



Identifying the Training Needs of Auxiliary Pharmaceutical Service Providers: The Case of Licensed Chemical Sellers in Ghana

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Introduction

The Pharmacy Council of Ghana by statute licenses a group of persons called licensed chemical sellers (LCSs) to supply over-the-counter medicines by retail. LCSs, currently numbering over 7,000 and located nationwide, are a major source of health care for communities in Ghana. The process of licensure of these individuals is not enough to assure their competence and the quality of services they provide; thus, the Council organizes annual training programmes for them nationwide.

Problem Statement

Currently the training programme is not based on the needs of LCSs, its organization and management is not well structured, and the choice of subjects or topics are made on an ad hoc basis. The method of delivery is largely didactic and not conducive for adult learning, whilst financing the programme has always been a challenge, with potential sponsors wanting evidence of its sustainability and structure based on a needs assessment.

Objective

To develop a curriculum and a sustainable training programme for LCSs in Ghana based on a training needs assessment.

Methodology

The Pharmacy Council was given a lead role in the implementation of the project and was responsible for drawing the road map for the whole activity. Together with two consultants, they developed the background, literature review, implementation plan for the field activity, and instruments for data collection. The scope of the fieldwork was to target practicing LCSs in a two-tier mode, with the first part looking at a focus group discussion of LCSs and key stakeholder interviews and the second part involving a structured interview of randomly selected licensed chemical sellers.

Preliminary Observations

Preliminary observations from the literature review gave interesting information about the background of the LCSs, which is important when doing a needs assessment for a group of



persons. The review of the existing training programmes also shed some light on its strengths and weaknesses, which will be useful in the development of the future programme.

Conclusion

This intervention would bring a lot of relevance and benefits to the training programmes for the LCSs, and the general public would be assured of better pharmaceutical service delivery from them through enhanced competence and capacity development. This will ultimately improve access to quality medicines in the country.

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