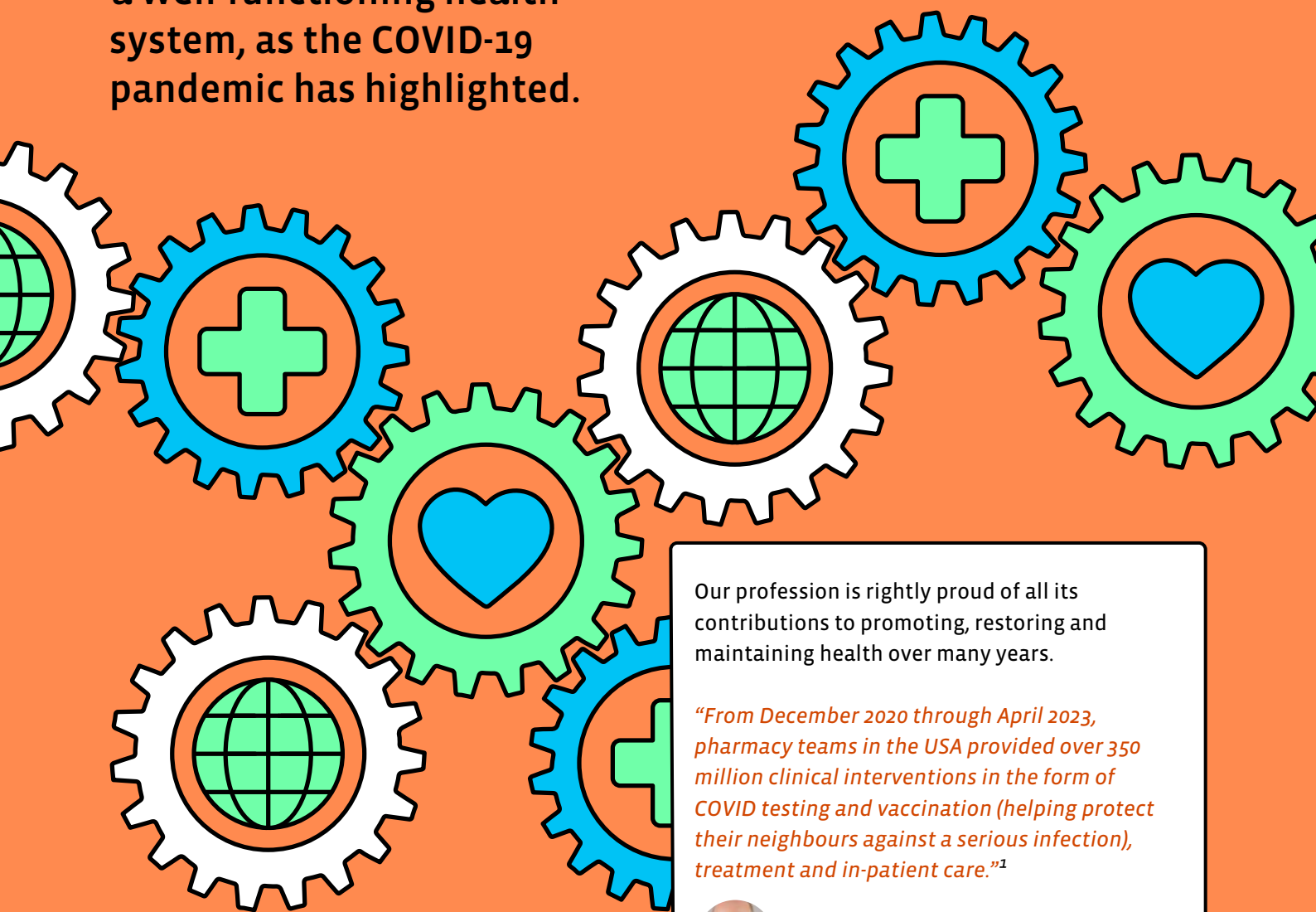


# Pharmacy strengthens health systems

Pharmacy is integral to a well-functioning health system, as the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted.



Our profession is rightly proud of all its contributions to promoting, restoring and maintaining health over many years.

