
Pharmacist as Health Ambassador: A Community Programme on Patient Empowerment

NG, Cheng Tiang
Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore

www.pss.org.sg

Pharmaceutical Society of Singapore



- Non-profit organization representing the professional interests of all pharmacists in Singapore
- Current membership ~1,200 pharmacists



Our mission:

To maximize the contribution of pharmacists to the healthcare of Singaporeans/residents.

- by optimizing & ensuring appropriate medication use through 5R: Right Patient, Right Drug, Right Dosage, Right Route & Right Duration
- by advocating health promotion & healthy lifestyle
- by emphasizing disease prevention & responsible self-care/self-medication
- by ensuring medications & health products on Singapore market - quality, safe & efficacious

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Focusing on Community & Patients

Significance of Healthcare in Community

■ Community

- place where people work, play & engage in activities which impact their livelihood & health
- in other words – most people live & die in their resp. community

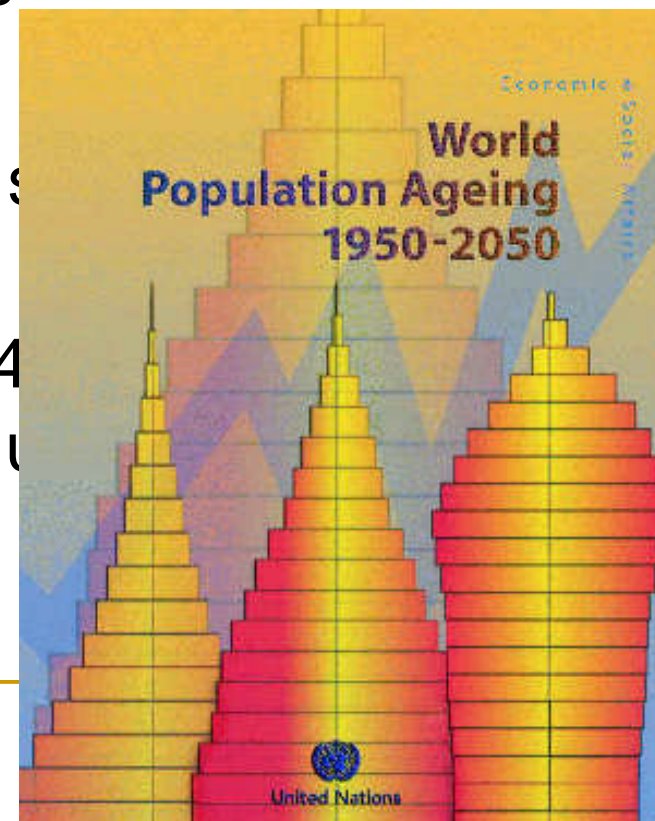
■ Patients/Consumers

- consumers of healthcare services/advice; health products; health promotion products & services
- ~4½ million accessible customers within Singapore; +
- >10 million visitors to Singapore every year!



Singapore Demographic

- 4½ mil. population
- Average life expectancy : 78.9 yrs
- Ageing population & declining birth rate
- By 2030, 1 in 5 S'poreans >65 yrs
- ↓Workforce relative to retirees
- ↑Demands for chronic healthcare s
ppts
- Recently – Medisave allowed for 4
chronic diseases treated in commu
GP clinics





Current Healthcare Philosophies

- Build healthy population
- Responsibilities towards own health
- Avoid preventable diseases & early detection
 - Child Immunisation Programme (infectious diseases)
 - preventive healthcare programmes & public education.
 - HPB (Quit smoking, National Healthy Lifestyle Campaign, Healthy Diet)
 - Health Screening Programmes (early detection) eg. DM, HP, HD & other chronic diseases)
- Consume healthcare serv. & pdts. prudently





Pharmacists in Singapore

- Approx. 1,500 pharmacists on MOH register
- Diverse job portfolios:
 - About 50% in patient-care practice, eg.
 - Hospital pharmacies
 - Community/Retail pharmacies
 - About 50% in non patient-care practice, eg.
 - Drug regulation & compliance functions
 - Manufacturing, formulation & quality assurance roles
 - Administrative & various commercial functions
 - Research & academic positions etc.



