

We must preserve advances made during pandemic and apply our learning

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The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) welcomes the World Health Organization (WHO) declaration last Friday that the COVID-19 pandemic is no longer a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC)

The declaration was made 1,191 days after the WHO's initial PHEIC declaration. The past three years have seen pharmacy's contribution to healthcare expand at an unprecedented rate, particularly in the areas of vaccination, testing, prevention and education. For example, the pandemic demonstrated that the accessibility, convenience, expertise and trustworthiness of pharmacies to offer vaccination services had a huge impact in terms of vaccination coverage and bringing the pandemic under control. 48% of all COVID-19 vaccine doses in the USA were administered by pharmacies;¹ and at least 52% in France;² 23% in the UK³ and over 14% in Australia.^{4,5} The huge contribution that pharmacists make to immunisation coverage through administering vaccines, providing information and addressing vaccines hesitancy is clear.

How the pharmacy profession around the world responded to the COVID-19 pandemic is detailed in a report published by FIP at the 1,000-day milestone in 2022: [“The global response of pharmacy to the pandemic: The contribution of the profession to COVID-19”](#). The aim of this report is to share best practices and lessons from FIP members worldwide so that we are better prepared for future pandemics and recovery and to build our sustainable approach to future preparedness.

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FIP has tracked, collated and monitored pharmacy's response to COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic. We are now putting all our learning and evidence into place to both prepare for health emergencies in the future, as well as to preserve the advances in pharmacy roles, the expansion of pharmacy services in every country in order to ensure that our health systems function optimally. We must continue to advocate for more investment in our healthcare systems and we must ensure that we have a health workforce competent to meet needs of today and the future.

References

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/retail-pharmacy-program/index.html>
2. <https://www.data.gouv.fr/fr/datasets/donnees-vaccination-par-categorie-dinjecteur-hors-centres-de-vaccination-et-etablissements-de-sante/>
3. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-vaccinations/>
4. <https://www.guild.org.au/news-events/news/2022/covid-19-vaccinations-delivered-through-community-pharmacies-hit-9-million>
5. <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/covid-19-vaccine-rollout-update-24-november-2022?language=en>