

## **The new and improved pharmaceutical care during coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**

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### **Abstract**

*COVID-19 pandemic reached the world causing an enormous health and economic crisis that strickled surprisingly the healthcare workers. An outbreak in public health development affecting the entire society and during this scenario some health workers that before were not paid to much attention begin to show their necessity and importance to population and to the health system. Pharmacies and their pharmaceutical team needed to improve the concept of pharmaceutical care and go beyond their common needs and responsibilities as they were already considered the most accessible professional of the medical community. This article seeks to show the importance of pharmaceutical care not only in normal moments but also in periods considered of crises as coronavirus disease. Pharmacies and the community pharmacists play a significant part that undertake the initial expectations to this health class highlighting their standing position as they provide correct information about coronavirus to the population decreasing contamination status, helps to make drug control, creates a balance between supply and demand of medicines reducing hospitalization and the pressure on general practice and service. Pharmacists also helped testing the population for corona and most recently is taken part in mass immunization as pharmacies participates in the vaccination process that is happening all over the world.*

**Key words:** *pharmaceutical care, pandemic, coronavirus, COVID-19, pharmacists*

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### **I. Introduction**

The year of 2020 brought a new challenge for the world mainly to the health care workers due to the rapidly spread of a new disease. It was in march of 2020 that coronavirus pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) and since then we see all our lives been suffering changes [1]. This new world challenge began due to a virus responsible for causing a “severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2” named SARS-CoV-2, this is from a taxonomic perspective due to that was discovered that the closest relative of this pathogen is the SARS coronavirus [2].

Additionally, this pandemic brought not only an economic crisis but also showed how health system in major countries was weak and needing more attention from the governments. Therefore, it might be considered that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought many new challenges worldwide and it can be pointed out that these trials were felted unprecedented between the health workers [3].

Ethical challenges started to be discussed such as questions on how to ensure continuing treatment, easy access of the population to the professional cares mainly a reasonable pharmaceutical one also became really important to have more discussion about how the health workforce can protect themselves and be safer [3].

Yet, a brand-new responsibility is noticed by the health workers and communication among all areas became extremely needed pointing the importance of new approaches and innovative developments between all these groups makes the patient care be multiprofessional. Motivation is other situation that raises in this moment for all as new pressures and been throwed into these professionals as a transformation in the health care system was needed to be able to serve the entire population [4].

Pharmaceutical care and the accessibly to the pharmacist became a high priority as the population first seek for pharmaceutical attention mostly of the times before look to another health professional. The quality of this service provided by the pharmacist became really important as a form to decrease hospital demand due to the ability of the pharmaceutical professional to screen at the pharmacies [5].

### **Covid 19 and the role of the pharmacists**

Detected in the end of 2019 in China, the coronavirus disease known as COVID-19 was easy spread around the world going from been considerate an epidemic to pandemic by the WHO in a few months. This is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-COV-19 virus causing a severe and acute respiratory syndrome that was at first being confused with pneumonia [6].

Soon this pandemic started to place on the world health systems a lot of strain. Due to the high increased numbers of people looking for medical care suggestions as social distancing and lockdowns were put in consideration as an attentive form to help to contain the rapidly spread of the virus. Considered a new infectious pathogen this virus was no treatment known and his epidemiology, the transmission and clinical characteristic was mystery too [7].

However quickly the scientist started to study COVID-19 full epidemiology and it was found that the virus is mainly transmitted through the respiratory tract. Therefore, prevention became a big issue as the mainly form to reduce hospitalization and control measures started to be need. For the patients that was testing positive measures as full isolation from others at the hospitals or at home depending of the symptom gravity begin to be used as treatment and medical observation during this period became extremely important [8].

With this situation and the danger of been infected people with others diseases found difficulties to access healthcare facilities. Medicines management for patients with chronic illnesses also became hard as all saw their routine to change. In this scenario community pharmacies saw their contribution to increase speedily as the population begun to look for these pharmacists as the prior health care support not only in COVID-19 but also for others illness [1].

These pharmacists are easier for the patients to have access and obtain guidance in how to manage all type of clinical conditions. They also have full capacity to the promote the use of rational medication so the population adherence to this pharmaceutical support was easy accepted during this COVID-19 pandemic becoming an essential service in the health systems. This important pharmaceutical care practice served to the society during this moment of world crises only highlights the importance of the community pharmacists into the society [9].