Community Pharmacists

- >350 pharmacists work in retail or community pharmacies
- Strategically & conveniently located in various parts of Singapore
- Most accessible healthcare professionals in our community
- Trained in pharmacotherapy & management of common ailments
 - provide **advice**, **services** & **products**



Pharmacists As Health Ambassador

- PSS partnered the HPB jointly launched the Pharmacist Health Ambassador Programme.
- A MOU was signed on 21 October 2006
- Objectives:
 - To equip pharmacists knowledge & skills to provide advice to achieve better health outcomes for public
 - To increase access of effective & holistic health advice & assistance to public;
 - To increase outreach & empower public to adopt healthy lifestyle to prevent & delay onset of chronic diseases



Pharmacists As Health Ambassador

Focus:

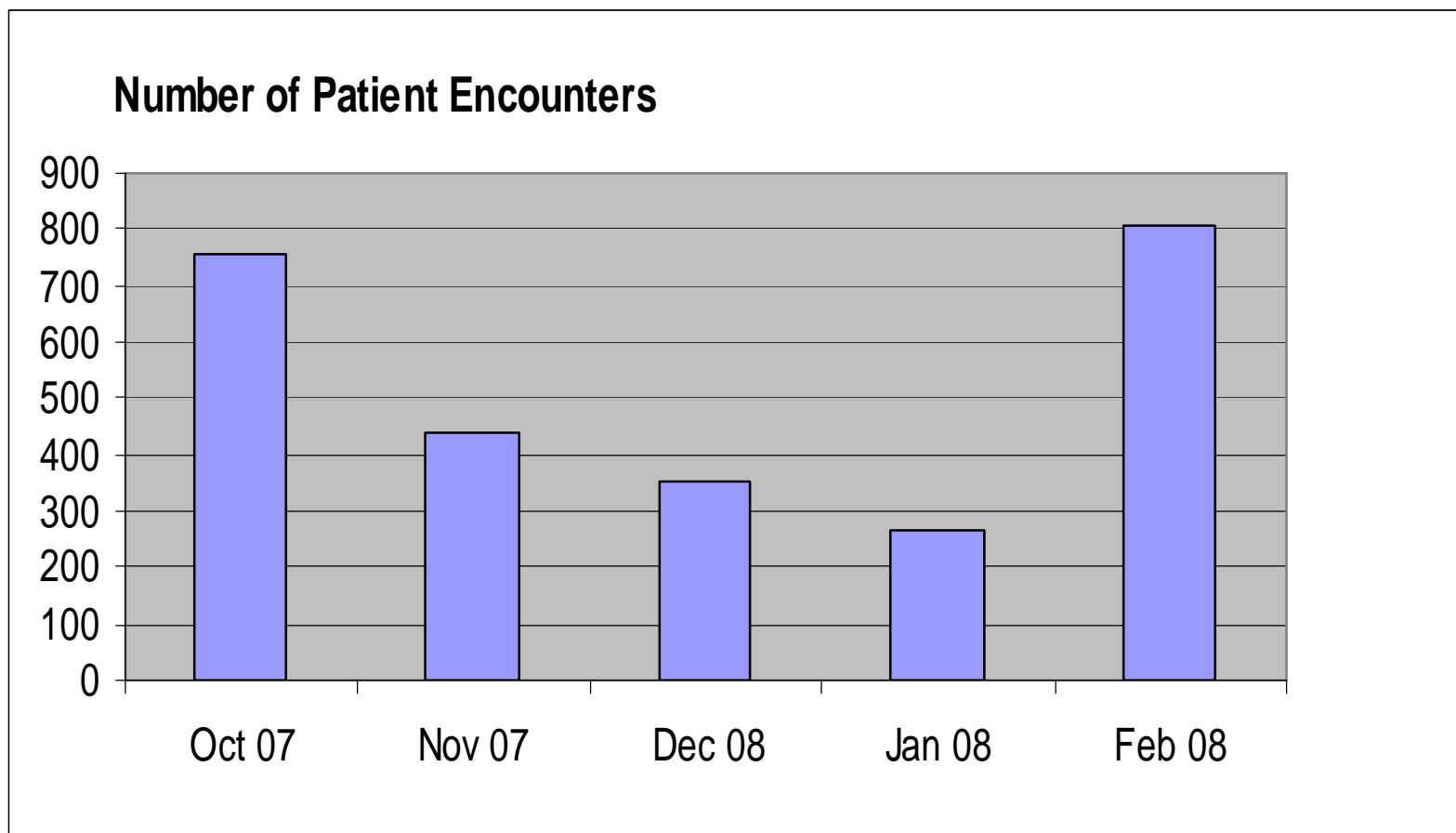
- By continuing to provide opportunistic intervention & advice on:
 - ❑ Smoking cessation;
 - ❑ Diabetes prevention & management;
 - ❑ High blood pressure;
 - ❑ High blood cholesterol;
 - ❑ Stroke; &
 - ❑ Healthy lifestyle

