



EUROPEAN INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP ON ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING

ACTION GROUP A1

PRESCRIPTION AND ADHERENCE TO MEDICAL PLANS

**WORKING GROUP ON USER EMPOWERMENT/INFORMATION
TASK 5.1 – COLLECTION OF RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT
SERVICES OFFERED BY PHARMACISTS FOR PATIENT
EMPOWERMENT**



We administered a survey aimed to assessing the existing experience on Pharmaceutical Care services for patient empowerment in Europe. The collection of these information has been performed by presenting an evaluation questionnaire of 16 items to Action Group A1 partners, involved in the Action Group.

Each item was designed to address comprehensively various aspects of the services provided by community pharmacies about user empowerment-related issues, considering a number of relevant factors, such as:

- which stakeholders are involved
- which population groups were involved (clustered by age)
- which tools are being used to perform activities
- which barriers are limiting severely the deployment of these services.

The questions proposed usually allowed for multiple answers with only a small percentage of “yes”/“no” questions. The following Countries took part to this survey: Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Furthermore, PGEU (Pharmaceutical Group European Union) has provided aggregated answers for their affiliated countries.

The **stakeholders** involved in the compilation of the questionnaire belonged to two groups: professionals and reference organizational structures. **Pharmacists and GPs** were enrolled as professionals while **Academia, hospitals, research centers, NGOs, and primary care centers** were involved as reference organizational structures. The majority of persons filling the questionnaire reported “University Professor” as their **job**.

The survey showed that, in each of involved countries, community pharmacies are currently performing patient empowerment-related activities since at least three years.

Another interesting aspect are the issues addressed by the empowerment services implemented: 18.4% regards Adherence to therapy, 14.8% Drug interaction / ADR and polypharmacy; 11.1% specific self-management and OTC- self management; all of these were measured on total of the answers.

