

PHARMACISTS SUPPORTING SELF-CARE AND UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE: A SNAPSHOT OF CURRENT PRACTICE AND NEEDS

FIP Multinational Needs Assessment (MNA)



Self-care is an essential component of primary health care and universal health coverage (UHC). As one of the most accessible healthcare professionals, pharmacists are well positioned to support responsible self-care through the management of common ailments, patient education, health literacy, early identification of red flags, and timely referral to other healthcare providers.

This infographic presents key findings from FIP's multinational needs assessment exploring current pharmacy practice, pharmacists' confidence and support needs, barriers to effective self-care delivery, and opportunities to strengthen pharmacy-led self-care based on 779 respondents from 45 countries.

Key findings from the report

Confidence level variation

81.1%

indicated high confidence in OTC product selection

48.3%

indicated low confidence in managing unclear symptoms

Confidence is high for routine self-care services, but drops for self-care decisions requiring clinical judgement

Support needs

56.7%

reported needing support with age specific considerations particularly children and babies

Support and training needs in areas involving age-specific considerations and higher risk patients

Perceived need for health literacy

84.9%

of respondents encounter patient misinformation at least monthly

Health literacy is a core component of pharmacy-led self-care

Confidence, knowledge, and readiness to deliver self-care



Pain relief/fever

82.4%



Vaccination

43.4%

Highest confidence Least confidence

Respondents feel more prepared to support common and frequently encountered self-care needs (pain/fever) than more specialised or sensitive areas of practice (vaccination)



More than half of respondents rely on personal expertise and knowledge (54.9%, n=428) and symptom checklists (51.1%, n=398).



Respondents demonstrated willingness to use credible digital tools and resources more frequently in self-care consultations.

Barriers and gaps in self-care

Patient-related challenge

60.0%

Cost of products

Respondents reported that the most frequently encountered patient-related challenge during self-care consultation was the cost of products

Major barrier

91.2%

Time and workload pressure

Respondents reported that the major barrier in pharmacy-led self care was time and workload pressure

Least available support mechanism

65.7%

Reimbursement or remuneration for self-care services

Respondents reported that the least available self-care support in their practice settings was reimbursement or remuneration for self-care services

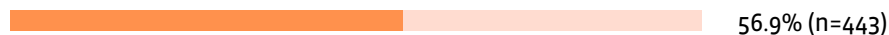
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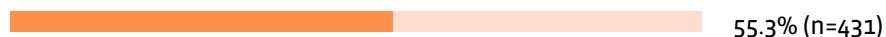


Tools and resources that support self care

Quick reference clinical guidance documents



Patient education leaflets



Decision-support tools for self-care consultations



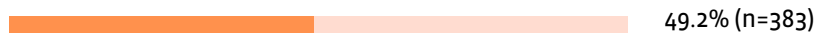
Respondents placed value on readily accessible, credible and practical consultation tools that enhance clinical decision-making, standardise self-care assessments, and improve patient education

Preferred learning format

Face-to-face workshops



Online self-paced learning



Short educational videos of less than 10 minutes



Respondents valued a combination of in-person training and flexible digital learning opportunities that can be integrated into busy practice environments

Recommendation and next steps

What is needed to strengthen pharmacy-led self-care?



Integrate pharmacists into health systems

Develop:

- referral pathways for self-care escalation
- access to patient information
- multidisciplinary collaboration



Strengthen workforce capacity to deliver safe and evidence-based self-care support

Increase:

- competency-based education in self-care and OTC counselling
- continuing professional development



Improve clinical decision support for self-care consultations

Provide:

- evidence-based guidance
- protocols and algorithms
- digital decision-support tools



Recognise and remunerate pharmacy-led self-care services

- expand funding models that compensate pharmacists for self-care consultations
- recognise their contribution to primary health care.



Enhance self-care education and health literacy

Develop:

- practical self-care education resources
- health literacy initiatives
- communication tools to enable people manage common ailments safely, combat misinformation and make informed decisions

Access the full report [here](#) or scan the QR code.