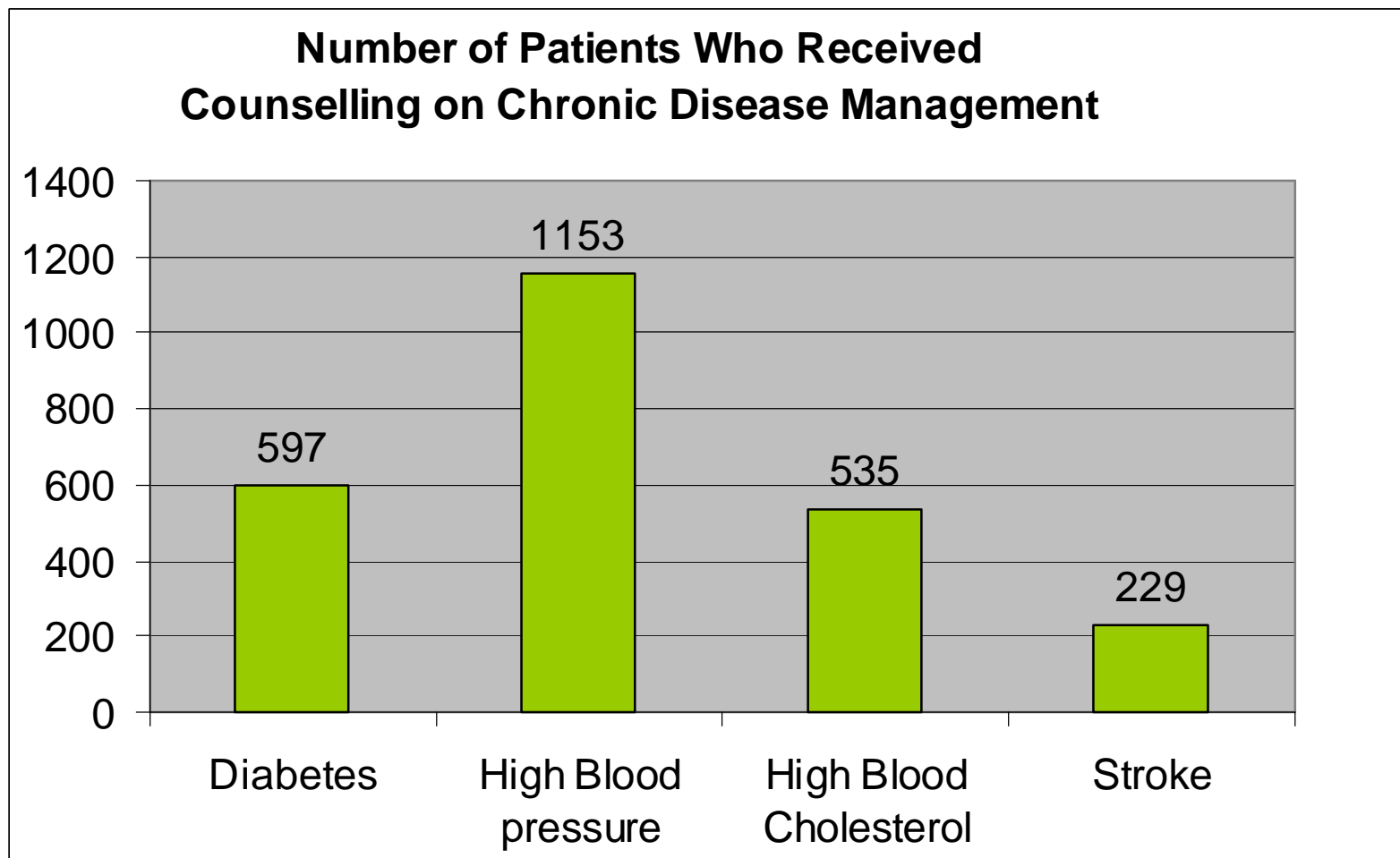


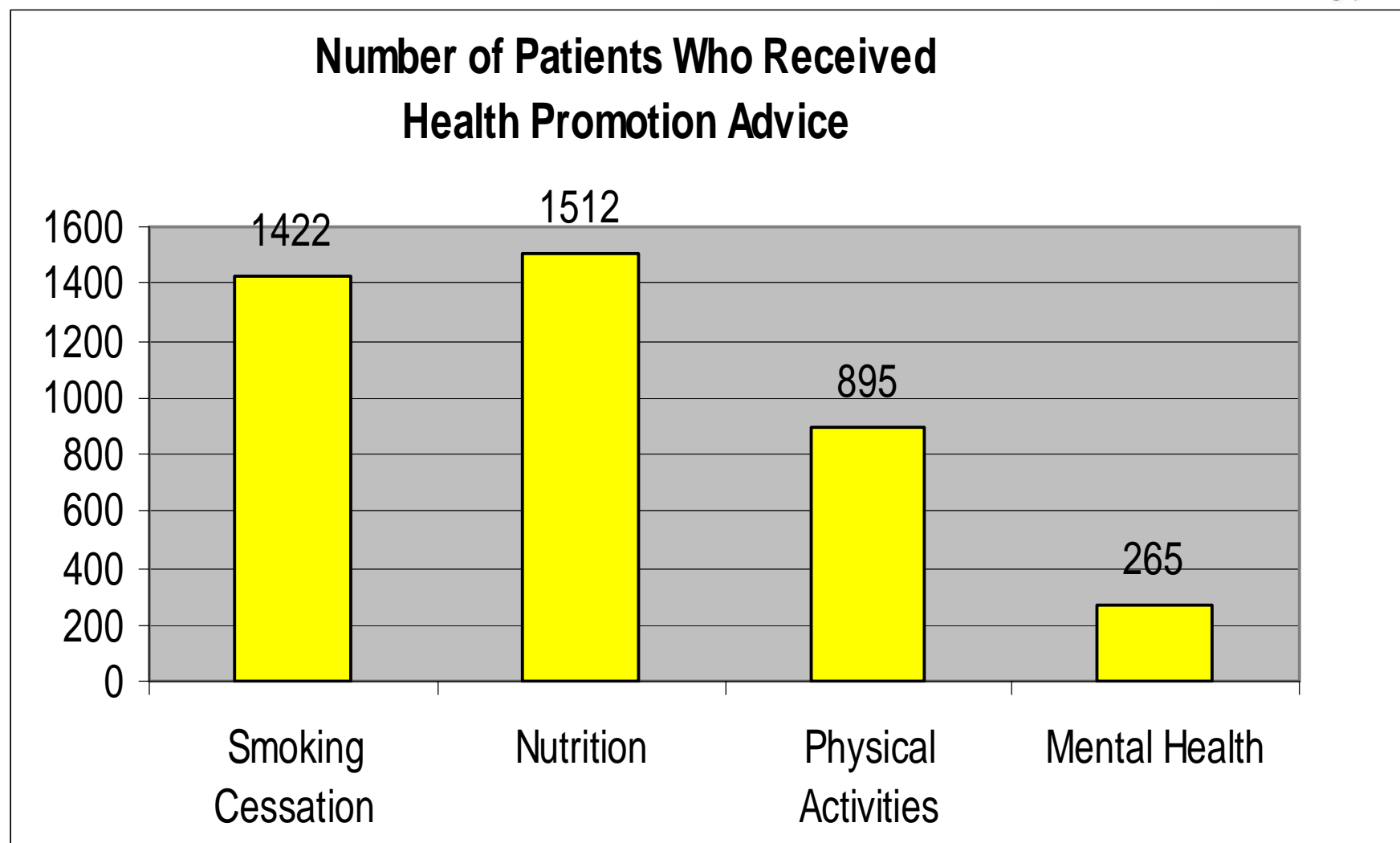


Building Capabilities

- Specially tailored training programmes were designed by PSS and HPB.
- In 2007, 2 training workshops were conducted for close to 250 community pharmacists.
- Topics covered:
 - diabetes management
 - nutrition
 - physical activity
 - smoking cessation
 - mental health

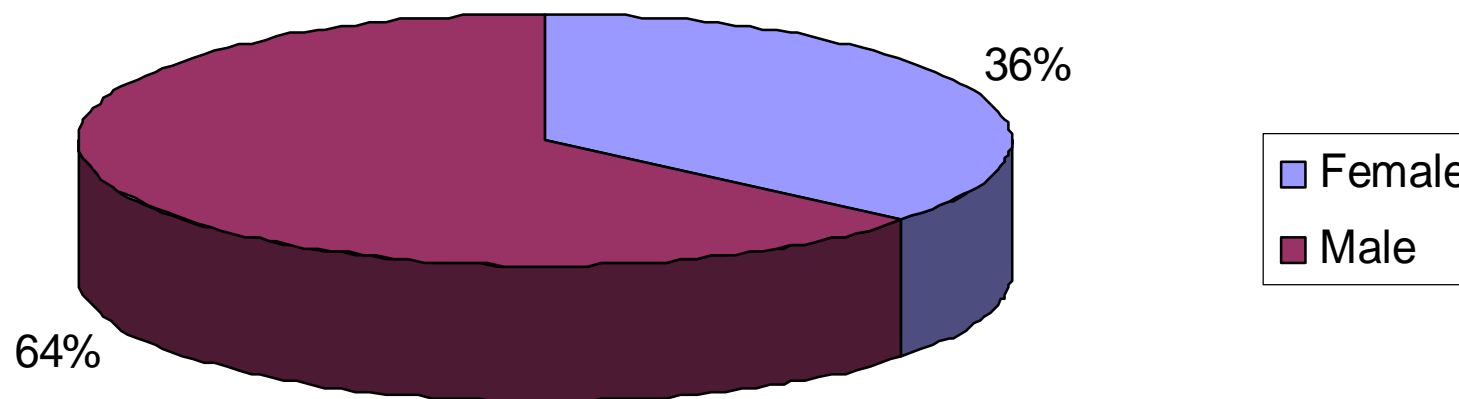








Proportion of Female to Male Given Smoking Cessation Counselling (total =1422)





Conclusion

Community Pharmacists:

- can play vital role to offer primary healthcare services/advice - esp. in promoting healthy lifestyles, disease prevention, management of minor ailments
- can significantly complement & strengthen our public health system by working in tandem with other HCP to manage chronic diseases in a holistic approach
- can educate & empower the public to look after their own health & self-medicate responsibly

The Way Forward:

- start documenting & capturing outcome data
 - continue working with stakeholders to reach out & promote the programme
 - further develop capacity & capabilities with some scheme to motivate both the patients & the pharmacies to intensify the programme
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Thank You Very Much

