



# Shaping the future of self-care through pharmacy

Collection of summaries from the digital events programme

2022



## SERIES I

# Towards sustainable and universal healthcare systems and coverage

## Colophon

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International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP)  
Andries Bickerweg 5  
2517 JP The Hague  
The Netherlands  
[www.fip.org](http://www.fip.org)

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**Author:**

Rúben Viegas, FIP Practice Development Projects Coordinator

**Editors:**

Christopher John, FIP Lead for Data and Intelligence  
Gonçalo Sousa Pinto, FIP Lead for Practice Development and Transformation

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## Introduction

Pharmacists contribute daily towards making health systems more efficient and sustainable, and hence towards universal health coverage (UHC). They do this by supporting and empowering patients and consumers in making better health choices, leading to optimal outcomes. This is part of their role all around the world as healthcare professionals at the hearts of communities, who deal with consultations on a variety of self-care topics in their practice. Self-care spans the whole wellness spectrum, from disease prevention to the management of symptoms and common ailments.

Self-care empowers people and societies to transform health, as empowered individuals can be champions of their own health and take a proactive role in looking for solutions to health problems. Health literacy is deeply linked with health-seeking behaviours and there is significant room for improvement and for greater research in this field. Health literacy is impacted by ability to read, comprehend and see, and can change across our lifespans. Understanding the need to explain and communicate well to ensure health literacy is a vital step towards self-care.

Self-care is an important contributor to UHC through savings in healthcare expenditure and the reallocation of resources by means of reduced use and pressure on the healthcare system. Often, informed choices of non-prescription medicines can reduce emergency department visits from patients seeking consultation for minor ailments and lessen the reliance on prescription-only medicines.

Policies should also highlight how self-care can improve health and well-being in parallel with formal healthcare systems. Countries can promote self-care by providing populations with effective, efficient and inclusive primary healthcare services, quality healthcare information, and accessible preventive care and supplementary care services through community pharmacies.

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) organised a programme of digital events in 2021–22 called “Shaping the future of self-care through pharmacy”, which included two series of events focusing on the policy elements and the practice elements of this role. The first series, “Towards sustainable and universal healthcare systems and coverage”, had the following aims:

- To share and discuss strategies adopted by pharmacy leaders and workers, including FIP member organisations, to accelerate universal health coverage by enabling self-care;
- To describe sector or area-specific implications, innovations and approaches adopted across practice; and
- To discuss the implications of optimising self-care and the role of pharmacy.

These events included a variety of international stakeholders and partners in the area of self-care, such as the Global Self-Care Federation, the International Self-Care Foundation, the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union, the Association of the European Self-Care Industry, and others.

This publication provides a summary of the events related to the policy elements of pharmacists’ interventions in promoting informed self-care. A more detailed analysis of the drivers and barriers to the advancement of the role of pharmacists in self-care is available in the FIP publication “[Empowering self-care: A handbook for pharmacists](#)”.

Additional resources to support the role of pharmacists in empowering self-care can be found at the dedicated FIP website <https://prevention.fip.org/self-care/>.

## Summary

The event on 19 May 2021 set the scene for FIP's self-care digital events programme. It described the programme and its main learning outcomes, and outlined the future of self-care, its contribution to healthcare and the role that pharmacy plays in supporting and empowering informed self-care.

## Programme highlights

### **Defining self-care and its benefits — Judy Stenmark, director general, Global Self-Care Federation**

Ms Stenmark presented a definition of self-care together with the main benefits, including savings in costs for the healthcare systems and improved outcomes of self-care interventions. Furthermore, she highlighted the important role of pharmacists in supporting self-care, with the example of the important contributions they had during the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Healthcare needs and challenges: the self-care readiness index — Catherine Laverty, director of communications, Global Self-Care Federation**

Ms Laverty focused on the GSCF Readiness Index, which is a tool that addresses the self-care enablers and barriers in different countries around the world. This tool was created using validated research methods with the aid of a group of experts that supported its development. A set of recommendations was one of the important outcomes from this work.

### **The future of self-care — Judy Stenmark, director general, Global Self-Care Federation**

The main topic Ms Stenmark discussed in relation to the future of self-care was the current changing landscape. That includes technology, individual empowerment that is strongly connected to health literacy and the contribution of self-care to universal health coverage (UHC).

