Barriers and facilitators for community pharmacists' participation in pharmacy practice research

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Background Practice-based research in community pharmacies is essential for the advancement of an academic pharmacists' profession, but actual research participation in daily practice is challenging.

Purpose The aim of this study was to explore the vision, attitudes and motivation of community pharmacists in the Netherlands to participate in pharmacy practice research.

Method All 1,974 community pharmacies were invited by e-mail to complete an online questionnaire with 35 questions, based on previous research, illustrated by examples for invitations to join practice research. Categorical answers were analysed with descriptive statistics. Answers to open questions were categorized to visualize potential barriers.

Findings The questionnaire was completed by 252 pharmacists, out of 2968 pharmacists working in 1974 community pharmacies (response rate 8.8%). The majority agreed that participation in pharmacy practice research should be part of the daily practice. 55% agreed that they would like to participate, but lacked time to do so. Time investment and a clear added value for the profession, patient or pharmacy were the most important factors in the decision to participate in the research. Pharmacists were more likely to participate when tasks could be delegated and spread over time or when they could invite patients for participation by email. A need to cooperate with medical specialists discouraged some pharmacists to participate.

Conclusion Feasible study designs may encourage pharmacists' participation in pharmacy practice research. Researchers should offer possibilities for a flexible and delegate task allocation, avoid collection of obviate data and unnecessary, complicated patient selection and only ask for cooperation with medical specialists when needed.