

# Pharmacist: Experiences and Utilization of Lockdown Period for Future Endeavours

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## Description

Pharmacy is a leading health discipline contributing to a country's development. Given the worldwide study of lock-downs and the leading role of the national level pharmacy practitioner, this editorial emphasizes the role played by pharmacists in the COVID-19 pandemic. Pharmacists play an essential role in pharmaceutical manufacture, marketing and regulation of drugs, the provision of pharmaceutical care services and the dissemination of their knowledge through academic and research. In addition, pharmacists are an important part of the multidisciplinary healthcare team that takes care of patients and plays a key role in ensuring the proper use of drugs. Extended roles of clinicians contribute to cost efficient therapeutic outcomes. These roles are well-known and regarded as an integral part of the healthcare systems in many countries, including certain developing countries. But pharmacists are currently not an integral part of India multidisciplinary healthcare team and their role is primarily restricted to the dispensing of medicines, compounding them and providing patients with limited medicine information. In order to achieve the final objective of enhancing a nation's healthcare services, the pharmacy profession should commit to continually improving their knowledge and quality of practice. Globally, pharmacists offer services in amidst of the pandemic including TRIAGE systems, patient vision and the reduction of patient's burden on healthcare institutions such as hospitals and GP practices. Pharmacists also work to provide home prescriptions to cope with the rising number of patients who seek pharmacy in conjunction with other diseases.

Pharmacies worldwide are one of the few places which remain open even during strict lockdowns for public service. During the outbreak, community pharmacists and their teams are vital health care providers; they continue to be at the forefront of public health by providing patients direct access to them. During an epidemic, hospital pharmacists play an important role in monitoring and assisting the infection.

Countries seriously affected by pandemics face over-loaded healthcare services and shortages and burnouts of health workers. Throughout this moment of crisis, TRIAGE service has become a supporting process, involving pharmacists and other primary health

professionals. A provision of COVID-19 trained healthcare professionals is available to support these services during shortages of medical or nursing staff and also to enhance the service's coverage. The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) has been provided by the set of 10 summaries for guidance on COVID-19. The American Pharmacist Association, as a leading health worker in global health crises, has also published guidelines and resource papers for the strengthening and preparedness of community-based pharmacies.

Most pharmacists work in the pharmaceutical sector, but there are an increasing number of pharmacy professionals now in the community or in retail pharmacies. While the organizations, administrations, hospitals organized Personal Protective Equipment's (PPEs) for doctors, nurses and paramedics, little attention has been paid to shielding pharmacy departments, despite being a first line of public contact in a normal situation and even more so in this COVID-19 pandemic with global OPDs. In their workplace health plans many governments, hospitals, e-pharmacies and even businesses have embraced telemedicine. Telemedicine is an online data exchange of medical information from one place to another that enhances patient safety status.

The development of telecommunications follows the long-term guidelines for telemedicine which have been finally published by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MHFW) in partnership with NITI Aayog and Board of Governors (BoG) Medical Council of India (MCI).

With ease of access, the community pharmacy has a unique and credible role to play. Pharmaceuticals are an important role in healthcare in the past pandemics and health crises, while others such as Ebola and Zika virus pose global health risk. Likewise, COVID-19 pandemic community pharmacists play a role for public health when they deal with this crisis by contributing to prevention and preparedness. In numerous countries, pharmacies have worked in closely collaborated with International Humanitarian Organizations, such as the Red Cross and local community workers, to increase public awareness and ensure the supply of medicines at home.

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