



Community Pharmacists' Attitudes Toward and Barriers to Providing Immunization Services

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SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

BACKGROUND

Vaccinations are one of the most effective public health interventions, preventing disease, hospitalizations, and death worldwide. Despite their proven benefits, adult immunization rates in the United States remain below public health targets.

Community pharmacists play a critical role in improving vaccine access due to their accessibility and frequent patient interactions. Pharmacies now administer a large proportion of routine vaccines, including influenza, COVID-19, and shingles vaccines.

However, pharmacists face multiple challenges that may limit their ability to provide immunization services effectively. International studies show pharmacists generally have positive attitudes toward vaccination but face barriers such as staffing shortages, increased workload, lack of training, and limited resources. There is limited research evaluating these factors in U.S. community pharmacy settings, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic.

This study aims to evaluate community pharmacists' attitudes toward immunizations and identify key barriers impacting vaccine delivery in community pharmacy practice.

METHODS

- Cross-sectional
- Participants: Licensed community pharmacists at CVS and Walmart in Metro East, Illinois
- Recruitment via email (~65 pharmacists contacted)
- Survey administered through Qualtrics
- Survey period: Dec 15, 2025 – Jan 15, 2026
- Anonymous and voluntary participation
- IRB reviewed and exempt from full review

RESULTS

Baseline Characteristics

- Response rate: 20%; completed surveys: 12
- Gender:
 - Female: 85% (n=11)
 - Male: 15% (n=2)
- Practice site:
 - CVS: 69% (n=9)
 - Walmart: 15% (n=2)
 - Walgreens: 15% (n=2)
- Years of experience:
 - <1 year: 23% (n=3)
 - 1–3 years: 38% (n=5)
 - 4–7 years: 23% (n=3)
 - 15+ years: 15% (n=2)

Attitude Toward Immunization

- 100% of participants agree that vaccination is an essential pharmacist role and that pharmacists reduce vaccine preventable illness.

Potential Solution Support

- There is strong agreement that expanding technician roles and improving compensation could enhance vaccine delivery. 100% (n=12) of participants support technician-administered vaccines and expanded reimbursement for pharmacists who administer vaccines.

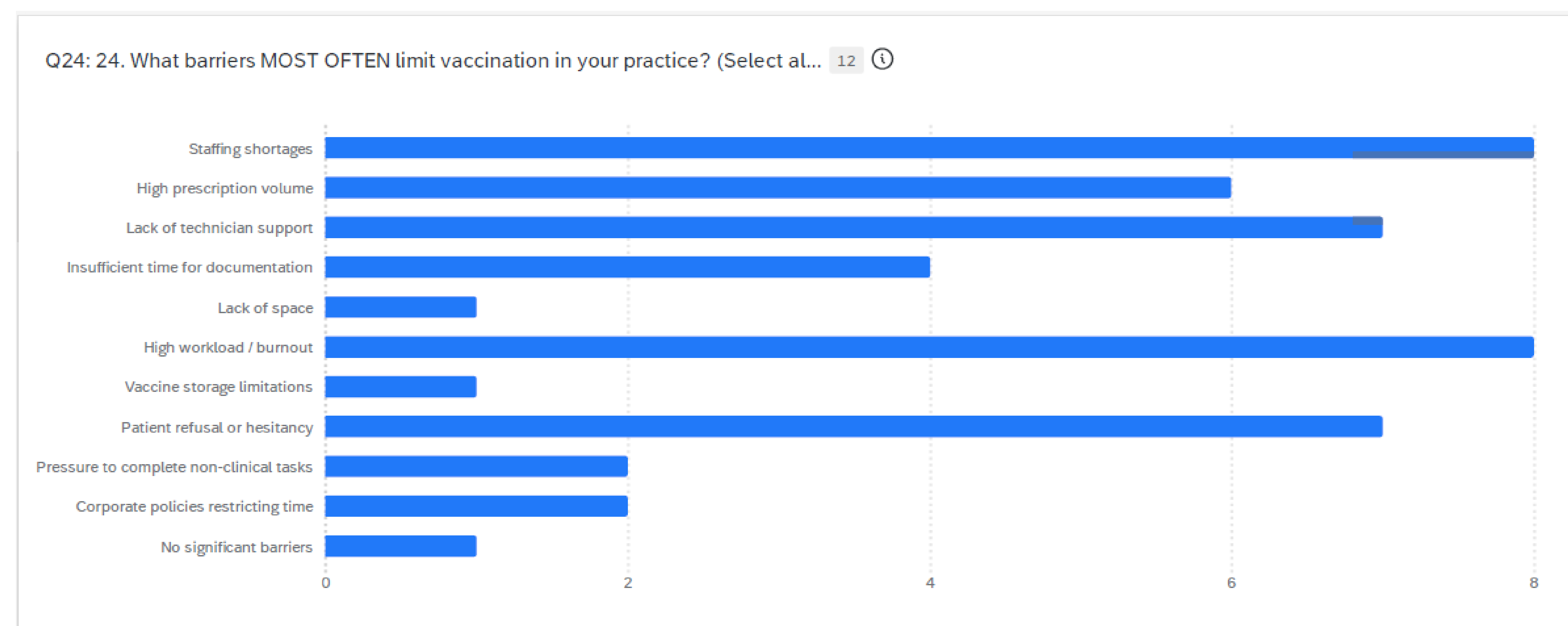
Confidence and Patient Interaction

- 100% of participants feel they are adequately trained to administer vaccines.
- 83% (n=10) of participants feel confident managing vaccine related adverse reactions
- 75% (n=9) of participants are comfortable encouraging hesitant patients to receive vaccines.

Workplace Pressure

- 83% (n=10) of respondents reported feeling pressured to meet vaccination quotas or metrics

Most Common Barriers to Administering Vaccinations



According to the survey, the most common barriers contributing to limitations in administering vaccines in community pharmacy are staffing shortages, high workload/burnout, lack of technician support, and patient refusal/hesitancy.

LIMITATIONS

- Small sample size (n=13) limits generalizability
- Conducted in a single geographic region, limiting applicability
- All participants are employed by large retail chains which does not reflect the environment of all community pharmacies

Q10: 10. I have enough time during a typical shift to administer vaccines safely. 12 ⓘ

Response	Count
a. Strongly Agree	25%
b. Agree	33%
c. Neutral	8%
d. Disagree	8%
e. Strongly Disagree	25%

CONCLUSION

- Pharmacists have strong positive attitudes towards immunization services
- Workflow, staffing, patient refusal, and time constraints are the biggest challenges
- Vaccine quotas may contribute to stress and shift focus from patient care
- Expanding technician roles, simplifying documentation and billing processes are possible interventions
- System-level improvements are needed to turn positive pharmacist attitudes into safe, consistent vaccine delivery