### **Opportunities for pharmacy to support self-care — Daragh Connolly, vice president, Community Pharmacy Section**

Mr Connolly presented the FIP Community Pharmacy Section Vision 2020–2025 document, which puts a focus on access to health services and medicines as an important part of self-care. The importance of community pharmacies in supporting self-care in the future was also presented together with the future challenges of new communication streams, innovative therapies and integrated care.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Lars-Åke Söderlund, president, FIP Community Pharmacy Section**

- The value of self-care can be a good indicator to advance self-care roles in low to middle income countries. By sharing best practices and the value of interventions for patients the conversations with governments and policy makers can be facilitated. The recent COVID-19 pandemic put pharmacists in the spotlight as one of the most important healthcare professionals in providing self-care services.
- Pharmacists should maintain high quality standards in terms of products and services they offer in their pharmacies, in line with what is regulated. The Global Self-Care Federation produces publications and resources that can be used at national level to have an impact on policy making in self-care.
- There is little data on the sustainability of healthcare systems, as for example with the case of pharmacists in prescribing antibiotics after a screening test.
- There are few countries with national self-care integrated policies, and community pharmacies can play an important role in providing data and research to support those policies.
- Consumers can better use digital technologies if policies and regulations support individual health literacy.

# Appropriate management in the choice of medicines for self-care

2 June 2021 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 2 June 2021 showcased the four pillars of the FIP Community Pharmacy Section's Vision — review, prescribe, dispense, administer. It also signposted how to empower patients, pharmacists and healthcare professionals about the value of self-care and the importance of appropriate management for selecting medicines for self-care.

## Programme highlights

### **The four pillars of the Community Pharmacy Section's vision — Daragh Connolly, vice president, FIP Community Pharmacy Section**

The FIP Community Pharmacy Section Vision 2020–2025 document includes four pillars: reviewing, prescribing, dispensing and administering. It also refers to using the skillset of the pharmaceutical workforce, considering the demographics of the population and striving for better patient outcomes.

### **People-centred care — Dr Lina Bader, FIP lead for workforce transformation and development**

The FIP Development Goals 14, 15, 18 and 19 are directly related to self-care. FIP DG14 focuses on medicines expertise and aims to provide accurate medicine information and provision. DG15 focuses on patient-centred care and aims to support the work around non-communicable diseases.

### **Empowering people, pharmacists and healthcare professionals about the importance of self-care — Prof. Charlie Benrimoj, emeritus professor, University of Sydney, Australia**

Community pharmacy contributes to promoting and delivering self-care to individuals and the population. Prevention, detection, minor ailments, and chronic diseases are connected to health literacy as the main core factor. Simple actions pharmacists might use in their practice are to generate pharmacy specific evidence, use theories and models to educate and train pharmacists and extend the perception and understanding of self-care to pharmacists.

### **Minor ailments and common conditions: appropriate selection of medicines — Dr Nardine Nakhla, University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada**

The main categories and examples of minor ailments were described and include several self-limiting conditions that are very frequent in the community (e.g., constipation, acne). Minor ailment schemes, and how they promote referral to another healthcare professional where necessary, were presented.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Ms Leonila Ocampo, president, Asia Pacific Institute for Medication Management**

- Pharmacists must be empowered to work through evidence-based practices, advice and consultations.
- Advising on minor ailments can reduce the negative pressure of selling in the community pharmacy as this is usually associated with a product. When providing services, it should be clear what is the associated value.
- Self-medication and use of medical products is a component of the broader concept of self-care. Health literacy should be supported.

# Delivering person-centred support for self-care: current and future pharmacy practice

16 June 2021 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 16 June 2021 showcased current self-care delivery in community pharmacy across the globe and explored how future delivery could look. People-centred care is at the heart of self-care and so this is an important area, as is the associated communication skills. Strategies to build trust and rapport are vital to self-care and were discussed

## Programme highlights

### **Current practice in self-care delivery: country case study — Alistair Burse, New Brunswick College of Pharmacists, Canada**

The specific services pharmacies can provide in different regions of Canada include down-scheduling medications, prescription extensions, vaccination, management of common ailments and triage of urinary tract infections (UTIs). The main priorities for the New Brunswick provincial government are the UTI services and prescription extension.

