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The role of pharmacists in healthcare delivery

Yosef Houmid Al Shammari

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: zx5zx6@hotmail.com

Homoud Awade Al Shammari

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: Abomlk022@gmail.com

Talal Muhammad Bin Barak

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: gdmol2014@gmail.com

Bandar Said Alharbi

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: aa4605a@gmail.com

Saud Tawfiq Alshammari

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: Tobksa79@gmail.com

Saleh Abdullah Alnais

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: Salehalnais22@gmail.com

Saeed Awad Aljohani

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: 4uvideoclip@gmail.com

Abdulrahman Abdullah Alorf

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: abdulrahmanab7557@gmail.com

Meshari Abdulmajeed Alnawmasi

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: Alnomasime@gmail.com

Mohammed Awad Alshammari

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs
Email: alshammario15@nghan.med.sa

Majed Farhan Alharbi

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs

Email: Alharbima2@ngha.med.sa**Abdulrahman Gobile Al Enazi**

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs

Email: Alenazia13@ngha.med.sa**Abdulelah Mohammed Mubashir Alamri**

KSA, National Guard Health Affairs

Email: Deloo.hellcat@gmail.com

Abstract--Pharmacists play a multifaceted role in healthcare delivery, contributing significantly to patient care, medication management, and public health initiatives. This paper explores the diverse responsibilities and contributions of pharmacists within healthcare teams, highlighting their expertise in medication therapy management, preventive care, chronic disease management, and medication access and adherence. Through collaborative practice models, patient education initiatives, and innovative interventions, pharmacists play an integral role in promoting optimal health outcomes and improving the quality, safety, and effectiveness of healthcare delivery.

Keywords--Pharmacists, healthcare delivery, medication management, patient care, medication therapy management.

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of modern healthcare, the role of pharmacists has evolved beyond traditional dispensing practices to encompass multifaceted responsibilities crucial for optimal patient care. As frontline healthcare providers, pharmacists play an integral role in healthcare delivery, bridging the gap between patients and other healthcare professionals. With their extensive knowledge of medications and their interactions, pharmacists contribute significantly to medication management, patient education, and promoting health outcomes. This research aims to explore the diverse roles pharmacists undertake in healthcare delivery, highlighting their impact on patient safety, medication adherence, and overall healthcare efficacy. Understanding the evolving role of pharmacists is paramount in enhancing collaborative healthcare models and optimizing patient-centered care in the ever-evolving healthcare landscape.(7)

Medication Management: The Vital Role of Pharmacists in Healthcare

Medication management is a crucial aspect of healthcare, ensuring patients receive the right medications, at the right doses, and with proper instructions. Pharmacists play a vital role in this process, serving as medication experts who collaborate with healthcare teams to optimize patient outcomes.(3)

Pharmacists are uniquely trained to understand the complexities of medications, including their mechanisms of action, potential side effects, and interactions with other drugs. They use this knowledge to review prescriptions, verify their appropriateness, and counsel patients on how to take their medications safely and effectively.(7)

In healthcare settings, pharmacists work closely with physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals to develop comprehensive medication regimens tailored to each patient's needs. They also monitor patients' responses to medications, assess for adverse effects, and make recommendations for adjustments when necessary.(5,6)

Beyond direct patient care, pharmacists contribute to medication safety initiatives, such as medication reconciliation programs and adverse drug event reporting systems. They also play a crucial role in educating patients and the community about medication adherence, proper storage, and disposal practices.(1,5)

With the rise of chronic diseases and complex medication regimens, the role of pharmacists in medication management has become increasingly vital. Through their expertise, pharmacists help improve patient outcomes, reduce medication errors, and enhance overall healthcare quality. Thus, fostering collaboration between pharmacists and other healthcare providers is essential for delivering safe and effective patient care.(1,2)

