fewer clinic visits (4)
 - ☐ Lower cost (5)
 - ☒ I don't practice self care (6)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (7)
-

End of Block: Block 2. Self-Care Knowledge, Attitudes & Norms (12 items)

Start of Block: Block 3. Information Sources & Exposure (5 items)

Q15 How often do you use the following for health info?

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Very often (5)
Government/NHS/MoH/WHO/UN websites (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
University/Medical centre websites (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pharmacists/Nurses/Doctors (Medical professionals) (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personal social networks (family/friends/colleagues/ acquaintances) (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online news (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Facebook (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Youtube (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tiktok (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Instagram (9)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ChatGPT and similar AI tools (10)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q16 How often do you receive health info via WhatsApp/Telegram/Line/Email/SMS?

- ☐ Never (1)
 - ☐ Rarely (2)
 - ☐ Sometimes (3)
 - ☐ Often (4)
 - ☐ Very often (5)
-

Q17 Do you save or bookmark health information posts?

- ☐ Never (1)
 - ☐ Rarely (2)
 - ☐ Sometimes (3)
 - ☐ Often (4)
 - ☐ Very often (5)
-

Q18 Do you verify health content before sharing with others?

- ☐ Never (1)
 - ☐ Rarely (2)
 - ☐ Sometimes (3)
 - ☐ Often (4)
 - ☐ Very often (5)
-

Q19 Do you discuss online health information with a clinician?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ Very often (5)

End of Block: Block 3. Information Sources & Exposure (5 items)

Start of Block: Block 4. Information Disorder: Exposure & Response (6 items)

Q20 In the past 6 months, have you seen what you believe to be is:

	Never (1)	Once or twice (2)	Monthly (3)	Weekly (4)	Daily (5)
False or misleading health content online? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deliberately false health content intended to deceive? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health information that was true but presented to cause harm? (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q21 Common tactics you notice in health information:

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Very often (5)
Sensational headlines (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cherry-picked evidence (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fake experts or credentials (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
AI-generated images/videos (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Impersonation of official sources (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q22 In those cases where you have seen misleading or false information, which health topics are most often the focus? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Vaccines (1)
 - ☐ Nutrition/weight loss (2)
 - ☐ Supplements (3)
 - ☐ Chronic disease “cures” (4)
 - ☐ Mental health (5)
 - ☐ Sexual health (6)
 - ☐ Women’s health (7)
 - ☐ Men’s health (8)
 - ☐ Fertility/hormones (9)
 - ☐ Supplements/herbals (10)
 - ☐ Nutrition/diets (11)
 - ☐ Weight-loss medicines (12)
 - ☐ Cancer treatments (13)
 - ☐ Skin care treatments (14)
 - ☒ None of these (15)
 - ☐ Other (please specify) (16)
-

Q23 I can usually detect misleading health content

- ☐ Not at all confident (1)
 - ☐ Slightly (2)
 - ☐ Moderately (3)
 - ☐ Very (4)
 - ☐ Extremely confident (5)
-

Q24 I have corrected someone who shared false health content

- ☐ Never (1)
 - ☐ Rarely (2)
 - ☐ Sometimes (3)
 - ☐ Often (4)
 - ☐ Very often (5)
-

Q25 I have shared health content later found to be false

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ Very often (5)

End of Block: Block 4. Information Disorder: Exposure & Response (6 items)

Start of Block: Block 5. Trust Triangle (2 items)

Q26 How much do you trust the following sources for health information?

	Not at all (1)	Slightly (2)	Moderately (3)	Very (4)	Completely (5)
Doctors (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pharmacists (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Nurses (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Government/NHS/Ministry of Health / The World Health Organisation (WHO) source (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Universities/medical centres (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
NGOs/charities (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
News media (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers/creators (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friends/family (9)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ChatGPT, AI & chatbots (10)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q27 To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
A health message from quality assured sources (e.d a University, WHO, National Health Service) (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A health message with clear references increases my trust (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A health message written in plain language increases my trust (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Disclosure of conflicts of interest increases my trust (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use of charts or data visualisations increases my trust (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Platform moderation policies increase my trust in content (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I trust information more when someone outside the source checks it (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transparency about algorithms increases my trust (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

I would follow advice from my most trusted source (9)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would ignore advice from a source I distrust (10)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I rely on the judgment of my most trusted source when making important decisions*** (11)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I disregard advice or recommendations received from a source I do not trust (12)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: Block 5. Trust Triangle (2 items)

