

## FUNCTIONING PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES IN GERMANY

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**Introduction.** Pharmaceutical service (PhS)— provision of pharmaceutical assistance (help) to the population at the service (commercial) level as a result of the professional activity of pharmacists in saving and maintaining the health of people, which has a cost estimate and is obtained on the basis of contractual prices – this is a part of definition for PhS, given by the leading scientists of National University of pharmacy (Kharkiv, Ukraine) in 2000. And only nowadays Germany, which has one of the most developed health systems in the world, implemented pharmaceutical services with defined cost, covered by social insurance, to the pharmacies' activity. Understanding of basic methods and mechanisms of the implementation and analysing of existing implementation challenges and benefits will make easier and more acceptable the same process of PhS' introduction in reforming health systems of developing countries.

The **goal** of the research was to study the basics of the PhS providing in Germany and describe maintains of the process.

**Materials and methods** of the research includes generalization, structural analyses, induction and deduction methods.

**Main material of the research.** Local pharmacies are often the first point of contact for healthcare issues for visitors: from dispensing vaccines to consulting on a wide variety of complaints. Since June 2022, the customers of German pharmacies are entitled to five additional pharmaceutical services (pharmazeutischen Dienstleistungen, pDL), which costs are covered by the medical insurance company. The goal of such initiative was to further strengthen and increase the safety of the supply of medicines, and therefore of health care as a whole.

According to the German State Ordinance on the operation of pharmacies (pharmacy operating regulations, Apothekenbetriebsordnung- ApBetrO), Section 20,

issued in 1987 (last changed on 20.12.22): as part of the quality management system, the manager (head) of the pharmacy must ensure that patients and other customers as well as persons authorized to practice medicine, dentistry or veterinary medicine are adequately informed and advised about medicinal products and medical devices that are sold in pharmacies. The obligation to provide information and advice on medicines must be exercised by the head of the pharmacy; it can be assumed by other members of the pharmacy's pharmaceutical staff if the head of the pharmacy has previously determined this in writing or electronically. PhSs - are services that go beyond the obligation to provide information and consultation in accordance with ApBetrO, Section 20, and which improve the care of the insured persons. PhS includes activities of the pharmacies to provide the safety and efficiency of a medicines' therapy. Thus, providing with pharmaceutical information has been expanded with additional services which may be covered for German pharmacies. List of additional PhS consists of: *i. Advices on taking medicines for polymedicine.* Anyone who takes five or more medicines at the same time can get a comprehensive consultation at the pharmacy and check the entire combination of medicines even for medicines prescribed by different doctors. The pharmacist checks whether the prescribed medicines are suitable in the best way, so that there are no unwanted side effects or interactions. The service that is especially relevant at the background of demographic changes: more elderly people are taking more medicines at the same time. Thus, this PhS can make a big contribution to the success of therapy and quality of life. *ii. Advices for using inhalers.* This PhS is aimed at patients from the age of six who have to take medication by inhaler due to a respiratory disease. Pharmacist shows and explains, for example, the correct inhalation technique with a demonstration device and other illustrative materials. Then patient rehearse the inhalation, and receive direct feedback from pharmacist. So that the therapy can ultimately be as effective and successful as possible. *iii-iv. Pharmaceutical assistance to cancer patients and organ donor patients.* Specially trained pharmacists also accompany people who have received a donor organ. Many recipients of donor organs must take immunosuppressants to prevent their body from rejecting the foreign organ. It can be improved the safety of

treating these people with medicines. Cancer patients receiving oral anticancer medicines as part of their therapy are also eligible for pharmaceutical support from the pharmacy. This greatly increases the probability that drug-related problems can be identified and corrected during therapy. *v. Risk assessment in patients with arterial hypertension.* High blood pressure is one of the most common diseases in Germany: it affects between 20 and 30 million, i.e., almost one in three adults in the country. Therefore, all patients who take at least one antihypertensive medicine can monitor their blood pressure at the pharmacy. Regular, careful measurement and recording of values may confirm that the high blood pressure therapy is positive or can otherwise be adjusted if necessary. The long-term goal is to prevent possible consequences related to blood pressure, such as a stroke or organ damage. It's should be noted, the measurement is done once a year, if there is a change in the prescribed medication, even earlier.

It's predicted that that a new process meets some difficulties in the implementation activity. Thus, after several months defined part of pharmacies is not able to provide given PhSs and their staff needs additional training and education that needs additional time (working time for pharmacists) and costs for pharmacy. As for patient, they should look for a pharmacy that provides PhS in advance. Discussed questions is also the frequency of given services for patient per defined time horizon.

**Conclusions.** PhSs are an important tool for fulfilling the social function of a Ppharmacy. The introduction of such services confirms the importance of the pharmacist profession as a specialist in the health care system. The introduction of PhSs in Germany was facilitated by the effective functioning of the system of obligatory health insurance, as well as a high level of state assurance of the availability of health care services for the population. The development of the system of PhSs can also be considered the result of effective interaction of medical and pharmaceutical specialists. The presence and development of the specified prerequisites in Ukraine may have a positive impact on the path to the introduction of PhSs for the population in Ukraine.