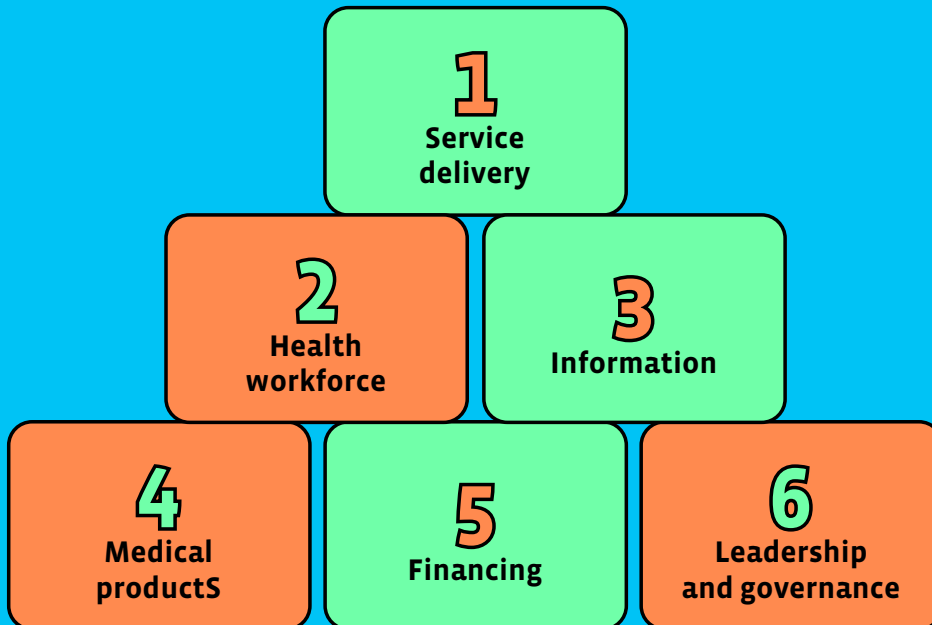
*“From December 2020 through April 2023, pharmacy teams in the USA provided over 350 million clinical interventions in the form of COVID testing and vaccination (helping protect their neighbours against a serious infection), treatment and in-patient care.”<sup>1</sup>*



**Dr John D. Grabenstein**  
Board member, APhA Foundation, USA

# Six building blocks

According to the World Health Organization, strong health systems are built on six blocks.<sup>2</sup> Pharmacy delivers on each:



## 1 Service delivery

*“Good health services deliver effective, safe, quality health interventions to those who need them, when and where needed. In my hospital in Barranquilla, pharmacists provide a pharmacotherapy adherence service so that we achieve the best results for patients during their hospital stay and beyond.”*



**Dr Dadier Antonio Arroyo Monterroza**  
Clinical pharmacy specialist, Colombia

## 2 Health workforce

*“A well-performing health workforce works in ways that are responsive, fair and efficient, is sufficient in numbers, well distributed, competent, motivated, responsive and productive. In Nigeria, pharmacy educators join hands and hearts to prepare the pharmacy workforce of the future by teaching, motivating and mentoring students to take their place in the healthcare delivery system as practitioners, researchers, innovators and patient care advocates.”*



**Dr Arinola Joda**  
Associate professor  
University of Lagos, Nigeria

# Six building blocks

According to the World Health Organization, strong health systems are built on six blocks.<sup>2</sup> Pharmacy delivers on each:

## 3 Information

*“A strong health information system ensures the production, analysis, dissemination and use of reliable and timely information on health determinants, health systems performance and health status. In India, pharmacists are providing information about medicines, including appropriate selection, dosage and drug interactions, potential adverse drug reactions and therapeutic effects for better health care. Their advice is often based on pharmacovigilance work, which is also done by pharmacists.”*



**Ms Bidhata Khatri**  
Pharmacovigilance pharmacist,  
India, and secretary of the FIP Health  
and Medicines Information Section

## 4 Medical products, vaccines and technologies

*“A well-functioning health system ensures equitable access to medicines, vaccines and technologies of assured quality, safety and efficacy, and their scientifically sound and cost-effective use. Pharmaceutical scientists continue to work on new medicines to save lives. Just one example is antimicrobial resistance, which is one of the greatest threats we face today. Here, pharmaceutical scientists are playing a pivotal role in finding new target proteins and developing drugs that bind to them, as well as in bringing these new drugs to market. We’re also important partners to practitioners, helping to ensure that antimicrobials are used responsibly.”*



**Dr Rebecka Isaksson**  
Research fellow,  
University College London, UK

## 5 Financing

*“A strong health system has adequate funds so that people can use the services they need and are protected from impoverishment associated with having to pay for those services. Through FIP, pharmacists are campaigning for increased investment in health. For example, as part of a World Health Professions Alliance statement on universal health coverage,<sup>3</sup> we recently called on governments to ensure adequate and sustainable resources and remuneration with a focus on health workforce development and integrated service delivery for primary health care.”*



**Dr Catherine Duggan**  
FIP chief executive officer,  
Netherlands

## 6 Leadership and governance

*“For a strong health system, we need effective policies, oversight and accountability, with attention to system design and appropriate regulation. Pharmacists around the world participate in the development of the frameworks that advance the delivery of effective and safe healthcare and ensure access to high quality medicines.”*



**Mr Brett Simmonds**  
Chair, Pharmacy Board of Australia

## Health system models vary between countries, but elements common to all are primary health care and public health measures.