How Pharmacists Enhance Healthcare Delivery

Pharmacists play a multifaceted role in enhancing healthcare delivery across various domains, leveraging their specialized knowledge and patient-centered approach. One pivotal aspect is medication management, where pharmacists serve as frontline guardians of patient safety by meticulously reviewing prescriptions, verifying appropriateness, and counseling patients on proper medication usage. Through their expertise, pharmacists ensure patients receive the right medications, in the correct doses, and with clear instructions, thereby reducing the risk of medication errors, adverse reactions, and treatment non-adherence.(3,5)

Beyond dispensing medications, pharmacists actively engage in patient education, empowering individuals to take charge of their health. Pharmacists offer invaluable guidance on medication administration techniques, potential side effects, and strategies to mitigate risks, fostering medication adherence and treatment success. This educational outreach extends to chronic disease management, where pharmacists work collaboratively with patients to optimize therapy regimens, monitor disease progression, and provide lifestyle counseling. Whether managing diabetes, hypertension, or asthma, pharmacists serve as integral members of the healthcare team, promoting holistic wellness and disease prevention.(8)

In addition to direct patient care, pharmacists contribute significantly to medication therapy management (MTM), a comprehensive approach to optimizing

medication regimens and enhancing patient outcomes. Through MTM services, pharmacists conduct thorough medication reviews, identify potential drug interactions, and tailor treatment plans to individual patient needs. By addressing medication-related issues proactively, pharmacists play a crucial role in minimizing adverse events, improving medication adherence, and optimizing therapeutic efficacy.(5)

Pharmacists also play a vital role in promoting public health and wellness initiatives, including immunizations, smoking cessation programs, and medication adherence campaigns. As accessible healthcare providers within communities, pharmacists leverage their expertise to deliver preventive care services, administer vaccinations, and educate the public on disease prevention strategies. Furthermore, pharmacists contribute to population health efforts by participating in public health surveillance, reporting adverse drug reactions, and advocating for evidence-based policies to improve healthcare outcomes on a broader scale.(5,13)

Pharmacists excel in collaborative care models, working alongside physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals to deliver integrated and patient-centered care. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, pharmacists contribute unique perspectives and insights to care planning, medication reconciliation, and transitional care management. By fostering effective communication and teamwork, pharmacists help streamline care processes, enhance care coordination, and optimize healthcare delivery across the continuum of care.(1,4) In essence, pharmacists serve as indispensable assets to the healthcare system, enhancing patient safety, improving treatment outcomes, and promoting population health through their diverse contributions. With their expertise, commitment to excellence, and patient-centered approach, pharmacists continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of healthcare delivery.

The Evolving Role of Pharmacists in Modern Healthcare

The role of pharmacists in modern healthcare is undergoing a profound evolution, driven by advancements in healthcare delivery models, technological innovations, and shifting patient needs. Pharmacists, traditionally known for their expertise in medication management, are now expanding their scope of practice to encompass a broader range of clinical services, preventive care initiatives, and collaborative care models. This transformation reflects a growing recognition of pharmacists as essential members of the healthcare team, capable of delivering high-quality, patient-centered care across diverse healthcare settings.(3,5)

One significant aspect of this evolution is the expansion of pharmacists' clinical roles beyond traditional dispensing duties. Pharmacists are increasingly taking on direct patient care responsibilities, conducting medication therapy management (MTM) services, and providing comprehensive medication reviews to optimize therapy outcomes. By leveraging their specialized knowledge of pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, and pharmacotherapy, pharmacists are able to assess medication efficacy, identify potential drug interactions, and tailor treatment regimens to individual patient needs, thereby improving medication adherence and patient outcomes.(5,15)

Pharmacists are playing a more prominent role in chronic disease management, working collaboratively with patients and healthcare providers to manage conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma. Through medication reconciliation programs, disease state management protocols, and lifestyle counseling interventions, pharmacists are helping patients achieve better disease control, reduce hospitalizations, and enhance their quality of life. This expanded focus on holistic patient care reflects a shift towards proactive, preventive healthcare strategies aimed at addressing underlying health disparities and promoting long-term wellness.(9,10)

