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STATEMENT BY THE WESTERN PACIFIC PHARMACEUTICAL FORUM

The International Pharmacy Federation [FIP] is the global federation of national associations of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists in official relations with the World Health Organisation. The Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum is the regional forum of FIP aligned with the Western Pacific Region of WHO focussed on advancement of pharmacists practice.

Guidelines for pharmacists' services in mental health care

Opportunities exist for pharmacists to work in collaboration with multidisciplinary stakeholder groups to contribute to the improvement in delivery of mental health care services.

Why Guidelines for pharmacists?

- While pharmacists recognise that medicines are not necessarily the primary or sole treatment option for mental illnesses, mental health-related prescriptions comprise a significant and growing portion of all medicines dispensed by pharmacists. These dispensing occasions illustrate the need and create the opportunity for pharmacists to be more involved in mental health care.
- Pharmacists have a strong primary health care role and, due to their accessibility, are often the first health professional contacted by a consumer with a health concern. Pharmacists are frequently consulted for advice on psychotropic medications and their accessibility and frequent contact with mental health consumers and carers means they are ideally placed to play a greater role in the management of mental illness or conditions.
- Psychotropic medicines are frequently implicated as a cause of adverse drug events or drug-related problems and there is evidence of the benefits arising from pharmacists monitoring for therapeutic effect and performing medication reviews for people receiving medicines for mental illness or conditions.
- Pharmacists' skills and experience within the area of safe and appropriate use of medicines can be applied to improve quality use of medicines for consumers with a mental illness including the provision of services to enhance medication adherence.

We propose that Guidelines for Pharmacists in Mental Health Care be developed in partnership with mental health consumers, general practitioners, psychiatrists, psychologists and mental health practice experts, policy experts, carers and care coordinators.

The Guidelines:

- will contribute to the enhancement of the role of pharmacists as members of the mental health care team;
- provide guidance for the ongoing education and training of pharmacists to increase their knowledge and skills to be able to recognise the need for and provide mental health first aid;
- will provide a basis for exploring future pharmacists' roles as partners in mental health care to enhance mental health care service delivery to consumers and carers.

The Guidelines will describe the role of pharmacists as consisting of:

- indirect services, including education, academic detailing and policy development; and
- direct services, such as medication adherence support, crisis intervention or medication review, which are aligned broadly with four main aims for mental health care service delivery:
 - health promotion;
 - supporting early detection and intervention;
 - minimising illness; and
 - maximising recovery.

In addition to being directly applicable to pharmacists, the Guidelines will be used to engage with a variety of audiences including consumers, carers, mental health care organisations and health care practitioners to promote the role of the pharmacist as a partner in the delivery of mental health care.

Thank you.