### **Future practice in self-care delivery — David Skinner, president, International Self-care Foundation**

Some self-care measures were adopted in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic and can be reinforced under the framework “seven pillars of self-care”, a framework that highlights seven different areas that can support self-care behaviours. Some studies from Canada, United Kingdom and Australia show the impact of self-care to the health systems. The four enablers of self-care for the future were highlighted: consumer and patient empowerment, self-care health policy, regulatory environment, and stakeholder support and adoption.

### **People centred care: required communication skills — Parisa Aslani, professor of medicines use optimisation, University of Sydney, Australia**

Current and future practices in delivering people centred self-care include a theory that brings relevance to cultivating communication by active listening, sharing information and engaging support networks. Key features of person-centred care include: common ground, disease and illness experience, whole person and patient-provider relationship.

### **Building trust and rapport to deliver self-care — Betty Chaar, associate professor, University of Sydney, Australia**

Trust is an inherent factor in the relationships between patients and pharmacists. Some tips on how pharmacists can build trust with their patients, include active listening skills, compassion, care and respect, and competence in knowledge.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Sari Westermarck, proprietary pharmacist, Finland**

- Self-care can be developed nationally through minor ailment schemes and evaluation of processes.
- Limitations for the development of the role of pharmacists in self-care can be either from a regulatory perspective or a workforce/motivation perspective.
- There are few countries with national self-care integrated policies and community pharmacies can play an important role in providing data and research to support those policies.
- Consumers can better use digital technologies if policies and regulations support individual health literacy.



# Readying the global population for self-care: health literacy in the 2020s

24 July 2021 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 24 July 2021 explored the evolution in our understanding of health literacy and identified practical strategies to improve health literacy in populations. The role of the pharmacist in health literacy was also discussed.

## Programme highlights

### **Importance of health literacy and how health systems can support it: a pharmacy perspective — Helen Ryan, National Adult Literacy Agency, Ireland**

Health literacy and numeracy were defined and the two parts of this system— services and people — described. Tips were given on how to communicate more effectively, which include knowing your audience, recognising signs, using plain communication and checking for understanding.

### **Improving health literacy — Dr Anandi Law, Western University of Health Sciences, USA**

Functional health literacy (FHL) must be differentiated from literacy. How FHL can impact patients' medicines use behaviour and the role of prescription labels in improving patient medicines use were outlined. FHL has a significant impact on patients' use of health information and pharmacists working directly with patients should know about it.

### **The role of pharmacists in supporting health literacy — Greg Duncan, Monash University, Australia**

There are challenges caused by the changing and increasing health literacy needs of patients. Pharmacists' current skills are sufficient to engage in strategies to promote health literacy; they just need to be put into practice. The main strategies are to use the "teach back" technique, to avoid jargon, to elicit questions and to use standard precautions, including process, content, and engagement strategies to increase health literacy.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Dr Sarah Dineen-Griffin, Charles Sturt University, Australia**

- Regarding the role of technology in pharmacy practice, some people might not know how to access the internet or how to use digital apps. The COVID-19 pandemic opened the door to the use of teleconsultations, for example.
- The use of electronic patient information leaflets with plain language and bigger fonts can be solutions for the future.
- Remuneration of services focusing on health literacy is still not a reality, as remuneration models are still more focused on products.
- Pharmacists' knowledge and skills are important to engage with their patients and frameworks, including tools such as the "teach back" approach, seem to be effective in increasing engagement.

# Self-care in the digital age

11 August 2021 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 11 August 2021 explored the latest developments in digital health that support self-care. It identified practical strategies to appraise latest technology and manage misinformation and the “infodemic”. The current practice and role of the pharmacist in digital health were also discussed.

## Programme highlights

### Digital health and enabling self-care — Timothy Aungst, The Digital Apothecary

Figures on the access of patients on digital technologies, such as adults using digital health tracking devices and how monitoring helps to reach goals, were given. The concept of the era of retail health followed by the importance of health sensors to get real time data from patients was outlined. Examples were given of digital health technologies to support patients, such as voice reminders to take medicines, home lab testing and medication helpers. The role technology has in creating alerts to check our health and how pharmacists can monitor these alerts together with patients to enhance early diagnosis was also discussed.