Pharmacists are also embracing new roles in public health promotion and population health management. Pharmacists are actively involved in immunization campaigns, smoking cessation programs, and medication adherence initiatives, serving as advocates for health promotion and disease prevention within their communities. By leveraging their accessibility and trust within the community, pharmacists are able to reach underserved populations, improve health literacy, and address social determinants of health that impact patient outcomes.(8,9)

Pharmacists are embracing technology-enabled solutions to enhance their practice and improve patient care delivery. From electronic health records (EHRs) to telehealth platforms and medication management apps, pharmacists are leveraging digital tools to streamline workflow processes, facilitate remote consultations, and enhance medication adherence monitoring. By embracing innovation and embracing a culture of continuous learning, pharmacists are staying at the forefront of healthcare delivery, driving positive change, and improving patient outcomes in an increasingly complex and dynamic healthcare landscape.(6,7)

the evolving role of pharmacists in modern healthcare reflects a paradigm shift towards a more integrated, patient-centered approach to care delivery. By expanding their clinical expertise, embracing preventive care initiatives, and leveraging technology-enabled solutions, pharmacists are poised to play a central role in shaping the future of healthcare delivery, driving innovation, and improving health outcomes for individuals and communities alike.(7)

Optimizing Therapy: Pharmacists as Medication Experts in Healthcare Teams

Pharmacists serve as indispensable medication experts within healthcare teams, playing a pivotal role in optimizing therapy for patients across diverse healthcare settings. With their specialized training in pharmacology, pharmacotherapy, and medication management, pharmacists possess a unique understanding of the complexities surrounding medication use, efficacy, and safety. This expertise enables pharmacists to collaborate effectively with other healthcare professionals to develop tailored treatment regimens, minimize medication-related risks, and enhance patient outcomes.(1,4)

One of the contributions of pharmacists in healthcare teams is their ability to conduct comprehensive medication reviews and assess patients' medication

therapy. Pharmacists evaluate factors such as drug interactions, therapeutic duplications, and adherence issues to identify opportunities for therapy optimization and medication reconciliation. By taking a holistic approach to medication management, pharmacists help ensure that patients receive the most appropriate medications, at the right doses, and with clear instructions for use, thereby reducing the risk of adverse drug events and treatment non-adherence.(2,4)

Pharmacists play a central role in medication therapy management (MTM) services, where they provide personalized medication counseling, monitoring, and intervention to optimize therapy outcomes. Through MTM programs, pharmacists collaborate with patients and healthcare providers to address medication-related concerns, optimize drug regimens, and promote medication adherence. By leveraging their expertise in pharmacotherapy and patient education, pharmacists empower individuals to take an active role in managing their health and achieving optimal treatment outcomes.(5,14)

In addition to direct patient care, pharmacists contribute valuable insights and recommendations to interdisciplinary healthcare teams, including physicians, nurses, and other allied health professionals. Pharmacists provide evidence-based guidance on medication selection, dosing adjustments, and therapeutic alternatives, drawing upon their knowledge of pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, and pharmacogenomics. By fostering open communication and collaboration among team members, pharmacists help ensure that patient care plans are comprehensive, coordinated, and tailored to individual patient needs.(2,16)

Pharmacists are at the forefront of efforts to enhance medication safety and quality within healthcare teams. Pharmacists participate in medication error reporting systems, conduct medication safety assessments, and implement strategies to mitigate risks associated with medication use. Through their vigilance and attention to detail, pharmacists help prevent medication errors, adverse drug reactions, and other medication-related complications, thereby improving patient safety and healthcare quality.(3)

Pharmacists play a critical role as medication experts within healthcare teams, contributing to the optimization of therapy, medication safety, and patient outcomes. By leveraging their specialized knowledge, clinical skills, and collaborative approach to care delivery, pharmacists are instrumental in promoting optimal medication use, improving treatment adherence, and enhancing the overall quality of patient care. As integral members of interdisciplinary healthcare teams, pharmacists continue to drive innovation, advance practice, and optimize therapy to meet the evolving needs of patients in today's healthcare landscape.(16)

