

Improving Diabetes Care through Pharmacies with SwipeRx



BACKGROUND

More than half (57%) of all people living with diabetes in Southeast Asia (SEA) are undiagnosed. Self-monitoring of blood glucose with glucose meters and strips is an essential mechanism to help control diabetes and reduce the risk of long-term complications. However, this often does not happen due to the high cost of blood glucose monitoring (BGM) products, as well as the lack of awareness about the benefits of diabetes self-management through glucose monitoring. In low and middle income country contexts, pharmacies are often the first and sometimes the only point of healthcare for underserved communities due to their geographic proximity, convenient opening hours, and quick service. In Cambodia, efforts to train pharmacies using traditional, offline approaches have achieved limited scale due to the cost and time required to reach thousands of independent retail pharmacies.



SWIPERX RESEARCH FINDINGS

In 2021, FIND and SwipeRx conducted a digital survey to understand barriers and opportunities to improving pharmacy access to quality BGM products. Key findings included:

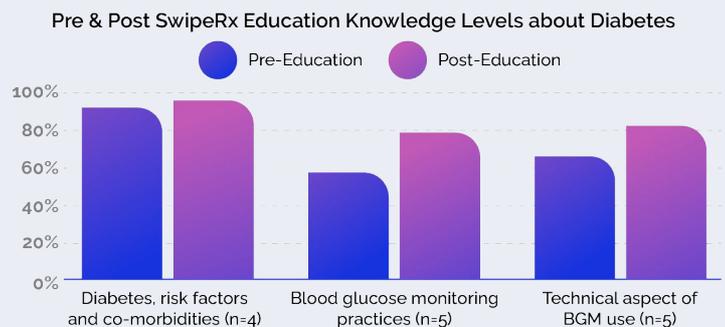
- 33% provide in-pharmacy glucose monitoring
- 57% had received diabetes professional education, with a focus on diabetes symptoms, risk factors and oral treatment.
- 84% counsel and 70% refer diabetes clients
- Common questions from pharmacy professionals about diabetes relate to the safety and side effects of diabetes medication and diabetes symptoms and causes, acceptable blood glucose levels, and diet and exercise.

SWIPERX EDUCATION RESULTS

In nine weeks, 1,124 pharmacy professionals in Cambodia were educated about diabetes and blood glucose monitoring through SwipeRx. This represents 43% of the active SwipeRx users in Cambodia during the same time period. Among the 1,124 pharmacy professionals educated:



Knowledge levels improved substantially in 10 out of 14 learning areas following completion of the SwipeRx education module:



In collaboration with the Pharmacy Council of Cambodia and other stakeholders, SwipeRx has become the largest source of free, accredited digital continuing professional development (CPD) for pharmacy professionals in Cambodia.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Building on these initial results, FIND and SwipeRx will explore opportunities to enhance pharmacy contributions to diabetes care and access to quality affordable blood glucose monitoring products in Cambodia and other LMIC contexts.