### An evidenced based approach: evaluating apps and managing misinformation. — Peter Guthrey, senior pharmacist, strategic policy, Pharmaceutical Society of Australia

Mr Guthrey discussed the main barriers and benefits of mHealth solutions in pharmacy practice. These digital tools are beneficial mostly for medicines management and reference resources for medical information. Misinformation and how pharmacists can tackle this issue in their practice was addressed. Tips were given for navigating the ‘infodemic’ and how people can prevent the spread of incorrect information.

### Practising digital health in the pharmacy — Jan De Belie, Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU)

The PGEU provides some key policy recommendations on digital health, including advancing the uptake of trustworthy digital health solutions in healthcare practice, supporting community pharmacists to help progress the safe digitalisation of healthcare, exploiting the potential of “big data” and artificial intelligence, and developing trust in the use and reuse of data. Some best practices around Europe were shared. For example, the French share pharmaceutical records between all community pharmacies; a pharmacies’ app in Denmark allows patients to have information in their hands; and in the Netherlands there is clinical decision support to improve the pharmaceutical care system. Further, pharmacies share real world data from flu and COVID-19 in Portugal. and in Italy pharmacies are available as access points to telehealth services.

## Discussion outcomes

### Moderator: Jaime Acosta Gomez, FIP Community Pharmacy Section

- Future changes to the community pharmacy setting might include a change of the business model, an improvement in electronic prescriptions, a shift toward shared medical records and a focus on connectivity and interoperability of electronic data systems.
- The lack of digital health literacy, among both pharmacists and consumers, should not prevent people from accessing health services. The implementation of digital prescriptions was a challenge at first but with time people get used to new technologies.
- The biggest drivers to a more digital future pharmacy are access, outcomes and improvement of healthcare systems in terms of clinical tools and interprofessional collaboration.

# Dynamics shaping the future self-care market

2 September 2021 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 2 September 2021 looked at how self-care can empower consumers by giving them the knowledge and tools to improve the quality of their daily lives. For example, consumers often treat minor symptoms, such as a mild headache or a cold, themselves using products purchased over the counter at a local pharmacy or grocery store. In today's rapidly changing healthcare environment, self-care should be recognised as an integral element of a coordinated and comprehensive national health policy.

## Programme highlights

### **How can self-care contribute to universal health coverage? Healthcare's and patient's perspectives** — Austen El-Osta, Imperial College London, UK

Mr El-Osta looked at the definition of Universal Health Coverage and its indicators, and frameworks and resources such as the self-care continuum, the Seven Pillars of Self-Care and the Self-Care Matrix. Also discussed were the role pharmacies have in providing self-care interventions and the different tools available to monitor patients (e.g., digital wearables). The current COVID-19 pandemic and how the number of cases could be reduced using self-care measures (e.g., use of masks, social distancing) were also touched upon.

### **Innovation in self-care models, shaping the future together** — Donna Castle, executive director of policy and communications, Proprietary Association of Great Britain

Ms Castle outlined the reasons why people need to take care of themselves and the most common self-treatable conditions, and gave some statistics on opinions about pharmacies and its services. She mentioned the vision for self-care and some topics such as the wrong use of emergency services and the local pharmacy first schemes, and the UK national strategy for self-care as an example for other countries.

### **Impact of digital technology on self-care/Artificial intelligence in self-care** — Bidhata Khatri, Drug Safety Associate, Contract Research Organisation, India

The speaker discussed digital health, its relation to self-care and the benefits of using technology to enhance self-care, as well as digital initiatives around the world and the different devices that can be used in these initiatives. After a quick note on artificial intelligence, the focus was put on the issues and challenges around digital health, the role of pharmacists in the digital revolution and the future of the profession.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Ema Paulino, FIP professional secretary**

- Self-care is not only related to the person but also to pharmacists that can support better health choices.
- Pharmacy-only medicines have the advantage of having a pharmacist as the first contact point. Some non-prescription medicines can be found outside the pharmacy in some countries, and this has the disadvantage of not having the pharmacist present to provide advice on their correct use.
- The use of point of care testing for antimicrobials is a great service to identify cases that need referral. Education is essential to manage patient expectations and ensure the rational use of antibiotics.
- The use of technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence might have barriers such as the regulatory frameworks of the countries and the issues surrounding data protection.

