

# Identifying Barriers and Facilitators that Affect Community Pharmacists' Ability to Engage Children in Medication Counseling

Olufunmilola Abraham, PhD, BPharm<sup>1</sup>; Dayna S. Alexander, DrPH, MSPH<sup>2</sup>; Loren J. Schleiden<sup>1</sup>; Delesha M. Carpenter, PhD, MSPH<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy, Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics

<sup>2</sup>University of North Carolina Eshelman School of Pharmacy, Division of Pharmaceutical Outcomes & Policy



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## INTRODUCTION

### Children are major consumers of medications

- ❑ One in five children report taking at least one prescription drug within the last 30 days<sup>1</sup>
- ❑ Children adhere poorly to medication regimens<sup>2-4</sup>
- ❑ Effective professional-child communication is thought to be a strategy to reduce medication nonadherence<sup>5,6</sup>

### Little is known about pharmacist-led counseling for children

- ❑ The United States Pharmacopeia recommends that health professionals communicate directly with children about medicines<sup>7</sup>
- ❑ Pharmacists as medication experts are the most accessible healthcare professional in the community
- ❑ Pharmacists may be able to facilitate safe medication use and reduce nonadherence in children

## OBJECTIVE

- ❑ To describe the barriers and facilitators that influence community pharmacists' ability to provide medication counseling to pediatric patients

## METHODS

### Recruitment

- ❑ Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians were recruited from three community pharmacies in two Eastern states

### Study Design

- ❑ A semi-structured interview guide was designed to elicit experiences of pharmacy staff interacting with children and parents
- ❑ Barriers and facilitators to medication counseling were elicited

### Data Collection and Analysis

- ❑ 16 interviews were conducted lasting approximately 45 minutes
- ❑ All interviews were audio-recorded and professionally transcribed
- ❑ Transcripts were reviewed for accuracy and a codebook developed
- ❑ Two researchers coded the data and NVivo 10 software was used for content analysis and identifying relevant themes

## RESULTS

### Barriers and Facilitators that Influence Community Pharmacists' Ability to Provide Medication Counseling to Pediatric Patients

#### Barriers

Child's absence during pick-up

Distracted/uninterested child

Unconducive environment

Age and limited attention span

Child's comfort and personality

Parent preference/time constraints

Pharmacist time constraints

#### Facilitators

Demonstrative/interactive technology

Pharmacist demeanor/approach

Child-friendly educational materials

Older children and comprehension

Private/welcoming consultation area

Pharmacist training and experience

Familiarity with child and caregiver

- ❑ Most participants were female (69%), aged 30 to 49 years (56%), with ≥ 5 years of pharmacy practice experience

#### Prevalent Barriers

##### Child's Absence During Pick-Up

- "The child does not come to the pharmacy. 99 percent of the time they do not come to the pharmacy...So when do I get to see the child?" - Pharmacist
- "...Their parents are either picking it up, or they're elsewhere. Rarely do they come with a parent." - Technician

##### Child Appears Distracted and Uninterested

- "But as for topics with medicine, they [children] - a lot of them tend to get distracted and not really seemed to be interested." - Pharmacist
- "We always try to talk to the child when we see them...but typically there's very little interaction. The child does not want to talk to us." - Pharmacist

##### Unconducive Environment

- "...At our counter there are so many distractions around whether it's in the pharmacy, around the counter, people, that the kids are so not focused on what's happening..." - Pharmacist
- "I think our setting, in particular, isn't the best for the child...so I can imagine for a child, it would be hard to focus." - Technician

#### Prevalent Facilitators

##### Interactive Devices and Technology

- "They're all using their electronics. So any type of electronic device that they could use to educate them would be helpful." - Pharmacist
- "...Most kids, you can give them an iPhone or an iPad or a tablet of some sort and they're pretty user friendly and intuitive for them to engage in..." - Pharmacist

##### Pharmacist Demeanor and Approach

- "I think you need to talk on their level. You need to make sure that you're not throwing words out there that they're not gonna understand." - Pharmacist
- "I think just the language that you use has to be different and the way you approach a child vs. an adult has to definitely be different." - Technician

##### Child-friendly Educational Materials

- "...If we had pediatric geared products... or an app on their phone, or tablet, or whatever they have, I think that would make it a lot better." - Pharmacist
- "Something that would be helpful, maybe, for kids would be something that's more age-appropriate...." - Technician

## CONCLUSIONS

- ❑ Pharmacists rarely engage children in medication counseling due to their absence during prescription pick-up
- ❑ Having child-friendly educational tools such as interactive devices and technology could facilitate child-pharmacist interactions
- ❑ Formal training and continuing education focused on medication counseling for children is recommended for future and practicing pharmacists

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