

## **Community Pharmacists' Involvement in Public Health Services in Kogi State**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Objectives:** The aims of the study were to evaluate community pharmacists' attitudes towards provision of public health services, their involvement in promoting public health services, and to identify potential barriers against the provision of these services in Kogi State.

**Methods:** The study was cross-sectional one carried out among community pharmacists in Kogi State. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into five (5) sections; socio-demographic characteristics, attitudes, extent of involvement, screening services and barriers. Attitudes responses were measured using 5-point Likert-type scale. Data were analyzed using SPSS (version 21) .Chi square was used to determine association of socio-demographics and public health services. P-values <0.05 were considered significant.

**Results:** Out of the 50 questionnaires distributed, 46 were returned giving a response rate of 92%. Majority of the respondents (41.3%) were aged 41-60 years, males 65.2%, 1-10years in service (41.3%) and B. Pharm holders 69.6%. All the of respondents had positive attitude towards public health services; Majority of the pharmacists believed that they should provide health promotion activities ( $4.30 \pm 0.73$ , 95.7 %), readiness to be trained in health promotion concepts ( $4.50 \pm 0.55$ , 97.8 %), willingness to participate in any health campaigns for disease prevention ( $4.43 \pm 0.50$ , 100 %), Pharmacists' interest in documenting public health services rendered ( $4.35 \pm 0.60$ , 93.5 %), public acceptance of pharmacist's contribution to health promotion services ( $4.17 \pm 0.85$ , 87.3 %), and interest in health promotion services ( $4.48 \pm 0.51$ , 100%). High involvement of community pharmacists in giving health information were evident in Hypertension screening ( $4.43 \pm 0.81$ , 91.3 %), Diabetes screening & education ( $4.20 \pm 0.88$ , 89.1 %), Drug Abuse/ mis-use Education ( $4.13 \pm 0.83$ , 80.4 %). Community pharmacists' poor involvements were evident in Smoking cessation education ( $3.2 \pm 0.87$ , 3.8%),

Immunization/vaccination education ( $2.15 \pm 1.21$ , 17.4%) and Cancer education ( $2.85 \pm 0.95$ , 23.9%). Lack of compensation ( $3.70 \pm 0.94$ , 76.1%), lack of official recognition ( $3.54 \pm 1.03$ , 76.1%) and lack of training/knowledge ( $3.11 \pm 1.04$ , 54.4%) were the major barriers that hindered involvement of community pharmacists in public health activities. There was no association between the public health services rendered by the respondents in their socio-demographic variables.

**Conclusion:** This study revealed that community pharmacists in Kogi state had positive attitudes towards public health activities. The identified barriers to implementing the activities include: lack of compensation, lack of official recognition and lack of training. Finally, the study highlighted that the public health services rendered by the community pharmacists were independent of the demographic characteristics.

**Keywords:** Public health, Community Pharmacists, Health promotion, screening and Kogi