In 2010 the EPICC Program and SelectHealth worked together to expand the role that pharmacists play in hypertension management. SelectHealth implemented a 12 month pilot project.

**Project Description**
- Physicians refer patients with difficult to control hypertension to a pharmacist with expertise in hypertension management
- Pharmacists follow up with patients via telephone or in person every two weeks until the patient achieves their blood pressure goal and every three to six months after that
- Pharmacists discuss: medication adherence, adverse drug events, and complexity of the medication regime
- Pharmacists adjust medications and doses based on a pre-established protocol developed with the physician
- All information is logged in the patient’s electronic health record (EHR) and communicated to physician

**Results**
- 40 patients with difficult to control high blood pressure were referred to the service
- 75% of patients achieved their blood pressure goal over the course of the one year pilot

**Pharmacists Can Help**
Pharmacists can help improve medication adherence. They are widely accessible and:
- Help patients find the correct medication
- Support patients in taking medications
- Help patients understand their disease

Only **50%** of patients take hypertension medication as directed.

Not taking medications as directed increases the risk of **heart attack** and **stroke**.

Estimated cost of non-adherence: **$100 billion** to **$289 billion** annually.