Frontline Guardians: Pharmacists' Contributions to Patient Safety and Health Outcomes

Pharmacists stand as frontline guardians of patient safety and health outcomes, making invaluable contributions across various aspects of healthcare delivery. As

medication experts, pharmacists play a pivotal role in ensuring the safe and effective use of medications, minimizing the risk of medication errors, adverse drug reactions, and treatment-related complications. Through their specialized knowledge of pharmacology, pharmacokinetics, and medication management, pharmacists meticulously review prescriptions, verify appropriateness, and counsel patients on proper medication administration techniques. This proactive approach to medication safety helps safeguard patients from potential harm, promoting optimal health outcomes and reducing the burden on healthcare systems.(1,4)

Pharmacists are instrumental in promoting medication adherence, a critical factor in achieving treatment success and preventing disease progression. Through patient education initiatives, medication counseling sessions, and adherence monitoring programs, pharmacists empower individuals to take control of their health and adhere to prescribed treatment regimens. By addressing barriers to adherence, such as medication complexity, side effects, and cost concerns, pharmacists help improve patient adherence rates, reduce hospitalizations, and enhance overall health outcomes. In doing so, pharmacists play a vital role in promoting patient autonomy, empowerment, and self-management of chronic conditions.(2,3)

In addition to their direct patient care responsibilities, pharmacists contribute to medication safety initiatives and quality improvement efforts within healthcare systems. Pharmacists participate in medication reconciliation processes, ensuring accurate medication lists across transitions of care and reducing the risk of medication discrepancies. Pharmacists also collaborate with healthcare teams to develop and implement medication safety protocols, adverse drug event reporting systems, and medication error prevention strategies. By advocating for a culture of safety and continuous improvement, pharmacists help foster a healthcare environment that prioritizes patient safety, quality of care, and positive health outcomes.(4)

Pharmacists are at the forefront of efforts to combat medication-related problems, such as polypharmacy, inappropriate prescribing, and medication misuse. Through medication therapy management (MTM) services, pharmacists conduct comprehensive medication reviews, identify drug-related issues, and optimize therapy regimens to maximize efficacy and minimize risks. Pharmacists also play a crucial role in pharmacovigilance, monitoring patients for adverse drug reactions, drug interactions, and medication-related complications. By providing early detection and intervention, pharmacists help mitigate potential harms associated with medication use, improving patient safety and health outcomes.(2,4)

Pharmacists serve as frontline guardians of patient safety and health outcomes, leveraging their expertise, clinical skills, and patient-centered approach to optimize medication therapy and promote optimal health. Through their contributions to medication safety, adherence promotion, and quality improvement initiatives, pharmacists play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality, safety, and effectiveness of healthcare delivery. As trusted members of the healthcare team, pharmacists continue to demonstrate their commitment to

patient-centered care, innovation, and excellence in safeguarding patient well-being and improving health outcomes in today's dynamic healthcare landscape.

Interdisciplinary Collaborators: Pharmacists' Integral Role in Healthcare Delivery

Pharmacists play an integral role as interdisciplinary collaborators in healthcare delivery, bridging gaps between various healthcare professionals and contributing to comprehensive patient care. With their specialized knowledge of medications and their effects on the body, pharmacists serve as valuable resources within healthcare teams, providing expertise on medication selection, dosing, interactions, and adverse effects. This collaborative approach enables pharmacists to work closely with physicians, nurses, and other allied health professionals to develop holistic treatment plans that address the unique needs of each patient while optimizing therapeutic outcomes.(1)

