

**FIP**  
**VIRTUAL 2020**  
SEPTEMBER

# HELPING PATIENTS AND PHARMACISTS TO BREATHE BETTER

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# AIR POLLUTION AND RESPIRATORY HEALTH: BEST PRACTICE SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS

A Roundtable organized by The Clean Breathing Institute & International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP)  
17th September 2020, **13.00-14.30 CEST**  
FIP Virtual 2020  
Meeting report

On 17 September, amidst growing links between air quality and Covid-19, the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) and The Clean Breathing Institute, GSK's scientific collaborative initiative, brought together experts from around the world to develop pioneering air pollution support for community pharmacists.

The event followed last year's roundtable in Abu Dhabi and FIP's subsequent International Survey on Respiratory Health and Air Pollution, conducted with the support of The Clean Breathing Institute.

This year's event was attended remotely by more than 20 experts representing pharmacy societies, associations and councils from around the world, all keen to play their part in ensuring pharmacists have the tools needed to help patients breathe better.

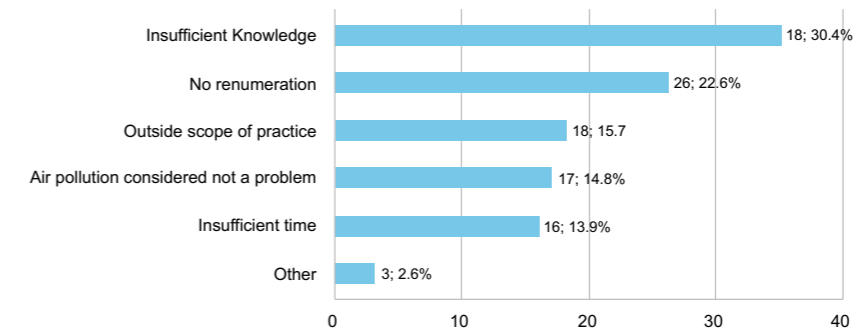
Opening the event, Robert Friedline, Chief Executive of The Clean Breathing Institute, recognised the incredible value of pharmacists around the globe and urged participants to share their expertise and experiences openly to support this invaluable workforce.

Following this, Gonçalo Sousa Pinto, FIP Lead for Practice Development and Transformation, presented survey findings which included:

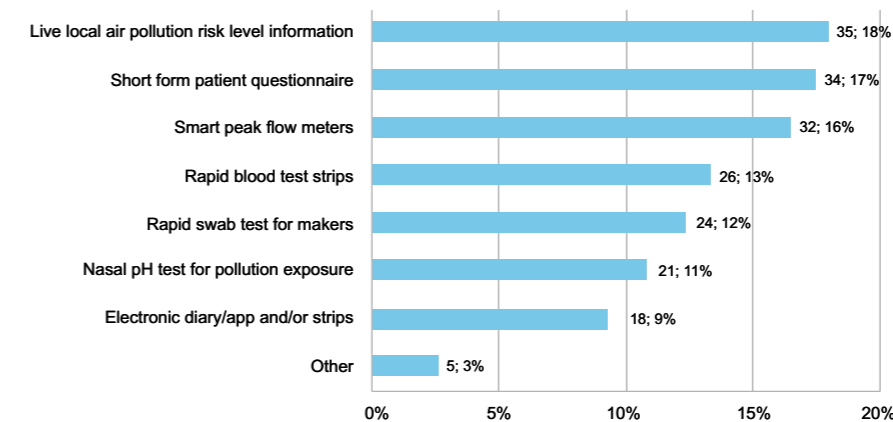
1. Pharmacists do not feel they have enough air pollution and respiratory knowledge to proactively engage with patients on the subject.
2. In 50% of respondent countries, there are no pharmacy guidelines for respiratory health.
3. Pharmacists want evidence-based tools to help them offer better advice.

# DISCOVERY

**What are the reasons why pharmacists are not proactively discussing and managing impact of air pollution on respiratory health with patients or the public?**



**What tools or devices would help pharmacists identify patients at risk from air pollution?**



Following this, attendees split into three groups covering Education and Training; Professional Services and Tools; and Advocacy, Policy and Guidelines.

The variety and breadth of expertise brought by attendees provided an invaluable wealth of insight, fostering an inspiring and lively debate.

Participants discussed how better data publication would help to support the case for reimbursement and funding from governments. However, it was also noted that there are many free interventions which could be implemented if a creative approach is taken to look beyond the bounds of pharmacies themselves to solutions like outreach work in schools and care homes, and collaborations with NGOs as well as pharmaceutical companies.

# YOU HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE A CHANGE

It is clear that better, evidence-based tools, such as apps for pharmacists, and protocols for their use, are needed to support informed patient conversations. In many cases, the evidence is already available but requires surfacing in a user-friendly format. However, it was noted that a fundamental lack of local information on air pollution would prevent this in some countries.

Participants explored how advocacy tools, tailored to reflect each country's unique situation, could help with the efficient sharing of key messages and, when complemented with public-facing campaigns, have a real and tangible impact on building awareness of pharmacists' expanding role.

The need for strengthened, and formalised, continuing professional development for pharmacists was a significant focus. While exploring methods of delivery, including e-learning, videos and events for insight sharing between pharmacists, participants were honest about barriers to education, such as time constraints, and explored how they could be removed.

The common thread, running through all groups and discussions, was the need for the role of pharmacists to be formally recognised within health care systems, and the wider population. Although participants agreed that gaining this recognition will take time, they were united in their commitment to it, not least as Covid-19 means other healthcare providers may be more pressured or less accessible, and pharmacy care is, therefore, more important than ever before.

Pharmacists are amongst the unspoken heroes of the Covid-19 pandemic, who we must support. FIP and The Clean Breathing Institute thank all participants for their contributions. We are committed to working together to truly change people's lives.

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EXPERT INSIGHTS.



## 6 – 16 OCTOBER IS CLEAN AIR WEEK

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