

Community Pharmacy

- Definition
- Scope of community pharmacy
- Roles and responsibility community pharmacist



Dr. Ayesha Fatima
Pharm D
Assistant Professor
Dept of Pharmacy Practice

Community Pharmacy

Community Pharmacy is defined as a place where the medicines are stocked and dispensed to the patients on a valid prescription and where legally permitted without a prescription and also offer various professional services that improves the health of the patient.

Community Pharmacists

Community pharmacists are the health care professionals easily accessible to the public and supply medicines in accordance with a prescription or sell them without a prescription when legally permitted.

In addition to ensuring an accurate supply of appropriate medicines and health care products, their professional activities include patient counseling, dissemination of unbiased drug information, providing clinical pharmacy services, and health promotion.

World Health Organisation (W.H.O) defines Community Pharmacist as legally qualified, trained health care professional who act as a vital link between the patient and the prescriber.

The pharmacist ensures the correct supply of medicines and provides medication usage information both to patients and prescribers and helps in minimizing the drug relate problems through clinical pharmacy services.

Scope of Community Pharmacy

Community Pharmacy encompasses various approaches related to patient counseling and managing drug-related issues, including:

Drug
Information
Services

Drug
Utilization

Drug
distribution

Drug Selection

Patient
Counselling
and evaluation

1. Drug information Services:

- Community pharmacies provide essential knowledge regarding drug chemistry, pharmacology, toxicology, routes of administration, and stability.
- They serve as a crucial source of authoritative drug information for both physicians and pharmacists, acquired through interactions with healthcare professionals and pharmacy committees.
- Community pharmacies also play a role in ensuring drug quality, proper dispensing, and selecting suitable products in the market.
- It also gives the knowledge to how to administer the drug to the patient.

2. Drug utilization:

- Community pharmacies contribute to developing policies for pharmaceutical service charges and are responsible for implementing effective systems for stock and inventory control.
- Stock control reports on prescription and controlled drugs dispensed, drug purchases, inspection and improvement in operation and such other aspect which demand attention.

3. Drug distribution:

- It is necessary to have control for internal distribution of drugs for patients.
- The patients who are hospitalized may require intensive drug therapy, controlled procedures which will allow rapid rechecks of drug source and quality.
- The potentialities of automated dispensing at the wards level bring further emphasis to establishment of correct controls for drug distribution in this situation.

4. Drug selection:

- In the field of community pharmacy the 'rational drug therapy' plays an important role for the selection of drugs which will be given to the patients to encounter the disease.
- It is defined as the use of an appropriate, efficacious, safe and cost-effective drug given for the right indication, in the right dose and at right interval of time and for the right duration of time.

It involves various type of activities like-

- Adoption of essential drugs concept
- Training of health professionals
- Maintenance of data based on clinical guidelines
- Consumer education and regulatory strategies if the Rational Drug Use (RDU) is not proper it leads to illness, adverse drug reactions (ADRs). increase cost of medication and treatment to the patient. It is also known as "Essential Drug Concept" (EDC).

5. Patient counseling and evaluating:

- Dialogues between patients and physicians regarding the indication, proper use and potential adverse effects of non-prescription drugs (NPDs) should be different as compared, when if the physician has written the prescription.

Roles And Responsibilities Of Community Pharmacist

The consultative group of the World Health Organization listed the following responsibilities as the professional responsibilities of the community pharmacists.

1. Processing of the prescriptions
2. Dispensing
3. Patient counseling
4. Drug information services
5. Health promotion
6. Health screening services
7. Responding to symptoms of minor ailments
8. Consultation to General Practitioners

1. Processing of the Prescriptions

- Pharmacists are expected to review and check the prescriptions for the legality, appropriateness and potential drug related problems in the prescription.
- Upon satisfaction with the content of the prescription, the pharmacist will dispense the prescribed medicines.