# Accelerating selfcare to achieve universal health coverage

6 October 2021 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 6 October 2021 explored how healthcare can be rebuilt amid a global pandemic and focused on the important role that self-care will play. It also looked at the enablers that will accelerate self-care through community pharmacy and how those build towards universal health coverage (UHC).

## Programme highlights

### **Rebuilding healthcare amid a global pandemic: the role of self-care — Jurate Svarcaite, director general, Association of the European Self-Care Industry**

The speaker provided statistics on self-care and the role it has in healthcare, highlighting its economic and social role. Country data on self-care indicators and a perspective of savings (time and money) that self-care activities can provide were also mentioned, as well as the importance of having non-prescription medicines.

### **Enabling self-care: the community pharmacy contribution — Ruben Viegas, FIP practice development projects coordinator**

Mr Viegas gave an overview of the role of pharmacies and pharmacists as contributors to UHC. He described activities and resources FIP recently developed with a focus on the “FIP Survey on community pharmacy, self-care, and digital and online pharmacy operations”. He highlighted three drivers to enable self-care: workforce, access to services and regulations.

### **Increasing access to and value of self-care — Dr Padmaja Kamath, director, regulatory and scientific affairs, Global Self-care Federation**

Dr Kamath mentioned the GSCF’s recent publication “Self-Care Readiness Index”. This publication contains three main themes (self-care as a concept, individual empowerment and self-care legislation) and four enablers (stakeholder support and adoption, consumer and patient empowerment, self-care health policy, and regulatory environment) that apply in the different study countries. He mentioned the role pharmacists have in supporting self-care and the importance of using digital technologies to support self-care, and emphasised that policies and regulations need to be coherent and follow developments in the self-care market.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Sham Moodley, community pharmacist, Independent Community Pharmacy Association, South Africa**

- Interprofessional collaborations are essential to guarantee the best outcome possible for the patient. Good integration of policy events and documents at national level helps advance self-care practices.
- Prescription models in the doctor’s office and remuneration models in community pharmacy can influence the time spent with each patient.
- FIP aims to support members at a national level by providing a platform for best-practice sharing and resources for pharmacists to advance pharmacy.
- In Europe there are countries with five International Non-proprietary Names as over the counter medicines and others with 160. This shows a high level of regulatory variability.
- Measures to support the safety of medicines include the constant updates of patient information leaflets, specific information for healthcare professionals and a warning box in pharmacy software.

# Self-care's contribution to universal health coverage – Healthcare's and people's perspectives

9 December 2021 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 9 December 2021 discussed the perspectives of providers of healthcare services and the people accessing them about how self-care can contribute to universal health coverage (UHC). Self-care is not no care, and it is not necessarily practised in isolation. It may involve support and advice from others, such as expert pharmacy teams.

## Programme highlights

### **Public health perspectives on self-care's contribution to UHC — Prof. K. Srinath Reddy, Public Health Foundation of India**

Prof. Reddy gave an overview of public health and how it relates to universal health coverage. He mentioned the three dimensions of UHC: population, service, and cost coverage. In terms of health promotion people must have adequate access to information, motivation, skills and competence, and a supportive environment to engage in self-care. Higher levels of self-referral and monitoring are also key issues linked with health literacy that can be one factor to advance self-care. The model of care is also changing from a more paternalistic way to a patient-centred model where the patient has a bigger role in decision-making.

### **Public and patients' perspectives on self-care's contribution to UHC — Jacqueline Bowman-Busato, Patient Foundation, Belgium**

Ms Bowman-Basato outlined the role of community pharmacists in contributing to UHC by referring to the ABCD framework: assumptions, bridges, champions and dialogue. The first point focuses on not assuming and always asking people which ailments they might be facing. The second point is about the importance of building bridges to mutual empowerment. The third focuses on cultivating knowledge and champions among the pharmacy profession and the fourth brings up the importance of engaging in dialogue based on the 5A principles (affordability, appropriateness, availability, adequacy and accessibility).