### **The new and improved pharmaceutical care**

In this moment of crises where is been noticed that things are changing rapidly countries are facing major problem in maintain the health care system. As a form to assist the medical society the International Federation of Pharmacy (FIP) the department of health advice for global pharmacists and the pharmacy workforce together with the Pharmacy Administration Commission of Chinese Hospital Association (CHAPAC) and National pharmacist team of supporting Hubei frontline pharmacists developed a guidance book where is pointed throughout pharmacy experts in consensus a summarized material based in literature, scientist findings and experience during SARS in 2003 prevention about strategies for prevention in hospital and community pharmacy and pharmacy staff [10].

Other's guidance materials were released by the FIP and a manual of rational drugs usage in the treatment of COVID-19 was created for frontline medical personnel. In this manual is able to find a prescribing medication list that may be used and explains about them for a better medical understanding that includes the usage, adverse effects, dosage, precautions, solvents. In these materials are also to find a correlation made for special population such as children, dialyses patient, elderly, pregnant woman, patients with auto immune disease and others with the dose adjustment [11].

Patients with chronic diseases found difficult to obtain medical care looking for the community pharmacist for guidance. Due to pharmaceutical care access and their interventions, it can be notice positive health outcomes in the society for all kind of patients as their improved therapy intervention and concerning are been reported as to save lives. When a person is not feeling good it is the pharmacist who is wanted what is able to optimize the person life without this person look for a hospital reducing the probably contamination that could be obtained [12].

The pharmacy role at this point became extremely relevant as is able to improve the life quality of people and aim to enhance medicine utilization with a therapeutic outcome. The COVID-19 pandemic wakes these professionals for the world as they measure no efforts to ensure the patient safety and wellbeing. The impact of coronavirus in the pharmacies services also changed since the logistic procedures, available services to patient counselling and education. Additional trainings and hygiene measures was needed to be implemented by the pharmacist to try to avoid population and staff contamination [13].

To reduce the time that the patience pass into the pharmacy, logistic changes were also made like drive-thru service, delivery implementation by foot or other means of transportation and the use of normal phone, WhatsApp or computational consulting. All these adaptations are to try to achieve social-distancing and even barriers were placed in the door ways, implementation of time to elderly population goes to the pharmacy also was implemented all to reduce the number access of people [14]. The practice of pharmaceutical care was

totally adapted focused into the pandemic not forgetting the professional care and trying to avoid non-essential visits to the pharmaceutical establishment.

All these services were developed as a way to minimize duration of the patient in the encounters too as information about COVID-19, prices, treatments can be all provided by the trained team or the pharmacists enhancing the importance of maintain the team always well informed [15].

In some countries like Brazil tests of COVID-19 passed to be provided in pharmacies and is the pharmaceutical team that performed helping the early detection and therapeutic interference decreasing hospitalization or the spread of the disease [16]. For elderly patients or the ones that has limitations the pharmacy staff can give a support when it writes in the patient medication box how is the correct use which influence the use of rational medicine and less side effects [17].

Pharmacists are also important for immunization and with some coronavirus vaccines already approved are been used. Nevertheless, pharmacies are becoming very important for mass vaccination against COVID-19 increasing one more type of care to the pharmaceutical team contributing for the public health. Once more they became a place for health promotion and essential to contain the pandemic spread been responsible in avoid major disasters proving that they are always prepared for emergencies and to help the community.

## II. Conclusion

Pharmacists are proven to be the most accessible healthcare worker and the pandemic only put this in more evidence. The community pharmacies are playing an important role to combat the COVID-19 public crises and their ability and care with the population in all types of situation demonstrated their increased capacity of emergency adaptation. They show that they are able to undertake additional responsibility such as disease self-management training, point-of-care testing, screenings and also immunizations with response helping to relieve the pressure that other health service workers are feeling. Pharmacists also makes health promotion and education with patience always making medication counselling paying attention in side effects.

If a person is seeking for information about coronavirus or others diseases, they go direct to the pharmacy establishment look for advice and the pharmaceutical team is always them to combat misinformation and help the patient. Therefore, they are playing an important and direct role in this emerging issue arising their significance and importance to society.

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