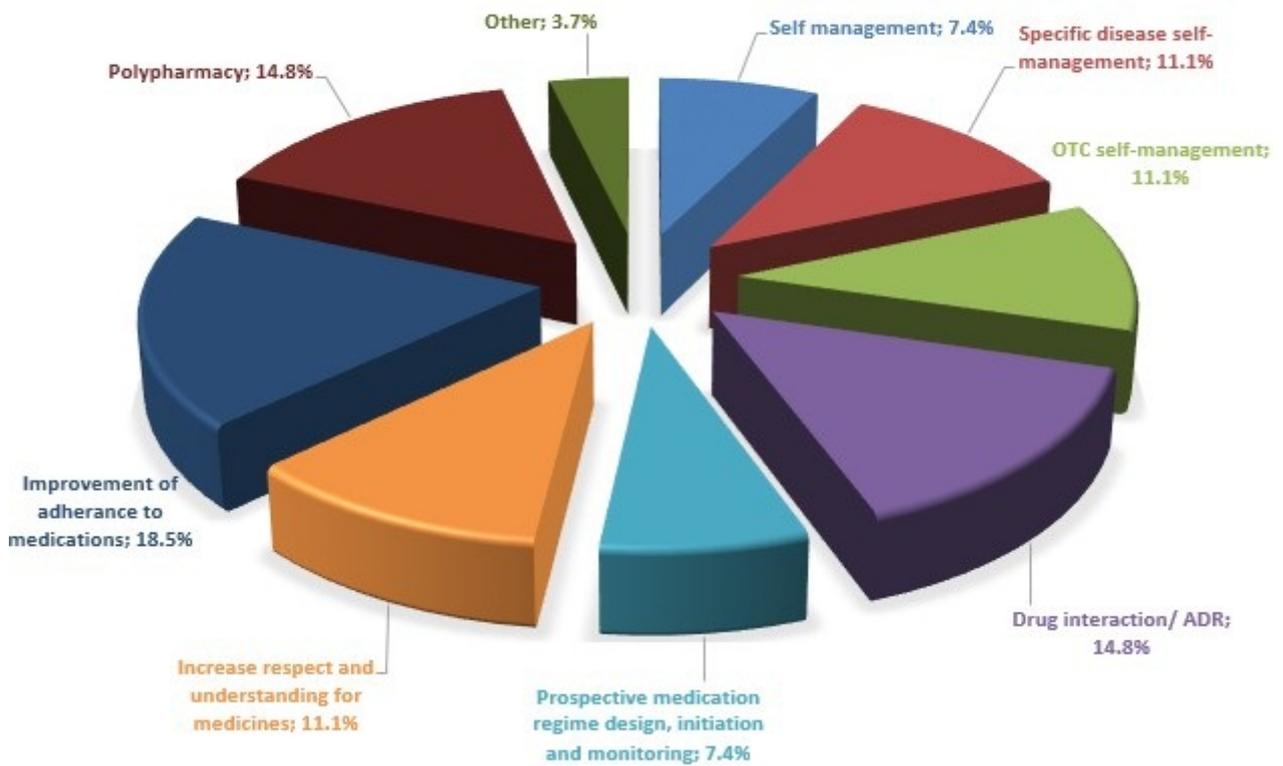


Figure 1. Area Empowerment intervention

In each country, every **age category of adult population** is subject to intervention. Moreover, in Spain, Portugal and Ireland, pediatric population is involved too. In addition to that, **chronic and multimorbidity conditions** are the main factors for which services of empowerment are being delivered.

The tool that is more frequently adopted by European pharmacies is informal advice, followed by structured interview and ICT tools (see Figure 2).

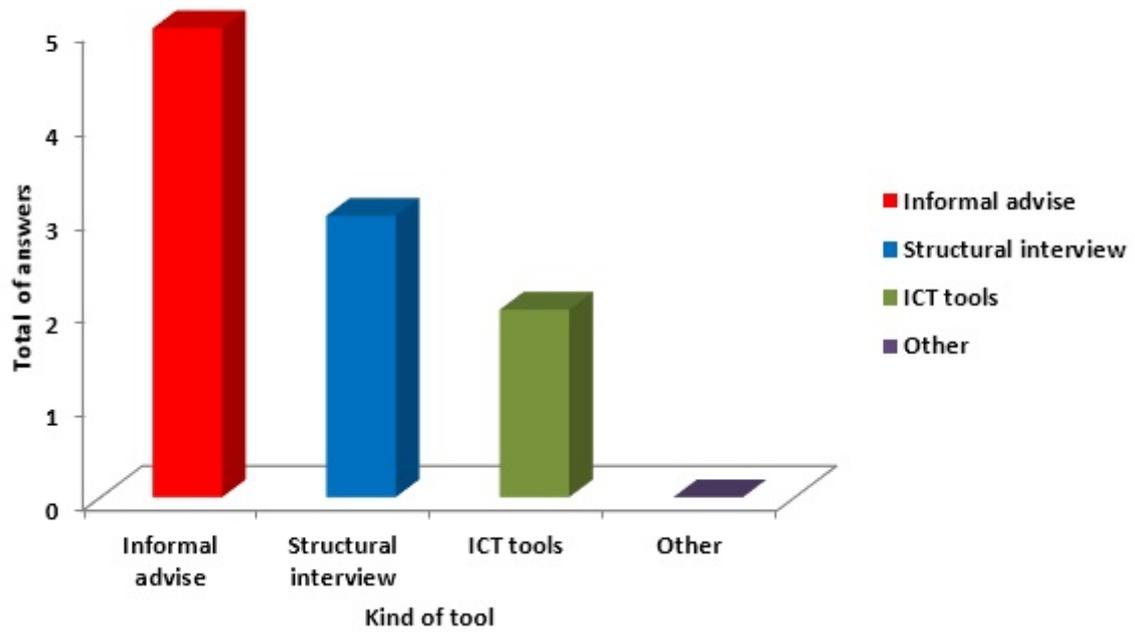


Figure 2. Tools for patient empowerment

The **communication approaches** most preferred in the community pharmacy to improve the services of empowerment, were **conversation and leaflets**.