2. Dispensing

- The meaning of "dispensing" according to Oxford dictionary is to make up and give out the medicines on a prescription.
- In the early days as the pharmacists were engaged in compounding activity, the prescribed med dispensed to the patient.
- Currently, prepackaged medicines as various pharmaceutical dosage medicines were appropriately compounded and forms are available in the market, thus the compounding and dispensing activity has become obsolete.
- Thus the pharmacist should label each item prescribed in the prescription with the name of the patient, age, gender, name of the drug, instructions for proper use of the drug, name of the prescriber and the seal of the pharmacy

3. Patient Counseling

- Majority of the patients may not have proper ideas about the correct usage of their medicines. Due to their busy schedules and over patient load, often prescribers may give very brief information about the medicines. Thus it is an opportunity for the pharmacists to step into the counseling role.
- Patient counseling is defined as providing the disease related and medication related information in layman language to the patients or patient's representative for appropriate use of prescribed medication and controlling the disease symptoms by practicing an appropriate diet and lifestyle modifications as per the individual requirements.
- Many research studies have corroborated the positive influence of counseling in disease management and improved medication adherence behavior and ultimately on improved therapeutic outcomes and health related quality of life.

4. Drug Information Services

- Every year many new molecules are approved by the regulatory authorities and permit the pharmaceutical companies to market them for the labeled indications.
- However efficacy and the safety profile of these new molecules is often ambiguous.
- In such situations, prescribers depend on pharmaceutical companies for medication related information.
- Due to the commercial interests, the information given by the companies in product literature is product favored and biased.
- To overcome this problem, the pharmacist may take the responsibility to provide unbiased information about the drugs.
- Drug information is defined as the systematic approach of reviewing various sources of published literature, evaluating the published information and providing the suitable answer to the requester.
- To provide the information, pharmacist may use various resources such as primary sources (peer reviewed journals e.g., LANCET, BMJ, Annals of Pharmacotherapy etc.), secondary resources (Various databases like IDIS, MicroMedex etc.,) and tertiary resources such as text books and compendia.

5. Health Promotion

- Pharmacists by virtue of their knowledge, skills and the rapport with the public, they will be able to educate the individuals to practice healthy habits and lifestyle practices to prevent diseases.
- Health promotion activities include smoking cessation programs, family planning, participation in vaccination program and education about deworming and balanced diet.

6. Health Screening Service

- Health screening service is the patient care service that is offered by the pharmacists in community pharmacies.
- Health screening service plays an important role in early detection of the chronic diseases, and thereby patient can receive early treatment and prevent the complications of the disease.
- By offering health screening service, community pharmacists can also involve in monitoring and managing the chronic disorders like hypertension, diabetes mellitus, hyperlipdemia, asthma.
- This will minimize the disease burden on the individual and also on the society.
- Monitoring refers to observation and in some cases intervention of the disease condition after the diagnosis and treatment, which helps to asses and improve the therapeutic outcomes.

7. Responding to Symptoms of Minor Ailments

- Worldwide pharmacists are known as easily accessible health care professionals to the as common colds, diarrhea, simple body aches, spasms and sprains, pharmacists will be able common man on matters related to the health.
- When required in case of minor ailments such to give suitable medications to alleviate the symptoms.

8. Consultation to General Practitioners

- Pharmacists by virtue of their professional liaison, they can guide patients to the general practitioners for suitable management of the medical condition.
- When required pharmacists will provide the drug information to the doctors, supply the emergency drugs to clinics and nursing homes. In Australia, pharmacists in consultation with the general practitioners, participate in home medicine review programs (HMR).
- HMR is a specialized service offered by accredited community pharmacists.

- In HMR activity, the HMR pharmacist in consultation with the general practitioners will visit the patients at their residences by taking their appointment.
- During the house visit, HMR pharmacist review the patient case notes and medications to identify any drug related problems and resolve the same in consultation with the general practitioners and educate the patient appropriately for increased medication adherence and better therapeutic outcomes.