

# Consumers' rights in community pharmacies in Latvia.

## Patient right protection in Latvia

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### The aim of the study

The aim of the study was to evaluate the situation with the patient rights in Latvia, devoting a particular attention to the knowledge of pharmacy customers about their rights, as well as to the pharmacy staff's understanding of patient rights.

### Work tasks

- The clarification of the rights of patients in Latvia and lawful substantiation thereof.
- Learning of the most important problems in the field of patient right protection.
- Studying of the understanding of pharmacy visitors about their rights.

### Introduction

- Determining and analysis of pharmacy workers' knowledge about the rights of customers.
- Law on patient rights became effective only on March 1, 2010. But this law is not attributable to pharmacy clients and does not discuss patient-pharmacist relationship.
- Despite the pharmacy being both an enterprise and a healthcare institution, there is practically no information on patient rights in the pharmacy.
- Currently, only active citizens fight for their rights and submit complaints to the Ethics Committee of the Pharmacists' Society of Latvia, but if the pharmacy patients were better educated, this activity would be much higher and would facilitate the improvement of service quality.

### Rights of patients in the pharmacy

#### Deduced from the Ethics Code of Pharmacists:

1. Any person has the right to be served in the pharmacy.
2. Any customer of the pharmacy shall be considered a personality and he or she shall be treated with respect.
3. Customer of the pharmacy has the right to a composed and kind serving.
4. Customer of the pharmacy has the right to receive a service from a competent and knowing expert.
5. Customer of the pharmacy has the right to receive professional information about the medicine – manner, frequency of administration, storage at home, etc.
6. Customer of the pharmacy has the right to receive advice about over-the-counter medicines.
7. Customer of the pharmacy has the right to receive information about self-treatment principles.
8. Customer of the pharmacy has the right to the confidentiality of information, connected with the personality of the patient, which he or she provides in the pharmacy – confidentiality of the diagnosis of illness, treatment tactics, etc.
9. Customer of the pharmacy has the right to receive first aid if needed.

### Pharmacy visitors' understanding about their rights

- In total, 45 customers of pharmacies were polled – 13 men and 32 women.
- 17 respondents (of them 10 women and 7 men) were from a town with a population of approximately 9000 and 5 pharmacies.
- 28 (of them 22 women and 6 men) were from Riga.

### Conclusions

- Patient rights are in the initial development stage in Latvia. Significant problems with patient rights have been discovered. Lack of information on patient rights and the possibilities of their protection in the pharmacy have been observed.
- Pharmacy patients' understanding of their rights is quite poor, most of them do not know their rights and possibilities in the pharmacy. Also, in general, the received services are not assessed very positively.
- Pharmacists' and pharmacist assistants' understanding of patient rights in the pharmacy is better; however, in general, pharmacy staff assesses the quality of provided services much higher than patients do it.

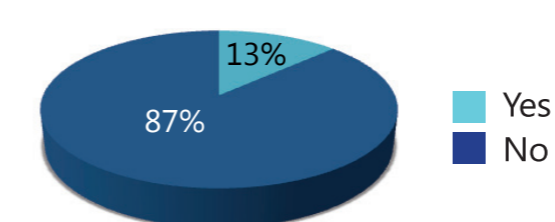
### Pharmacy workers' knowledge about the rights of pharmacy customers

- In total, 40 workers of pharmacies were polled.
- Of them, 23 forms were filled in by pharmacists, but 17 – by assistants to pharmacists.
- 13% of all respondents worked in the pharmacy for less than a year, 20% for 1-5 years, but 67% of the respondents worked in the pharmacy for more than 5 years.
- All respondents were women.

#### „Do you think that there is enough information available about the rights of patients in the pharmacy?”

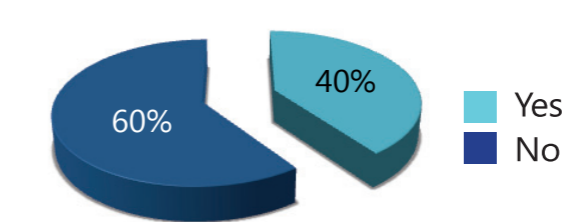
##### Patients' opinion

Do you think that there is enough information available about the rights of patients in the pharmacy?



##### Pharmacy workers' opinion

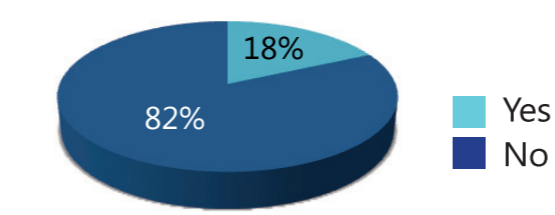
Do you think that there is enough information available about the rights of patients in the pharmacy?



