

# Benefits of Future Pharmacy Practice for Patient Care

	Benefits for patients	Benefits for the health service
<p><b>Pharmacy supporting health and wellbeing</b></p> <p>The network of over 1800 pharmacies in primary care is ideally placed to support and promote patient self-care and prevention through early intervention initiatives as part of the national health and wellbeing strategy.</p> <p><i>Evidence suggests that 2 million people visit a community pharmacy each month and that 20 million prescriptions are filled in pharmacies annually.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Wider access in the community to reliable information and prevention techniques to encourage healthy lifestyles.</li> <li>› Wider access to immunisation and health screening for early intervention and referral.</li> <li>› Broader community based support for the management of minor and self-limiting health conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Strengthened support for national health and wellbeing initiatives, such as health screening, by making use of the network of pharmacists to keep people well at all life stages.</li> <li>› Maximise existing patient contact with professional pharmacy services as a means to provide collaborative access to awareness and information campaigns.</li> <li>› Reduced pressures on the wider health system by delivering appropriate care in the pharmacy, and providing accurate referral pathways.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pharmacy supporting the prevention and management of patients with chronic disease</b></p> <p>Patients with chronic diseases are already frequent pharmacy visitors and pharmacists could increasingly assist and support their self-management of those diseases as part of an integrated approach across the healthcare team.</p> <p><i>Research indicates that 40% of Ireland's population will have at least one chronic disease by 2020.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Improved disease management with pharmacists providing a trusted source of patient information, accessible education and medicines adherence programmes for patients.</li> <li>› Ongoing, collaborative disease monitoring and opportunity for appropriate supplementary or repeat prescribing by pharmacists.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Care provided close to the patient's home and at the lowest level of complexity.</li> <li>› Improved management of chronic conditions by increasing understanding of medicines and raising patient adherence.</li> <li>› Better disease management resulting in reduced hospital admissions and decreased long term complications.</li> <li>› Reduced cost burden and resource pressures in acute care services as patients are better managed close to home and at the lowest level of complexity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pharmacy supporting medicines management throughout the patient pathway</b></p> <p>With increasingly complex medicines available and rising rates of polypharmacy, the knowledge and expertise of pharmacists should be better used to ensure the safety and efficacy of medications in all patient care settings.</p> <p><i>Irish health statistics show 26% of people over 50 are using 5 or more medicines each day.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Structured, collaborative supports on complex medicines for at-risk patients, in the community.</li> <li>› Driving patient safety with medicines reviews and reconciliation preventing error and complications, and reducing length of hospital stays.</li> <li>› Improved communication ensuring smoother and safer transitions of care for patients.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› A safe, standardised and integrated medicines service for patients.</li> <li>› Optimisation of medicines use in formal and residential care settings, minimising patient adverse events and reducing waste of medicines.</li> <li>› Cost avoidance opportunities with pharmacists collaborating on care and medicines interventions reducing hospital stays, medicine costs and waste.</li> <li>› Improved efficiency and better use of skilled resources, ensuring best value and safer, rational use of medicines in all patient care settings.</li> </ul>