Top 10 Practical Tips
How to Obtain an Efficient, Comprehensive and Accurate Best Possible Medication History (BPMH)

1. Be proactive. Gather as much information as possible prior to seeing the patient. Include primary medication histories, provincial database information, and medications vials/lists.

2. Prompt questions about non-prescription categories: over the counter drugs, vitamins, recreational drugs, herbal/traditional remedies.

3. Prompt questions about unique dosage forms: eye drops, inhalers, patches, and sprays.

4. Don’t assume patients are taking medications according to prescription vials (ask about recent changes initiated by either the patient or the prescriber).

5. Use open-ended questions: (“Tell me how you take this medication?”).

6. Use medical conditions as a trigger to prompt consideration of appropriate common medications.

7. Consider patient adherence with prescribed regimens (“Has the medication been recently filled?”).

8. Verify accuracy: validate with at least two sources of information.

9. Obtain community pharmacy contact information: anticipate and inquire about multiple pharmacies.

10. Use a BPMH trigger sheet (or a systematic process / interview guide). Include efficient order/optimal phrasing of questions, and prompts for commonly missed medications.

Adapted with permission from O. Fernandes PharmD, University Health Network, 2008