#### „Do you know the rights of patients in the pharmacy?”

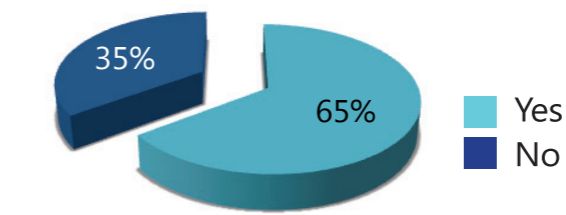
##### Patients' opinion

Do you know your rights in the pharmacy?



##### Pharmacy workers' opinion

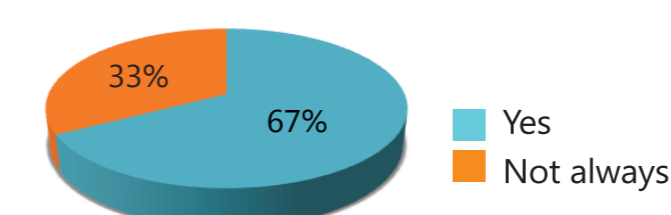
Do you know the rights of patients in the pharmacy?



#### „Is serving in the pharmacy always kind and respectful?”

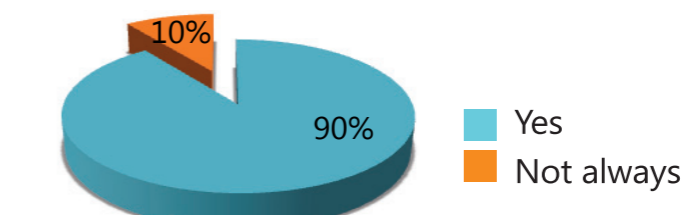
##### Patients' opinion

Do you think that pharmacists treat pharmacy customers with respect?



##### Pharmacy workers' opinion

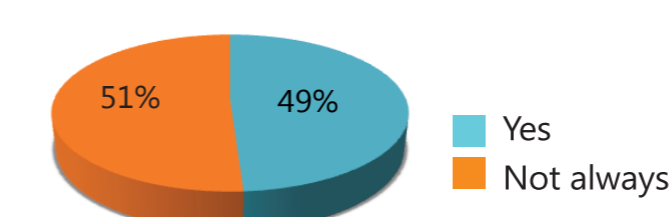
Do you always treat customers kindly and with respect?



#### „Is professional information about medicines and their administration provided in the pharmacy?”

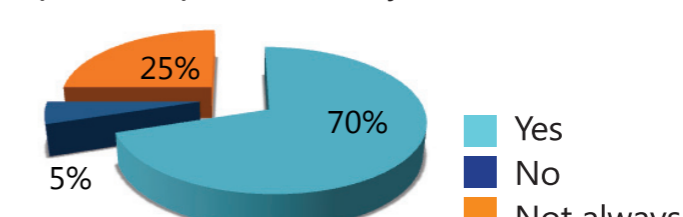
##### Patients' opinion

Do you think that pharmacists provide information about medicines and their administration professionally?



##### Pharmacy workers' opinion

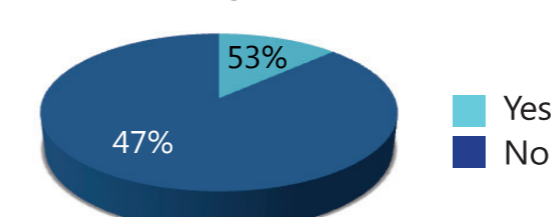
Do you provide information about medicines and their administration to patients professionally?



#### „Is confidentiality of the provided information guaranteed in the pharmacy?”

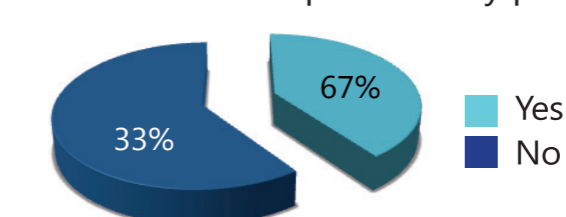
##### Patients' opinion

Is confidentiality of the provided information guaranteed in the pharmacy?



##### Pharmacy workers' opinion

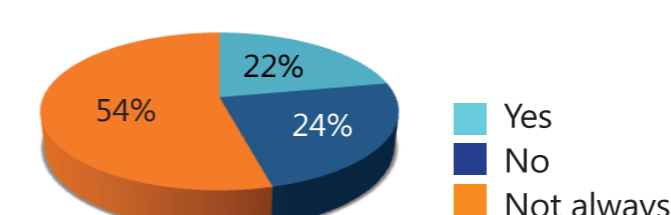
Do you guarantee confidentiality of the information provided by patients?



#### „Do pharmaceutical companies influence the choice of the pharmacist when offering over-the-counter medicines?”

##### Patients' opinion

Do you think that pharmacist acts in the interests of pharmaceutical companies when recommending over-the-counter medicines?



##### Pharmacy workers' opinion

Do you act in the interests of pharmaceutical companies when recommending over-the-counter medicines?

