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Title: *Wellness Choices of Pharmacists and Student Pharmacists and the Impact on Patient Acceptance of Self-Care Recommendations*

Background: Pharmacists in outpatient settings play an important role in disease prevention, treatment and education on lifestyle modifications. While several studies have looked into the impact of physician lifestyle behaviors on patient perception of health advice, it is unknown whether lifestyle choices of pharmacists affect patients' acceptance of health advice.

Objectives: To assess wellness or lifestyle choices of pharmacists and student pharmacists, as well as determine whether patients' motivation to follow health advice from pharmacists is affected by pharmacists' lifestyle behaviors.

Methods: Electronic surveys assessing various lifestyle choices including exercise, use of tobacco, alcohol consumption, and demographics were administered to pharmacists and pharmacy students. Paper surveys evaluating patients' likelihood to follow pharmacists' self-care recommendations when the pharmacist is known to make poor lifestyle choices were administered to patients receiving pharmacy services at community pharmacies and primary care clinics in the St. Louis Metropolitan area.

Results: Majority of pharmacists and pharmacy students did not use tobacco products, and consumed limited amount of alcoholic drinks. However, most pharmacists and pharmacy students did not make healthy dietary choices on a regular basis, and did not engage in adequate physical activity. More than half of the pharmacists and students maintained healthy body weight and had regular check-ups and preventive screenings from physicians. Poor lifestyle choices occurred more often in students than in pharmacists. Most patients trusted pharmacists' medical expertise and viewed pharmacists as role models of healthy living.

Conclusion: Pharmacists' lifestyle behaviors influence patients' likelihood to follow health advice from pharmacists. Given that the patients view pharmacists as role models of healthy living, it is recommended that pharmacy school curriculum include nutrition education to assist pharmacists and students in making healthier dietary choices, and pharmacists and students should live healthier lives in order to improve patients' adherence to health advice offered by pharmacists.