

Where There are no Pharmacists - Users guide:

Where there are no trained pharmacists serving communities, other categories of health workers are called upon to order, buy, store, dispense and advise people on rational use of medicines. This book walks them through each step, covering topics ranging from policy issues to patient education.

- ✓ **The concept of National Medicines Policies**
- ✓ **Principles of selection: Therapeutics Committees, Treatment Guidelines, Standard Medicines Lists**
- ✓ **Procurement, stock management and supply: sources and prices, quantification, quality issues, storage and stock control**
- ✓ **The process of dispensing, and dispensing according to treatment guidelines**
- ✓ **Rational Use of Medicines**
- ✓ **Integrating vertical programs like IMCI, STI and HIV programs, Reproductive Health**
- ✓ **Explaining to patients and communities**

Where There Are No Pharmacists is about managing medicines. It explains how to order them, store them, prepare them, dispense them and use them safely and effectively. Advice is provided on all these aspects for people working with medicines together with information to help communities benefit from the use of medicines. It provides guidance for anyone who is doing the work of a pharmacist; anyone who sells, dispenses, prepares, manages, or explains to others how to use medicines.

People with little or no formal education can be trusted to grasp what is communicated if the communication tool is comprehensive enough. It provides information to help communities benefit from the use of medicines. It does not provide clinical advice but emphasizes the need to adhere to national standard treatment guidelines or, in their absence, to appropriate texts and guidelines. Whole communities can be empowered through empowering health workers.

The main goals of the authors of *Where There Are No Pharmacists* is an increase of health workers who

1. responsibly maintain a reliable supply of good quality, essential medicines
2. manage medicines efficiently by carrying out activities in the best professional way
3. accurately dispense medicines to the community with relevant information and
4. continue to remain competent in their professional role as managers of medicines.

Chapter 1.1 and 1.2

In these chapters you learn about Primary health Care and the duties of a pharmacist and how access to the right medicines is part of PHC.

- Role of the Pharmacist
- Definition of Primary Health Care (PHC)
- Access to appropriate needed medicines by the community

Chapter 1.3

In this chapter you learn about government policies and selection of the right medicines.

- National Medicines Policy
- Essential Medicines ARE
- Essential Medicine List
- Appropriate or rational use of medicines
- Inappropriate or irrational use of medicines
- Donated Medicines
- National Programs such as HIV, TB, IMCI, Family Planning

Chapter 1.4

In this chapter you learn about the laws and regulations that apply to medicines and the supply of medicines and why they are important including:

- Registration of medicines
- Definition of schedules or categories for the availability of medicines

Chapter 1.5

In this chapter you learn about why it is important to know about medicines and what each medicines is used for and whether it is right for a particular person; and why medicines come in different forms – tablets, creams, mixtures injections and so on. The chapter explains different categories of medicines and how they are used differently.

Chapter 1.6

This chapter explains more about medicines: what does generic mean? Why are some medicines controlled? What is drug dependence? What are traditional Medicines? What are fixed dose combinations?

Chapter 2.1

In this chapter you learn how to calculate what needs to be ordered both at a national level and from your health facility to keep up the right supply of the right medicines for your patients.

- ✓ Reliable supply of the right medicines

Chapter 2.4

This chapter will show you good ways to receive and store and look after your stock as well as making it easy to find things

- List examples of damaged items or not good quality
- What do you do when you received the stock items (unpacking of medicines)

Chapter 3.1, 2, 3 Dispensing, Rational Use of Medicines

In this chapter you learn that dispensing is the final act of preparing and giving out medicines to the people that need them. This is the step that is the whole reason for selecting, purchasing and storing medicines. It is the most complex and most important step and it must be done well.

If the wrong medicine or wrong strength of medicine is dispensed, the results can be serious; the patient could become sicker or even die. It is therefore important that you understand the medicines you are dispensing and that the person receiving the medicines understands how to take them.

You will understand that the rational use of medicines means that patients receive medications appropriate to their clinical needs, in doses that meet their own individual requirements for an adequate period of time, and at the lowest cost to them and their community.

- Things to know when you dispense a medicine to a patient

Chapter 3.4 Improving use of medicines in your community

In this chapter you learn about how you can improve use of medicines in your community.

- Common reasons for misuse of medicines
- Things to be written on the label
- Importance of keeping patient record