**Pharmacy Practice: Lecture 3 Dr. Haider Raheem**

**Health Promotion in**

**Community Pharmacy**

**Background**

• Health promotion: a process enabling people to increase control over and to improve their health.

• Health education: giving information and working towards improving individual attitude and behaviour changes to sustain healthy living.

In health promotion, pharmacists provide information and skills to individuals so that they can prevent specific diseases and participate in services for early detection and treatment of disease. The process involves a behavioural change approach such as in advising individuals on the importance of preventing and managing obesity.

Health promotion activities from community pharmacies include the organisation of theme-oriented weeks where patrons are advised on the theme, and written and other visual aids are available in the pharmacy for further information and for shop window dressing.

**Themes of health promotion in community pharmacies**

• Smoking cessation programmes

• Diet, exercise and body weight

• Cardiovascular disease risk factors and prevention

• Sun exposure

• Travel medicine

• Patient concordance with treatment

• Immunisation programmes

• Sexual health

• Screening tests

• Alcohol and drug abuse.

Sustainable development and public health are closely related. Through health promotion activities pharmacists can contribute towards the reduction of carbon footprints and to practices that tackle climate change. This can be achieved by:

• acting as role model and educators

• serving as a resource (e.g. collecting used batteries)

• promoting proper use and disposal of medicines

• distributing literature on ways to save the environment.

**Information transmitted**

The information presented should be educational but at the same time acceptable to busy patrons. An entertaining presentation helps to make the information attractive and prompts the individual to take notice of the message being transmitted (Figure 1).



**Figure 1:** Information that is conveyed in health promotion programmes.

The impact of the information transmitted depends on the methods used to convey the information. The information presented has to be understandable by the individual. Pharmacists are in a position of interpreting scientific information so as to convey the message to the individuals in an understandable manner (Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** Pharmacists act as conveyers of patient-understandable information.

**Factors influencing health-promotion activities in community pharmacies**

**Positive factors**

• Environment within the pharmacy conducive to health promotion

• Accessibility of the pharmacy

• Communication skills of community pharmacist

• Strong pharmacist–patient relationship.

**Negative factors**

• Lack of resource materials

• Lack of space

• Lack of confidentiality

• Improper time management of the pharmacy personnel.

**Planning a health promotion campaign**

• Identify area(s) to be addressed

• Establish targets to be achieved

• Identify resources that can be used and are already available

• Develop a practical and realistic implementation programme

• Establish evaluation methods

• Set an action plan.

**Practice summary**

• Pharmacists are accessible health professionals who can play a very proactive role in promoting health.

• Pharmacists should actively promote healthy lifestyles including discouraging smoking, pointing out the importance of exercise and highlighting the benefits of a healthy diet.

• Pharmacists in any practice setting should encourage positive behavioural changes.