Community Pharmacy – Current Scenario and Future prospects

Dr. N. Udupa
Professor & Principal
Manipal College of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Manipal University
Manipal.

www.manipal.edu
19th Century Italian Pharmacy
Modern Day Pharmacy in Norway
Present scenario of health care in India

• 13,592 government hospitals having a total bed strength of 810,538 cater to over 1 billion strong Indian population.

• India’s per capita expenditure on health care is Rs 15.20 compared to Rs 6,876 in the US and Rs 14,823 in Japan.

• Less than 2% of our GDP is spent on healthcare

• An average Indian spends about 5% of his annual income on curative care.
Pharmacy

- **Pharmacy** (commonly the **chemist** in [Australia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia), New Zealand and the [UK](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom); or **drugstore** in [North America](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_America); **retail pharmacy** in industry terminology; or **Apothecary**, historically)

- Is the place where most pharmacists practice the profession of pharmacy.

- It is the community pharmacy where the dichotomy of the profession exists—health professionals who are also retailers
Global Scenario – Developed world

Types of pharmacy practice areas

• Pharmacists practice in a variety of areas including retail, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, drug industry, and regulatory agencies.

• Pharmacists can specialize in various areas of practice including but not limited to: hematology/oncology, infectious diseases, ambulatory care, nutrition support, drug information, critical care, pediatrics, etc.
Role of Pharmacist in community

• “Community” in this context means working in among public in particular area.

• Community pharmacists have greater role in the health care delivery to the community.

• Community pharmacists can act as first point of contact health care provider.

• They deliver medications and other health care services to the community.
Community Pharmacy

• Community pharmacies usually consist of a retail storefront with a dispensary where medications are stored and dispensed.

• The dispensary is subject to pharmacy legislation; with requirements for storage conditions, compulsory texts, equipment, etc., specified in legislation.
• In the past pharmacists stayed within the dispensary compounding/dispensing medications.

• But in recent years there has been an increasing trend towards the use of trained pharmacy technicians for compounding/dispensing purposes while the pharmacist spends more time communicating with patients.
Indian Scenario

• According to PCI (Pharmacy Council of India), there were 5,59,408 registered pharmacists in India in June 2003.

• This figure is estimated to be around 7 lakh registered pharmacists in 2008, thereby achieving a ratio of 1 pharmacist per 1785 persons.

• About 5.6 pharmacists per 10,000 people against average of 4.3 in the industrialized countries.

• India has around 300,000-350,000 pharmacies.
• This ratio although looks good mislead us from truth.

• In reality, the number of registered pharmacists does not reflect the number of those who are engaged in pharmacy practice in general and community pharmacy practice in particular.
• The number of pharmacists employed officially for community pharmacy service is much less, and does not exceed half of the total number of registered pharmacists due to migration, retirement and those work in other areas such as industry, research, academic, marketing and regulatory professions.

• An FIP (International Pharmaceutical Federation, 2006) study reports that 55% of the total registered pharmacists practice in community setting.
• Number of pharmacists involved in practice is likely to be much less due to the fact that large numbers of community pharmacies do not have a pharmacist present at all.

• The supporting persons or drug retailers (i.e. pharmacy assistants) manage the pharmacies in absence of the registered pharmacists.

• Medicines are still being sold/dispensed by pharmacy assistants.
Community pharmacists’ Image

• As far as the provision of health care goes community pharmacist's image in India is very poor.

• The community pharmacists are still struggling for their identity as health care professionals.

• The community pharmacists are branded as drug trader or drug seller by the public.
• The national health policy 2002 while declaring current levels of healthcare professionals, maintain silence about pharmacists and their role in health care.

• The public (patients or consumers) view the drug sale in a community pharmacy same as the similar sale in a stationary shop.

• If this current situation left unattended, Pharmacists loosing their professional role is not an unimaginable situation.
• The perception of government toward pharmacists received a setback when in the year 2002, when a Government committee suggested review of the licensing conditions that there is no requirement of pharmacists in distribution and sale of drugs.

• If the kind of regulation proposed by the Government of India comes to force probably medicines will be distributed by trained assistants through public Distribution System shops (Ration shops). ????????
• Keeping this in mind it is imperative that community pharmacists should take professional responsibilities voluntarily and establish their profession a responsible health care profession rather than mere drug sellers.
What needs to be done?