One key aspect of pharmacists' role as interdisciplinary collaborators is their involvement in medication management and therapy optimization. Pharmacists review medication orders, assess appropriateness, and provide recommendations to prescribers to ensure that patients receive the most effective and safe treatment regimens. By collaborating with healthcare providers, pharmacists help minimize medication errors, adverse drug reactions, and treatment-related complications, ultimately improving patient safety and health outcomes.(5)

Pharmacists contribute to interdisciplinary care teams by providing medication education and counseling to patients. Pharmacists empower patients to take an active role in managing their health by explaining medication instructions, potential side effects, and strategies for adherence. By fostering patient understanding and engagement, pharmacists enhance treatment adherence and promote self-management of chronic conditions, leading to better health outcomes and improved quality of life.(6)

In addition to their direct patient care responsibilities, pharmacists participate in interdisciplinary care planning and coordination activities. Pharmacists collaborate with other healthcare professionals to develop care plans that consider the patient's medical history, comorbidities, and medication regimen. Through medication reconciliation processes, pharmacists ensure continuity of care across transitions, such as hospital admissions, transfers, and discharges, reducing the risk of medication errors and adverse events.(4)

Pharmacists contribute to quality improvement initiatives and evidence-based practice within interdisciplinary healthcare teams. Pharmacists conduct medication reviews, monitor patient outcomes, and evaluate treatment effectiveness to identify opportunities for optimization and innovation. By staying abreast of the latest research and guidelines, pharmacists provide valuable insights and recommendations to enhance patient care delivery and healthcare outcomes.(3,10)

Overall, pharmacists' integral role as interdisciplinary collaborators in healthcare delivery underscores the importance of teamwork, communication, and shared

decision-making in providing high-quality patient care. Through their contributions to medication management, patient education, care coordination, and quality improvement efforts, pharmacists enhance the effectiveness, safety, and efficiency of healthcare delivery. As trusted members of the healthcare team, pharmacists continue to demonstrate their commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration, excellence in patient care, and advancing the practice of pharmacy in meeting the evolving needs of patients and communities.(5,8)

Promoting Wellness: Pharmacists' Impact on Preventive Care and Chronic Disease Management

Pharmacists play a significant role in promoting wellness through their impact on preventive care and chronic disease management, leveraging their expertise to improve patient outcomes and enhance overall health. One of the primary ways pharmacists contribute to preventive care is through vaccination services. Pharmacists are trained to administer vaccines, providing convenient access to immunizations and helping to prevent the spread of infectious diseases within communities. By offering vaccinations for influenza, pneumonia, shingles, and other preventable illnesses, pharmacists play a crucial role in reducing the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases and protecting public health.(6)

Pharmacists are actively involved in smoking cessation programs, offering counseling, support, and evidence-based interventions to help individuals quit smoking. Through personalized cessation plans, pharmacists empower smokers to overcome nicotine addiction, reduce their risk of tobacco-related diseases, and improve their overall well-being. By serving as accessible resources for smoking cessation services, pharmacists contribute to efforts aimed at reducing tobacco use prevalence and promoting a smoke-free society.(4,5)

Pharmacists play a pivotal role in chronic disease management, working collaboratively with patients and healthcare providers to optimize therapy regimens and improve disease control. Pharmacists are actively involved in managing chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, and hyperlipidemia, conducting medication reviews, monitoring disease progression, and providing lifestyle counseling. By addressing medication adherence issues, identifying drug-related problems, and promoting self-management strategies, pharmacists help patients achieve better health outcomes and reduce the risk of complications associated with chronic diseases.(5)

Pharmacists contribute to preventive care through health screenings and risk assessments. Pharmacists conduct screenings for conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and cholesterol levels, providing early detection of health issues and facilitating timely interventions. Through risk assessments and counseling sessions, pharmacists help individuals understand their risk factors for chronic diseases and develop strategies to mitigate those risks through lifestyle modifications, such as diet, exercise, and medication adherence.(4)