Start of Block: Block 6. Digital & Health Literacy (1 matrix item)

Q82 How often do you need to have someone help you when you read instructions, pamphlets, or other written material from your doctor or pharmacy?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Rarely (2)
- ☐ Sometimes (3)
- ☐ Often (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

Q28 To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I know how to find helpful health resources online (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know how to use the online health information I find (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can judge the quality of online health information (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand basic medical terms in my primary language (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can interpret simple risk statistics (e.g., "1 in 10") (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can read medicine labels correctly (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can compare side-effects & benefits of treatment (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall, I am confident about making self-care decisions based on information I find (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: Block 6. Digital & Health Literacy (1 matrix item)

Start of Block: Block 7. Impact of Exposure: Behaviour & Coping (20 items)

Q29 After seeing conflicting claims, my confidence in self-care decisions decreases

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
 - ☐ Disagree (2)
 - ☐ Neither (3)
 - ☐ Agree (4)
 - ☐ Strongly agree (5)
-

Q30 How often have you taken the following actions after seeing health information online?

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Very often (5)
I delayed seeking professional care because of online claims (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I used self-care instead of seeing a clinician after exposure (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I stopped a medicine without further advice due to information I found (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I asked a pharmacist for clarification after seeing conflicting info (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I asked a doctor/nurse for clarification after seeing conflicting info (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q31 How often do you take the following actions about conflicting health claims?

	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometime (3)	Often (5)	Very often (6)
I am likely to verify content before acting (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am likely to report harmful health content (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am likely to rely more on official sources in future (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am likely to follow professional advice, even after seeing conflicting claims (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I correct others when I see false health claims (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would participate in health education programmes (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

End of Block: Block 7. Impact of Exposure: Behaviour & Coping (20 items)

Start of Block: Block 8. Case-Based Scenarios (10 items)

Q32 The next questions give you a variety of scenarios with various choices to choose as you interpret them

Q33 You see on the news that President Trump urged pregnant women to avoid Tylenol (acetaminophen / paracetamol), because of an alleged connection to autism in children

- ☐ A) Believe it (1)
 - ☐ B) Read a few different reports to understand context (2)
 - ☐ C) Share it with a warning (3)
 - ☐ D) Report it (4)
 - ☐ E) Do nothing (5)
-

Q34 A wellness influencer recommends high-dose vitamins as a cure for depression.

- ☐ A) Try the recommendation (1)
 - ☐ B) Research scientific evidence (2)
 - ☐ C) Ask a doctor or pharmacist (3)
 - ☐ D) Ignore it (4)
-

Q35 You come across an (seemingly) AI-generated “news article” warning about a new drug’s side effects.

- ☐ A) Believe & share it (1)
 - ☐ B) Verify with a regulator’s website (2)
 - ☐ C) Ask friends what they think (3)
 - ☐ D) Report the content (4)
 - ☐ Do nothing (6)
-

Q36 Your community WhatsApp group shares a herbal drink recipe said to cure diabetes.

- ☐ A) Try it or recommend to others (1)
 - ☐ B) Ask your doctor first (2)
 - ☐ C) Comment or challenge the group admin (3)
 - ☐ D) Do nothing (5)
-

Q37 You hear two health authorities (local vs international) give conflicting COVID-19 advice.

- ☐ A) Follow whichever you agree with (1)
 - ☐ B) Follow local authority (2)
 - ☐ C) Follow international authority (3)
 - ☐ D) Seek professional medical advice (4)
-

Q38 You see a crowdfunding page claiming a new “experimental cure” for a (debilitating) condition works but isn’t licensed.

- ☐ A) Donate (1)
 - ☐ B) Share the page (2)
 - ☐ C) Research first (3)
 - ☐ D) Report the page (4)
 - ☐ E) Ignore it (5)
-

Q39 A celebrity on Instagram claims weight-loss injections are completely safe.

- ☐ A) Believe the claim (1)
 - ☐ B) Research side effects (2)
 - ☐ C) Ask a healthcare professional (3)
 - ☐ D) Ignore it (4)
-

Q40 A video shows “before-&-after” results of a detox treatment but seems AI-edited.

- ☐ A) Believe the results (1)
 - ☐ B) Share to get opinions (2)
 - ☐ C) Verify authenticity with reverse image search (3)
 - ☐ D) Report as misleading (4)
 - ☐ E) Ignore it (5)
-

Q41 A relative tells you antibiotics cure viral infections.

