THE IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL HEALTH LITERACY OF PHARMACEUTICAL WORKFORCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TELEPHARMACY

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According World Health Organization, digital health technologies save lives, improve health and well-being, increase access to care and lead to effective health systems and healthier populations. With increased complexity of health conditions and ageing populations, digital health can be the key to many unmet needs in health and related services [4].

The aim of this work is to study directions and current state of digital health and telepharmacy in different countries and justify the importance of digital literacy of pharmacists.

The paper uses methods of desk marketing research: analysis of documents, statistics, comparative and descriptive method.

Digital health is the field of knowledge and practice associated with the development and use of digital technologies to improve health. The most common digital health tools include electronic health record, e-prescribing and e-dispensing, blockchain, online pharmacy, wearable technology, bots, digital medicine, mobile applications, digital therapeutics, remote patient monitoring, online/remote (patient) counselling and telemedicine, artificial intelligence, and big data [4].

Telepharmacy is a way of delivering pharmaceutical products and pharmaceutical care by the means of telecommunication to patients. Telepharmacy as a form of remote pharmaceutical care can solve a number of tasks. In particular, its implementation increases the availability of pharmaceutical and medical care, saves money for the health care system and patients, and reduces the number of medical errors [5].

A wide range of clinical services and operational pharmacist activities can be conducted via telepharmacy such as patient assessment, medication review, patient education, prescription verification, disease prevention and assessment of clinical outcomes.

The most common types of telepharmacy are: inpatient telepharmacy (remote order-entry review for an inpatient pharmacy at a hospital**)**; remote dispensing (a remote-dispensing site, or retail community telepharmacy), remote counseling (via a live-and-interactive video session, or by some means through telecommunications) and preparation of pharmaceutical product for patients in a hospital setting.

In Canada, new pharmacy distant services were implemented in the context of COVID-19 pandemic in different states and cities: patient counselling, patient assessments in order to prescribe; medicines check services if they cannot be delayed; witnessing the ingestion of specific treatments; demonstrating the use of a medical device; deprescribing consultations; medication reviews; medication counselling; counselling and prescribing services; drug information services; conduct certain steps

in the dispensing process; assessments for minor ailments prescribing; smoking/tobacco cessation services; care to assess patients and prescribe a treatment; and extend prescriptions [2].

In USA, the application for telepharmacy has increased during COVID-19 and is now developing in new areas. In addition to retail independent community pharmacies and hospitals, telepharmacy is possible in specialty pharmacy (to enhance care for patients in oncology, HIV and Hepatitis clinics), in mental-health centers (to support patients with mental illnesses), in senior living centers (to provide seniors immediate access to urgent medication), in physician's offices, to deal with language barriers in healthcare organizations, in employer campuses and schools, etc. [1].

Many digital health technologies strongly depend on uptake and appropriate use by healthcare professionals. Digital heath literacy is a broad concept and it contains a wider set of competencies and skills. In 2020, to support early career pharmacists, International Pharmaceutical federation developed digital literacy competences.

Digital literacy behavior statements, according FIP Global Competency Framework, Version 2, 2020 include ability to:

- identify, manage, organize, store, and share digital information;
- critically appraise, analyses, evaluate, and/or interpret digital information and their sources;
- where applicable, participate in digital health services that promote health outcomes and engage with digital technologies (e.g. social media platforms and mobile applications) to facilitate discussions with the patient and others;
- maintain patient privacy and security of digital information related to the patient and workplace [3].

With its ability to provide increased access to pharmacists, expanded quality of services, more timely access to services, reduced costs, improved patient satisfaction, experience and convenience, better health outcomes, telepharmacy is set to become one of the most important aspects of telehealth in the nearest future. Pharmaceutical education should respond to the need to develop new competencies and skills of pharmacists.

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