### Primary health care

Primary health care is a cornerstone of sustainable health systems for the achievement of universal health coverage and the United Nations' health-related Sustainable Development Goals. Fifty examples of how pharmacists are providing primary health care around the world are available in the FIP Primary Health Care World Map: <https://primaryhealthcare.fip.org/worldmap/>

*"In Guangzhou, pharmacists have established an 'entire life pharmacy service system' for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, partly provided through community health centres and in patient's homes with regular follow-ups, which has improved early screening and diagnosis of COPD, [and] optimised treatment and prevention,"*



**Ms Wei Li**  
Chief pharmacist, First Affiliated Hospital of Guangzhou Medical University, China

### Public health

*"My first words are to recognise and support the public health system, which is one of the greatest achievements that we have achieved as a country."*



**Mr José Manuel Miñones**  
Pharmacist and minister of health Spain

Most governments recognise the importance of public health programmes in reducing the incidence of disease. Pharmacists support health systems with these programmes in many ways, including through administering vaccines, preventing non-communicable diseases, reducing antimicrobial resistance and addressing unhealthy behaviours (e.g., tobacco use), and environmental issues (e.g., air pollution).

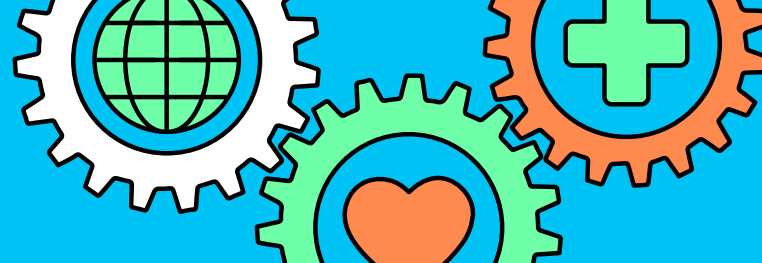
*"In Lebanon, community pharmacists have been administering influenza vaccines since the 1990s. This is an important public health initiative because, by advocating and administering influenza vaccines, pharmacists play a pivotal role in protecting patients against seasonal influenza and its related complications."*



**Dr Jihan Safwan**  
Community pharmacist, Lebanon

## Let pharmacists do more!

At a time when health systems around the world are recovering from the COVID-19 crisis, and despite the valuable contributions of health professions, the consensus is that urgent action is needed to prepare health systems to meet future needs.



## Pharmacists are an intelligent solution

Strengthening health systems in ways that achieve more equitable and sustainable improvements to health outcomes requires technical and political knowledge and action. Pharmacy is essential to access to health, a safe supply chain and the responsible use of medicines. FIP supports the profession in these key roles, and is also transforming practice, science and education and workforce with the FIP Development Goals framework and aligned resources, and supporting national organisations with global policy statements.

Through FIP, pharmacy is active in the reform of health systems, particularly in increasing pharmacists' presence in the public health space, especially in countries where policies are restrictive, gathering evidence to use in advocacy work and health minister summits.

FIP has also been increasing professional development and competence, especially in the context of public health in a post-pandemic world, with a range of resources and the creation of a digital health workforce. In addition, FIP is updating its policy statement on building sustainable health systems through pharmacy and promoting intra- and interprofessional collaboration. In terms of intraprofessional collaboration, the One FIP approach allows different sectors to work hand in hand to improve health care.

*“There’s a wide range of needs that can be met by pharmacists, which would relieve pressure on and save time for other areas of the health system. For example, as the experts on medicines, more pharmacists could be allowed to prescribe and initiate medication and we have the skills to take on the management of patients with long-term conditions such as diabetes. Things are moving. For example, the UK National Health Service is aiming for all newly registered pharmacists to be able to independently prescribe by 2026. But we need to see progress in all countries and territories if we are to achieve universal health coverage. Our message is clear: Let pharmacies do more.”*



**Mr Dominique Jordan**  
President, FIP

The FIP World Pharmacists Day campaign is an opportunity for pharmacy to celebrate its achievements in supporting our societies, but also to advocate its value and further potential in improving health. More information and FIP's World Pharmacists Day campaign materials are available here:

[www.fip.org/world-pharmacists-day](http://www.fip.org/world-pharmacists-day).

## References

1. <https://tinyurl.com/2bunzzkn>
2. <https://tinyurl.com/mwcbx3tm>
3. <https://tinyurl.com/3ch2nf2m>

