

ROLE OF PHARMACISTS

THE FUTURE IS NOW.....



Written By Umaimah Muzzamil

According to a definition presented by WHO in 1948, Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Studies have proved that optimum objective of better Health Care Delivery System is obtained by engagement of multidisciplinary teams. Pharmacist's professional roles and responsibilities towards health care system have evolved from merely compounding and dispensing to extended Pharmaceutical care. A paradigm shift in Pharmacy practices in 1990 has promoted Pharmaceutical Care as a philosophy and standard of provision of care for patient. The concept of 'THE SEVEN STAR PHARMACIST' states and recognizes that a Pharmacist should be a compassionate care giver, decision maker, active communicator, lifelong learner and good manager and should possess good leadership qualities and the ability to be a teacher and researcher. This notion was given by The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) and WHO.

Pharmacists are professionals uniquely qualified and trained to understand the principles of Quality Assurance, they appreciate the intricacies of the distribution chain and the standards of maintaining efficient stock and turnover, possess expertise in pricing structures applied to medicinal products, responsible for the custodianship of technical information on the product available in the market and provide an interface between the duties of prescribing and selling medicines. The competence of Pharmacists around the world are already proven and established. The Pharmacy Services are evidently directed towards the administration of the Pharmaceutical Services; in Drug Regulations and Control; Formulation and Quality Control of Pharmaceutical products; in the Inspection and Assessment of drug manufacturing facilities in assurance of product quality throughout the Drug Distribution Chain; in drug procurement; in National and Institutional Formulary Committees. Among the total number of pharmacists in Pakistan, approximately 55% are engaged in the production of pharmaceuticals, 15% are engaged in working for the federal and provincial drug control authority and hospital pharmacy, another 15% in sales and marketing of pharmaceuticals only 10% in community pharmacy, and the rest 5% in teaching and research. Around the world the role of

pharmacists is recognized universally in all disciplines of Healthcare. Although, the Health Care System of Pakistan has yet to recognize and implement this role. Pakistan extends from the mountain valleys of the Himalayas to along the Arabian Sea bordering India, China, Afghanistan and Iran. With a population of approximately 188 million, Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world. Life expectancy is 64 years for men and 66 for women. One in 10 children dies before their fifth birthday and every year 25000–30000 women die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth. As the population is growing and there are issues of poor housing, lack of exercise, pollution, improper diet and lack of health education, diseases are rampant. The health care system in Pakistan has been confronted with problems of inequity, scarcity of resources, inefficient and untrained human resources, gender insensitivity etc. Pakistan is facing a very precarious economic situation and there is a need of innovative health reform which will not be established if the Pharmacist role is not implemented and practiced. There are several reasons for the lack of recognition of the pharmacy profession in Pakistan, such as the lack of pharmacists in public health services and the lack of pharmacists in community pharmacies which leads to the lack of community pharmacist interaction. The profession is still under continuous transition. With change in the health demands, pharmacists have a further role to play in patient care.