

Headline	Pharmacy promotes immunization among diabetics	
MediaTitle	Manila Standard Philippines (www.thestandard.com.ph)	
Date	27 May 2019	
Section	NEWS	
Order Rank	6	
Language	English	
Journalist	N/A	
Frequency	Daily	

Pharmacy promotes immunization among diabetics

In celebration of World Health Organization's World Immunization Week, Mercury Drug Corporation, partnered with the Philippine Society of Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism (PSEDM), the Philippine Pharmacists Association (PPhA), and global healthcare company MSD to facilitate a series of diabetes care and immunization lectures at selected Get Well at Mercury Drug Diabetes Care specialty corners.



Pharmacists at the Get Well at Mercury Drug Diabetes Care corner provide free pharmacy counselling.

The lectures highlighted the importance of vaccination for persons living with diabetes.

“Mercury Drug’s foremost priority is the health of Filipinos and knowing that diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death in the country. We partnered with PPhA, PSEDM, and MSD for the Get Well at Mercury Drug Diabetes Care program, which was launched in August 2018. Our vision is to improve diabetes care for Filipino patients through an inter-professional collaborative approach,” said Annie Tejada, Mercury Drug district manager.

The patient-centered program aims to ensure continuity of care at the pharmacy level and address all relevant areas in diabetes care—including vaccination.

Vaccination is crucial in diabetes management, given that it is harder for the immune system of patients with diabetes to fight infections.

“We should be proactive in ensuring that we comply with the vaccine recommendations of our doctors. In the Philippines, though, there’s generally a lack of awareness about the benefits and importance of

vaccination, not only for diabetics, but also for the general population,” emphasized Dr. Jeremy Robles, president of PSEDMD.

For instance, pneumonia is one of the infections that can be prevented by vaccination. Fighting pneumonia can be burdensome, costly, and critical. According to Dr. Aurora Macaballug, board member of PSEDMD, the cost of vaccination is minimal compared to pneumonia medication and hospitalization which can escalate to up to P250,000 per patient.

Even for non-diabetic individuals, protection from pneumonia through vaccination is equally critical, since the disease factors in as one of the leading causes of deaths in the country, according to the Department of Health. In fact, the department includes pneumonia vaccination in its Expanded Program on Immunization.

“If a person aged 50 and above has never received any pneumonia vaccine, it’s time to get vaccinated. If a patient has a risk factor like diabetes and heart disease, even if the patient is not yet 50 years old, immunization is needed,” asserted Dr. Joel Santiaguel, pulmonologist at the Philippine General Hospital.

In fighting burdensome diseases, it is crucial to ensure that Filipino patients get quality and accessible healthcare. Collaborative interventions are needed to address priority healthcare areas, such as diabetes management and immunization.

Medication adherence, or the taking of medications correctly as prescribed by the doctor, is another integral aspect of diabetes care and management that many patients usually take for granted.

Miriam Soriano, aged 71 and diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, tells of a common occurrence among diabetic patients given that they have to take several types of medicines per day. “Yung isang manugang ko nga para di makalimutan uminom ng gamot, lahat iniinom niya ng sabay-sabay,” she lamented. (My daughter in-law takes all her medicines in one go so she will not forget it.)

The PPhA asserts the important role of pharmacists in guiding diabetes patients. “Pharmacists not only help ensure that patients have the right knowledge about drugs, but they also guide them in preventing possible complications that can arise from drug interactions or non-adherence. Pharmacists can also check for complications, administer screening tests, and make referrals to other members of the diabetes care team,” explained Dr. Yolanda Robles, president of PPhA.

“In the future, pharmacists would actually be able to administer adult vaccines under The New Pharmacy Law. In the meantime, we’re calling on the pharmacists to also educate patients about vaccination,” she said.



Officials of PSEDM, PPhA, Mercury Drug Corporation, MSD, and Paymaya unite for the celebration of World Immunization Week.

Mercury Drug, in partnership with PPhA, are working together to empower and equip pharmacists with the knowledge and skills to provide better counseling and support to patients.