

GSK Consumer Healthcare solidifies commitment to pharmacists with 3-year Pharmacist Support Programme

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GSK Consumer Healthcare today unveils a three-year programme to support the pharmacy profession with additional practical resources, mental health provisions and proposed policy changes as part of its new report *Standing with Pharmacists in the Age of Self-Care*.

The new report summarises findings from a roundtable hosted by GSK Consumer Healthcare in collaboration with the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) earlier this year, which convened the pharmacy community, policy experts, and industry leaders to discuss the critical role of pharmacy in the age of self-care following the COVID-19 pandemic.

We've seen COVID-19 have a significant impact on consumers' understanding of self-care, leading to an increased focus on wellbeing and everyday healthcare. During this time, pharmacies played a vital role in providing care and advice to their patients – particularly with many other health facilities closed. Our research shows that more than half of Europeans are planning to consult their pharmacist more often than before the pandemic. Yet in general, pharmacists remain under-utilised, despite being the most widely distributed health resource in Europe,

said Tess Player, Global Head of Expert at GSK Consumer Healthcare.

The report identifies six barriers faced by the global pharmacy community that can prevent them from fulfilling their critical role. These are workload; remuneration; limited education on disease prevention; public misperceptions of pharmacists' expertise;

integration challenges within the wider healthcare system; and support for identifying and addressing low health literacy among health consumers.

To tackle these issues, GSK Consumer Healthcare is unveiling a three-year commitment programme advocating for pharmacy policy and regulation change, and offering a range of bespoke support, training, and tools for pharmacists to help them address the barriers identified in the roundtable.

- Year 1 (2021-22): Focus will be on providing mental health and wellbeing support for pharmacists and pharmacy teams. This will also include the development of behavioural change tools and guidance for pharmacists in self-care conversations.

- Year 2 (2022-2023): Focus will be on helping pharmacists to manage their workload and wellbeing through the development of patient information and diagnostic tools. Year 2 will also include helping pharmacists identify and support health literacy challenges via a health literacy assessment tool.

- Year 3 (2023-2024): Focus will be on continuing to improve public awareness of the role of pharmacists in self-care among health consumers. This will include working with pharmacists to develop resources that improve health literacy, including public awareness initiatives and community health tracking.

We are proud partners to pharmacists everywhere and are committed to supporting the global pharmacy community to fulfil its critical role in building public health literacy and providing expert care. Our three-year plan is only the beginning; we have spent years working with experts to gain a better understanding of the barriers the pharmacy community faces and how we can empower them to fulfil their utmost potential,

The programme is part of the company's long-standing commitment to supporting the pharmacy community. In September 2020, GSK Consumer Healthcare released a Statement of Intent on the vital role of pharmacists in the future success of healthcare systems worldwide.

"The COVID-19 pandemic accentuated the crucial role pharmacists play in consumers' self-care routines. Self-care involves a variety of actions that patients take to manage their health. Pharmacists play an

important role in guiding patient's self-care behaviours. Thorough assessment and effective communication are crucial to meaningful self-care counselling. Pharmacists can act as advocates who empower patients and help them make healthy lifestyle choices, recommend appropriate OTC medications, and educate consumers about when they should consult a physician,” said Lars-Åke Söderlund, Vice President of the International Pharmaceutical Federation, FIP.

As the global healthcare system continues to evolve, self-care is expected to have an increasing role in treating certain minor ailments, and pharmacists are at the forefront of these changes and can lead the ‘self-care revolution’

For more details on GSK Consumer Healthcare’s work in supporting the pharmacy industry, and to read the full report, including the three-year commitments.

About GSK Consumer Healthcare

GSK Consumer Healthcare combines science and consumer insights to create innovative world-class health care brands that consumers trust and experts recommend for oral health, pain relief, respiratory and wellness. For further information please visit www.gsk.com.

The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) is the global federation of national associations of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists and is in official relations with the World Health Organization. Through our 146 member organisations, we represent over four million practitioners and scientists around the world. Our vision is a world where everyone benefits from access to safe, effective, quality and affordable medicines and pharmaceutical care. www.fip.org

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