• Every stake holder of the Pharmacy profession has a crucial role to play.
• Professional bodies.
• Regulatory Agencies.
• Universities and Academic institutions.
• Individual pharmacists and academicians.
• The pharmacist's role in responding to symptoms and overseeing the sale of over-the-counter (OTC) medicines is substantial and requires a mix of knowledge and skills in the area of diseases and their treatment
Basic knowledge about the drugs and diseases

Some of the issues which needs attention of Pharmacists are:

- In the ever growing OTC segments of products, lay press advertisements.
- Self medication.
- Drug abuse.
- Non-compliance of dosage regimen.
• Mixing of OTC medicines with prescription medicines.

• Changing life style and food habits.

• Prevalence of diseases like asthma, tuberculosis, diabetes, etc.

• There is need to educate and advice the consumers on proper and safe use of medicines- and it requires regular refresher courses to prepare the community pharmacists in patient care and counseling.
Specific Therapeutic areas to focus

• Cardiovascular disorders.
• Diabetes.
• Asthma.
• Communicable disease like TB
• High Risk diseases like HIV
• Life style modifications like Counseling for obesity and smoking cessation.
Cardiovascular system

• Blood pressure monitoring.
• Counseling BP medications.
• Lifestyle modifications to control BP.
• Following for other conditions like Arrhythmias, failure and hyperlipidemia.
• Pharmacists can be partners of patients in their cardiovascular care.
Diabetes

- Diabetes is an epidemic threatening world population and India is more vulnerable to this condition.
- Diabetes needs very intensive help from pharmacists in counseling on medications, food and life style modifications.
- Pharmacists can monitor blood sugars of patients and advice them suitably.
Asthma

• Asthma is a condition affecting millions of Indians and especially children are affected frequently by it.

• Quality of life is an important issue in this group of patients.

• Pharmacists can help patients in proper use of medicine, monitoring expiratory flow rate and suitable advice on use of inhalers and spacers.
Tuberculosis

• Millions of Indians are affected by Tuberculosis every year.

• Because of long duration of therapy non compliance is a major problem in patients.

• Pharmacists can educate patients on the need for compliance and help in control of this disease.
HIV

• In India HIV is also growing as a threat and as there is no known care and prevention is the best way for controlling this condition.

• Pharmacists can provide meaningful contribution for preventing this killer disease.
Obesity

• It is a growing epidemic among urban population and is responsible for the development of cardiovascular and diabetes related problems.

• Community pharmacists can actively involve in educating public on life style, selection of healthy food etc.
Smoking cessation

• As there are new interventions are available for smoking cessation, pharmacists can actively take part in this activity to help patients to quit smoking and reduce the risk of many complications.
Need to maintain proper statutory records

• It is in the interest of pharmacists that they buy the medicines from authorized sources with proper purchase records.

• Maintain sales memos with patients name and address, batch number of the medicines sold, as a legal requirement and to safeguard themselves in the event of any drug found substandard or unsafe requiring recall etc.
Need to provide patient information brochures

- Pharmaceutical associations, manufacturers can provide brochures to be distributed to patients at the counters on disease like asthma.

- Diabetes, hypertension, epilepsy even common cold and cough, with Do's and Don'ts etc,
To provide information

• For Immunization and if space permits, vaccination programs can be organized with the help of manufacturers in the pharmacies.

• To provide community outreach programs.

• Conducting special programs on specific days like World diabetes day, Heart day.
Geriatric care

• Elderly patients tend to get confused or forget to take medicines properly.

• Complementary packs for keeping each medication separately with dosage marked will help them to take medicines as prescribed.
Proper Storage

• All medicines are temperature sensitive and to retain their potency and efficacy proper storage is essential, protected from sunlight and heat.

• While it is recommended that all Community Pharmacies are air conditioned, there is a proposal to amend D&C Rules to provide air conditioners compulsorily.
Access

- To Drug Information Centers/ reference books/ web-sites on drug information: This is possible by providing Computers and Internet connectivity
Communication skills

• As pharmacists, to understand customer needs, it is necessary to develop listening skills, questioning skills.

• To develop a positive mind set for ethical pharmacy practices, evolving all professional, legal and moral obligations to the society.
Need for strengthening pharmacy groups

• Pharmacists can form groups which will help them in working for their progress.

• Conducting continuous pharmacy education programs.

• Upgrading skills.
Future

• Pharmacists should be recognised as a responsible health care provider and should be seen as dependable person by the public.

• Let all of us strive to achieve this goal !!!!