- ☐ A) Believe them (1)
 - ☐ B) Correct them politely (2)
 - ☐ C) Ignore to avoid conflict (3)
 - ☐ D) Show them official NHS guidance (4)
-

Q42 A news article says the government is hiding data about medicine safety.

- ☐ A) Believe & share widely (1)
- ☐ B) Research credible media/regulator sources (2)
- ☐ C) Ask health professionals for clarity (3)
- ☐ D) Ignore the article (4)

End of Block: Block 8. Case-Based Scenarios (10 items)

Start of Block: Block 9. Demographics / PROGRESS PLUS

Q81 What is your age?

▼ 18 (1) ... 101 (84)

Q46 In what type of area do you live in?

- ☐ Urban (1)
 - ☐ Peri-urban (2)
 - ☐ Rural (3)
-

Q48 How would you describe your ethnic or cultural identity?

- ☐ White (1)
 - ☐ Black (2)
 - ☐ Asian (3)
 - ☐ Mixed (4)
 - ☐ Prefer not to say (5)
 - ☐ Other (6)
-

Q50 What is your current main work status?

- ☐ Employed full-time (1)
 - ☐ Employed part-time (2)
 - ☐ Self-employed (3)
 - ☐ Student (4)
 - ☐ Homemaker (5)
 - ☐ Retired (6)
 - ☐ Unemployed (7)
 - ☐ Unable to work (8)
 - ☐ Other (9)
-

Q51 If employed, what type of work do you do?

- ☐ Professional/technical (1)
 - ☐ Skilled manual (2)
 - ☐ Service/sales (3)
 - ☐ Agriculture/fishing (4)
 - ☐ Unskilled labour (5)
 - ☐ Other (6)
 - ☐ Not applicable (7)
-

Q53 What is your gender?

- ☐ Woman (1)
 - ☐ Man (2)
 - ☐ Non-binary / Other (3)
 - ☐ Prefer not to say (4)
-

Q54 What sex were you assigned at birth?

- ☐ Female (1)
 - ☐ Male (2)
 - ☐ Prefer not to say (4)
-

Q56 How religious or spiritual would you describe yourself?

- ☐ Not at all religious or spiritual (1)
 - ☐ Slightly religious or spiritual (2)
 - ☐ Moderately religious or spiritual (3)
 - ☐ Very religious or spiritual (4)
 - ☐ Extremely religious or spiritual (5)
 - ☐ Prefer not to say (6)
-

Q58 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ No formal schooling (1)
 - ☐ Primary (2)
 - ☐ Secondary (3)
 - ☐ Vocational/technical (4)
 - ☐ University (5)
 - ☐ Postgraduate (6)
 - ☐ Prefer not to say (7)
-

Q61 Do you sometimes skip essentials (food, utilities, healthcare) because of cost?

- ☐ Never (1)
 - ☐ Rarely (2)
 - ☐ Sometimes (3)
 - ☐ Often (4)
 - ☐ Very often (5)
-

Q62 Do you have private health insurance?

- ☐ No (1)
 - ☐ Yes (2)
-

Q64 How many people can you rely on for support in a health crisis?

- ☐ None (1)
 - ☐ 1–2 (2)
 - ☐ 3–5 (3)
 - ☐ 6+ (4)
-

Q65 How often do you participate in community or religious group activities?

- ☐ Never (1)
 - ☐ Rarely (2)
 - ☐ Sometimes (3)
 - ☐ Often (4)
 - ☐ Very often (5)
-

Q68 Do you live with a long-term disability or health condition?

- ☐ None (1)
 - ☐ Physical (2)
 - ☐ Sensory (3)
 - ☐ Cognitive (4)
 - ☐ Mental health (5)
 - ☐ Other (6)
 - ☐ Prefer not to say (7)
-

Q70 What is your migration status?

- ☐ Born in your current country of residence (1)
 - ☐ Immigrant >5 years (2)
 - ☐ Immigrant ≤5 years (3)
 - ☐ Prefer not to say (4)
-

Q71 How well do you read in the survey language?

- ☐ Not at all (1)
- ☐ Basic (2)
- ☐ Intermediate (3)
- ☐ Advanced (4)
- ☐ Native/Fluent (5)

End of Block: Block 9. Demographics / PROGRESS PLUS

Start of Block: Consent to contact

Q72 The research team is looking to conduct interviews with participants. If you are interested to take part, please leave your name & email address & a member of the study team will contact you with more information about the interview study.

- ☐ Name (1) _____
- ☐ Email (2) _____

End of Block: Consent to contact
