



Draft WHO European roadmap for implementation of health literacy initiatives through the life course

It is a great honour to speak on behalf of the International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPSF), representing over 350,000 pharmaceutical students and recent graduates from over 90 countries worldwide.

In the current digital world, targeted mass media and social media campaigns are one of the key strategies used in health promotion. IPSF acknowledges that health information can easily be made accessible to the public through such channels, which greatly improve health literacy. However, it also leaves the public prone to misinformation, especially with regard to health matters, which may cause adverse effects on the health systems. An example is the rise of vaccination hesitancy, one of ten current global health threats, which has contributed to recent measles outbreaks incidents. Implementation of policies regarding the responsible use of media is inevitable as it plays a crucial role in disseminating evidence-based information to ensure safe and efficient delivery of health services.

Moreover, a key factor affecting health literacy is education. IPSF recommends utilization of health professionals as an expert reference for health information dissemination and improved quality of health promotion. Conducting public health campaigns on safe and healthy lifestyle, demonstrating proper use of medical devices and patient counselling on current therapies all contribute to augmented self-care interventions. A review of 39 studies showed that more than 1300 asthma and COPD patients indicated 91% inhaler technique improvement and a significant decrease of exacerbations after educational interventions provided by health workers.

IPSF urges member states to make health literacy a public health priority and utilise the accessibility of health care professionals to engage hard-to-reach populations. Pharmacists currently aid the patient's understanding of prescribed therapy and non-pharmacological measures with evidence-based prevention procedures. With these skills, if applicable, community pharmacists could use mHealth technologies to collect and monitor health data in addition to supporting the training of community health workers. Ultimately, IPSF will continue to advocate for accessible health services for all, towards more resilient health systems