Scoping review on role of pharmacists in promoting healthy ageing

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Ageing population is becoming a major global issue, with the number of people aged 65 and above expected to double from 703 million in 2019 to 1.5 billion by 2050. Malaysia is also experiencing this demographic change and is projected to reach ageing nation status by 2030. This shift brings serious challenges to the public healthcare system, particularly due to the rise in chronic illnesses and increasing functional dependence among older adults. In response, the concept of healthy ageing has gained attention as a key strategy to enhance quality of life and reduce the pressure on healthcare services. Many parties, including the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the community, and healthcare professionals, have well-documented roles in promoting healthy ageing through physical, mental, social, and environmental support. However, the role of pharmacists in this area is still underexplored. While some studies have shown that pharmacist interventions can lead to better medication use and fewer hospital admissions, most research has focused on disease management rather than their broader role in promoting healthy ageing. Pharmacists have strong potential to contribute to healthy ageing, as they are in a strategic position due to their regular contact with patients, especially in community pharmacies and outpatient settings. Their responsibilities may include managing medications, providing health education, supporting treatment adherence, and addressing issues such as polypharmacy. This review aims to explore and summarise existing studies on the role of pharmacists in healthy ageing, focusing on the types of interventions, healthcare settings involved, and the challenges faced by pharmacists in implementing healthy ageing. **Materials and Methods:** This scoping review will follow the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) methodological framework. A systematic search will be conducted across major databases, but not limited to PubMed, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, also complemented by grey literature. Studies will be selected based on predefined inclusion criteria which involve adults aged 18 years and above. Studies must also describe pharmacist-led activities that support healthy ageing in relevant settings including but not limited to community pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, primary care, and home visits. Study selection will be performed independently by two reviewers, with discrepancies resolved through discussion. Search terms will be derived from Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) related to pharmacists and healthy ageing. A standardised data extraction form will capture study details, pharmacist roles, settings, outcomes related to healthy ageing, and implementation challenges. Results will be summarised using PRISMA flow diagrams, tables, visual maps, and narrative synthesis. **Results:** The review is expected to identify and map the various ways in which pharmacists contribute to healthy ageing, including but not limited to medication safety, community-based health promotion, and interprofessional collaboration. It will also highlight existing knowledge gaps, where evidence is still scarce. **Conclusion:** Findings from this review will serve as a foundation for policy development, research direction, and future intervention models involving pharmacists in healthy ageing promotion.

Keywords: Healthy ageing, pharmacists, health promotion