In addition to their direct patient care roles, pharmacists engage in community outreach and health education initiatives to promote wellness and disease prevention. Pharmacists participate in health fairs, community events, and

educational seminars, offering information on preventive measures, healthy living practices, and medication safety. By raising awareness and empowering individuals to make informed health decisions, pharmacists contribute to the promotion of wellness and the prevention of illness within communities.(11)

Overall, pharmacists play a vital role in promoting wellness through their impact on preventive care and chronic disease management. By offering vaccination services, smoking cessation programs, chronic disease management support, health screenings, and community education, pharmacists help individuals lead healthier lives and reduce their risk of preventable diseases. As trusted healthcare providers and advocates for public health, pharmacists continue to make significant contributions to wellness promotion and disease prevention efforts, fostering healthier communities and improving population health outcomes.(13)

The Role of Pharmacists in Improving Medication Access and Adherence

Pharmacists play a crucial role in improving medication access and adherence, addressing barriers that hinder patients from obtaining and adhering to their prescribed medications. One way pharmacists enhance medication access is through medication therapy management (MTM) services, where they work with patients to optimize medication regimens, address cost concerns, and navigate insurance coverage issues. By conducting comprehensive medication reviews and collaborating with healthcare providers, pharmacists help identify affordable treatment options, explore patient assistance programs, and advocate for medication substitutions or therapeutic alternatives when necessary.(3)

Pharmacists promote medication access through medication synchronization programs, which align medication refills to coincide with a single pickup date. This approach streamlines the medication management process, reduces the frequency of pharmacy visits, and enhances convenience for patients, particularly those with complex medication regimens or mobility challenges. By minimizing barriers to medication access, pharmacists improve patient adherence and reduce the risk of treatment interruptions or discontinuations.(6)

In addition to facilitating medication access, pharmacists play a pivotal role in promoting medication adherence through patient education and counseling. Pharmacists empower patients to take an active role in managing their health by providing clear instructions on medication usage, potential side effects, and strategies for adherence. Through one-on-one counseling sessions, pharmacists address patient concerns, clarify misconceptions, and reinforce the importance of adhering to prescribed treatment regimens. By fostering open communication and trust, pharmacists help patients overcome barriers to adherence, such as forgetfulness, complexity of regimens, and fear of adverse effects.(12)

Pharmacists leverage technology-enabled solutions to enhance medication adherence monitoring and support. Pharmacists utilize medication adherence packaging systems, reminder apps, and automated refill programs to help patients stay on track with their medications. Through these tools, pharmacists track medication adherence, provide real-time feedback, and intervene proactively to address adherence issues as they arise. By harnessing the power of technology,

pharmacists enhance patient engagement, accountability, and self-management of medication adherence.(6)

Pharmacists play a vital role in promoting health literacy and self-efficacy among patients, empowering them to make informed decisions about their medication therapy. Pharmacists provide medication counseling, written instructions, and educational materials to help patients understand the purpose of their medications, how to take them properly, and the importance of adherence for achieving optimal health outcomes. By fostering patient understanding and confidence in their medication regimen, pharmacists promote long-term adherence and treatment success.(6)

Pharmacists are instrumental in improving medication access and adherence through their expertise, patient-centered approach, and utilization of innovative strategies. By addressing barriers to medication access, providing personalized counseling and support, leveraging technology-enabled solutions, and promoting health literacy, pharmacists help patients overcome challenges and achieve better health outcomes. As advocates for medication safety and adherence, pharmacists continue to play a vital role in enhancing patient care and promoting medication optimization in healthcare delivery.(7)

Conclusion

In conclusion, pharmacists are indispensable members of the healthcare team, contributing to various aspects of healthcare delivery with their expertise, clinical skills, and patient-centered approach. From medication management to preventive care and chronic disease management, pharmacists play a pivotal role in optimizing therapy, promoting wellness, and enhancing patient outcomes. Through collaborative practice models, innovative interventions, and patient education initiatives, pharmacists continue to shape the future of healthcare delivery, driving positive change and improving the health and well-being of individuals and communities.(9)

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