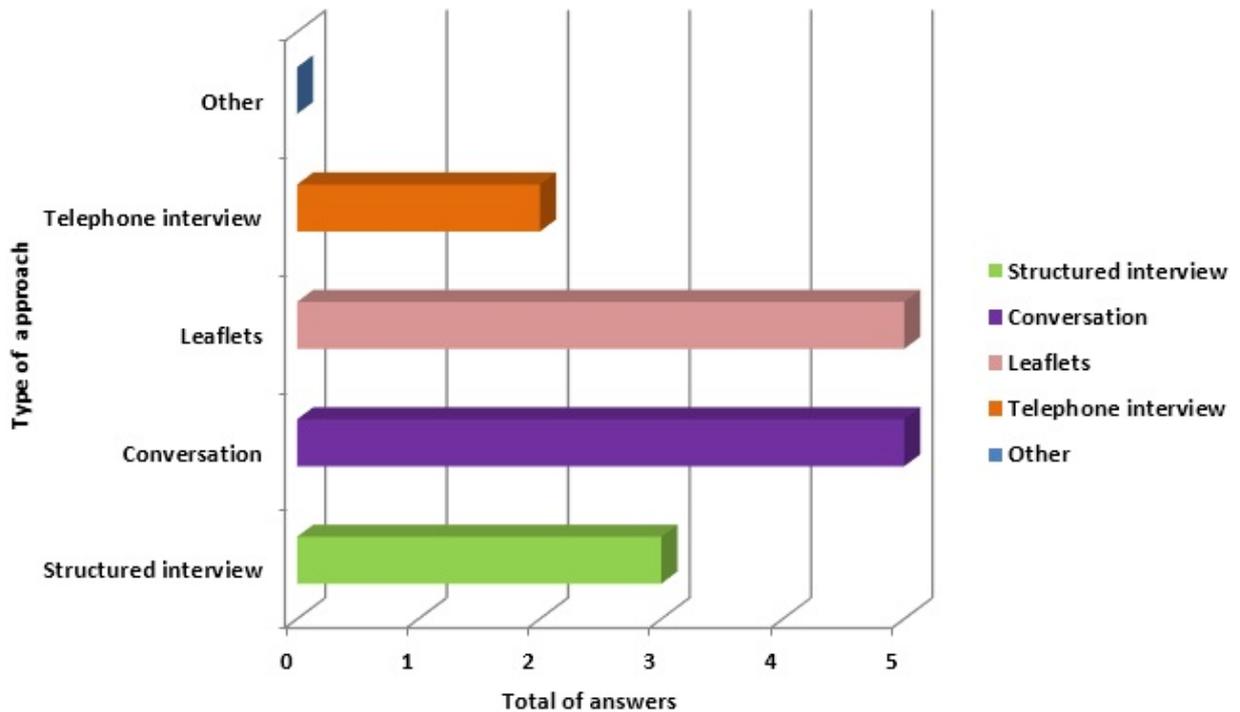


Figure 3. Approach of community pharmacies

European pharmacies, in most cases have electronic records of the empowerment interventions they provide. Significantly, in 60% of the answers the effort invested in the realization of these projects is **daily** and **pharmacist holds** has the role of chief representative responsible about the empowerment services implementation. In Europe the **interface team** with the patient, excluding **pharmacist holds**, is formed by MDs and nurses, too.

National Health Systems differently finance patient empowerment services: in UK, Belgium, France and Ireland they are financed while other countries such as Portugal, Spain, Norway and Italy they do not receive any remuneration.

The survey highlighted that in all countries there are more than one **barriers** slowing down pharmaceutical care services, such as **economic resources and lack of skills and staff training**.

The Institution of Pharmacy, in recent years, is undergoing a radical change in terms of activity. Indeed, the Pharmacy is not merely dispensing drugs but also performing a valuable task of counseling, providing correct therapeutic indications, as well as generic information to improve patients' health. The community pharmacies have hold a qualified role in supplying of health services to reply to the new needs for care required from people in order to ensure continuity of care in the region. According to the Eurostat evaluation, the average life expectancy in Europe is one of the highest in the world and it is increasing: if in 2000 was 74.7 years for men and 81.1 years for women, in 2050 it will be 79.7 and 85.1 years respectively. Pharmaceutical Care can enhance the responsiveness of Health Services to new issues and care needs, which represent a significant challenge to sustainability of care, considering rising costs and scarce resources. Therefore, in such a context, it is extremely important to motivate patients in the acquisition of new knowledge about their health and making them responsible for the management of their diseases and all related problems.

Patient empowerment is also dependent on the ability of health care professionals to renew both their competences and the ways in which they provide services. This goal can be reached by forming multidisciplinary teams of professionals, capable of supplying comprehensive evaluations of patients' health status, which in turn requires that health care professionals develop strong forms of cooperation and communication among them, involving not only GPs and Pharmacists, but stakeholder involved in the patient management.

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