

PERMANENT HEALTH EDUCATION FOR PHARMACISTS IN PRIMARY CARE: FIELD REPORT IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF NITERÓI/RJ

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Introduction

Pharmaceutical Assistance (PA) is a responsibility of the State and one of the key elements for the effective implementation of actions capable of improving the health conditions of the population across different levels of healthcare. Pharmacists working in Primary Health Care (PHC) must have the training and skills to promote access to and supply of medications, and to integrate into multidisciplinary teams to foster community involvement in self-care and self-management of health and disease. Permanent Health Education (PHE) is a professional training strategy that encourages reflection and analysis of work practices, aiming to identify the problems faced by professionals in their daily routines and seeking ways to improve the quality of services provided.

Material and Methods

To report on visits to Primary Health Care Units in Niterói to invite pharmacists to participate in Focus Groups (FG), the first phase of the project "Permanent Health Education for Pharmacists in Primary Health Care in the Municipality of Niterói", which aims to contribute to the development of solutions and transformations in the work routines of pharmacists through PHE.

Results and Discussion

Health units and pharmacists working in Niterói's PHC were identified through the National Registry of Health Establishments (CNES). Data were collected regarding the type of establishment, activity, whether the unit has pharmacy services, address, and contact information. Data on professionals, such as their affiliation, type of employment, and working hours, were also gathered. These data guided visits to the units that had pharmacists registered in the CNES, with the aim of selecting participants for the FG stage. In the FG, the gaps in the pharmacists' work processes will be identified, as the project aims to problematize routines and exchange experiences among participants. A teaching product will then be developed and applied based on the problems pointed out by the pharmacists during the FG. This product will be evaluated before and after its implementation using a previously validated tool. For the visits, a script was developed to assist the team in approaching participants, and logistics for the visits were organized by proximity to reach as many units as possible in one day. This project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Medical School of the Federal Fluminense University under Number: 5.890.602.

Conclusion

Visits were made to 12 PHC units. We directed ourselves to the pharmacy and approached the professional on duty; if they were the pharmacist, we explained the research objectives and inquired about their interest in participating, as well as clarified any doubts. If they accepted, we collected contact information and their availability for participation. If the professional was not present on the day of the visit, an invitation card with research details and our contact information was left, and we collected information on the days the pharmacist would be available for follow-up visits according to their work schedule. Multiple visits were necessary in some units due to vacations, leaves, or units undergoing renovation. During the visits, discrepancies were noted between the data collected from CNES. Out of the 12 units visited, in 4 we were able to contact the same pharmacists registered in CNES. In 6 units, there was a discrepancy between the number of registered pharmacists and the professionals actually working, with 4 units having fewer pharmacists than those registered, and in 2, the pharmacists found did not match those registered. This can be explained by professionals no longer working at some units due to relocation, retirement, or temporary contracts. During the visits, we observed the interest, understanding of the importance, and appreciation of the research by the pharmacists. In many units, even with lines of patients waiting to be attended, the professionals welcomed us, listened, and showed us the pharmacy, demonstrating their interest in the project. After explaining the project and inviting them to participate in the FG, we received acceptance from the majority of pharmacists. Of the 12 professionals contacted, 11 agreed to participate in the research. The focus group aims to problematize work routines to find solutions and answers to issues in a detailed manner, aligned with the objectives of PHE. Consequently, the development of the teaching product will likely contribute to the improvement of Pharmaceutical Assistance in the municipality of Niterói. We believe that after the application of the focus group and subsequent stages, the teaching product developed to train pharmacists in Niterói's PHC will contribute to their progress.

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