

Evaluation of pharmacy services: Capturing the patient perspective

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- OBJECTIVES:** To understand the patient perspective about the evaluation of pharmacy services including the patient perspective on the responsibilities of pharmacists. The findings from this study will assist in identifying which parameters patients would consider important components of a pharmacy services evaluation framework that may be applied to the broad spectrum of pharmacy services.
- METHODS:** A generic qualitative approach was used to conduct this inductive, exploratory study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with patients who self-reported as having regular and ongoing contact with a pharmacist. Data were organized using a micro-coding technique using N*VIVO 10 software. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the findings by identifying key themes and relationships related to an evaluation framework structure.
- RESULTS:** Eleven patients were interviewed. Participant responses varied considerably with regard to perception of pharmacists and appropriate measures for evaluating pharmacy services. However, emergent themes of accessibility, convenience of services, the importance of building a patient-pharmacist relationship, and effective communication between pharmacists and patients as well as physicians were identified. Consensus was less apparent in the views patients held of pharmacists as members of the health care team versus service providers, and to what extent the scope of practice for pharmacists should be expanded.
- CONCLUSIONS:** This study has highlighted the importance of gathering input from patients to improve evidence-based policy making. The process is expected to incorporate patient needs and expectations into the development of an evaluation framework for pharmacy services.