### **Localised self-care delivery (UK case study) — Dave Burrows, Damibu, UK**

Mr Burrows gave an overview of different services that can be delivered in the area of self-care, with differences in scope and localisation. If the combination of these two factors is higher, the complexity of the intervention will also be higher. He mentioned the system readiness to embrace these interventions and the little focus there is currently on prevention.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Dr Sham Moodley, pharmacist, Independent Community Pharmacy Association, South Africa**

- Causes for adult obesity include endocrine disorders, psychological aspects, medicines, irregular sleep cycles, and surgery. Factors that influence the current obesity epidemic include lack of early diagnosis, lack of control of environmental factors and lack of evidence-based approaches.
- Body fat percentage and composition can be a better outcome to investigate body composition than BMI due to the limitations of this measure. Even with normal BMI, individuals can have excess of body fat and abdominal fat and consequent diabetes and metabolic conditions. Tackling obesity as early as possible prevents diabetes by 80% and some types of cancer by 20%.
- Patients should have access to their own health records and have a sufficient level of digital health literacy to navigate them. If a system is built around a non-digital structure, the implementation of digital technologies is much harder.

# Innovation in self-care models, shaping the future together

13 January 2022 | 11.00 – 12.30 | [Click here for the event recording](#)

## Summary

The event on 13 January 2022 discussed how targeted switching of prescription only medicines to non-prescription medicines (over the counter medicines) can contribute to self-care. The availability of diagnostics in the pharmacy and beyond can also have an impact on self-care.

## Programme highlights

### **Approaches to switching prescription to non-prescription medicines — Natalie Gauld, innovator in improving access to medicines, Northern Regional Alliance, University of Auckland, New Zealand**

Ms Gauld highlighted the importance of switches and some examples of the health benefits for patients (e.g., Australia, Germany). She described the switch process and how it can vary according to country or territory and products. The Brass model is a clear framework that explains the benefits and risks of switching a product and can be used to support regulatory changes. She focused on the complexity of the switch process and the trilogy of factors that cause variability: company, product and market factors.

### **What medicines should be available over the counter and why? — Andi Shirtcliffe, clinical chief advisor for pharmacy and allied health, Ministry of Health, New Zealand**

The categories of medicines in New Zealand include controlled medicines, prescription medicines, restricted medicines, pharmacy-only medicines and general sales medicines. The role of pharmacists in supporting self-care decisions has an impact in terms of the status switch decisions for some medicines, to increase their availability as non-prescription medicines. The current COVID-19 pandemic shifted the resources and landscape of self-care and Ms Shirtcliffe gave her thoughts on products and therapeutic areas that could benefit from switches in the future.

### **Latest diagnostics/point-of-care testing available in the pharmacy — Prof. Anthony Serracino Inglott, Department of Pharmacy, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Malta**

Prof. Inglott discussed guidelines for pharmacists and challenges for the provision of point of care testing. Some issues linked to provide patient-centred care are the logistics surrounding the tests and the quality systems and equipment that are used. The role of digitalisation in improving access to care and the possible use of data through connected medical devices, was mentioned, as was the value of the point-of-care testing during the recent COVID-19 pandemic and how this can build up to better integration in the health systems.

## Discussion outcomes

### **Moderator: Jaime Acosta Gomez, secretary, FIP Community Pharmacy Section**

- Collaborative prescribing models can be an alternative to other slower approaches focusing on switching models.
- Pharmacists are usually very flexible and proficient healthcare professionals who can adapt to complicated situations and support health systems.
- Education and training are key for pharmacists to develop their role as service providers, together with adjusted remuneration models to enable more pharmacy services.
- Benefits of switching medicines or diagnostic tests include safer use of medicines, better use of resources and a better referral gateway into the health system.

International  
Pharmaceutical  
Federation

Fédération  
Internationale  
Pharmaceutique

Andries Bickerweg 5  
2517 JP The Hague  
The Netherlands

T +31 (0)70 302 19 70  
F +31 (0)70 302 19 99  
fip@fip.org

[www.fip.org](http://www.fip.org)

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