

Evaluation of Patient Perceptions on the Role of the Pharmacist for Diabetes Management in a Rural Community

Cheyenne Myers, Pharm. D. Candidate

Lauren Carlisle, Pharm. D.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The prevalence of diabetes is 9%-17% higher in rural areas when compared to urban areas.² Reports have shown that rural areas have 5.1 primary care physicians per 10,000 residents, further revealing that those who live in rural areas have less access to healthcare.⁶ It has been found that these patients visit their pharmacy more frequently than their primary care physician.¹³ There are limited studies that evaluate the specific roles and level of utilization of pharmacist services for diabetes management.

Methods: This single-center, quantitative survey was conducted at a rural independent pharmacy named Nauvoo Pharmacy in Nauvoo, Illinois. A survey was distributed to all patients who filled prescriptions for diabetes management, either Type 1 Diabetes or Type 2 Diabetes between December 4, 2024, and February 1, 2025. The survey was given on paper that also included a link to the online survey form with the choice to complete either method. Patients were excluded from this study if they were less than 18 years old or older than 89 years old.

Results: Over the two-month window of data collection a total of 20 surveys were collected. Analysis of the data revealed that the biggest roles reported by patients and the most utilized services at Nauvoo Pharmacy for diabetes management are advice on side effects from

medications used to treat diabetes, help understanding insurance coverage and co-pays, help with first placement of CGM (Continuous Glucose Monitor), and help setting up a diabetes meter. Both advice on side effects from medications used to treat diabetes and help understanding insurance coverage and co-pays are utilized by 45% of participants in the study.

Conclusion: Patients in rural communities living with diabetes depend on and utilize many services from their community pharmacist for the management of their diabetes. Community pharmacists are the most accessible healthcare provider available to patients on a walk-in or appointment basis for services that require a longer amount of time.