15 Tips for Improving

1. **Develop and provide healthcare related services**
   Consider providing services complimentary to filling prescriptions. This might include offering your treatment rooms to for example, a podiatrist, a dietician or an optometrist. You might also want to offer smoking cessation, flu jabs or healthy lifestyle support services.

2. **Focus on your staff**
   Recruit, train, motivate and develop your staff.

3. **Ensure your work place is seen as a health environment**
   There are pharmacies which are selling items not in keeping with the clinical nature of pharmacy such as estate agency, or selling wool products. In rural environments this may seem to be appropriate, but in the main people want to see a clinical environment.

4. **Talk to your customers and encourage your staff to talk to them about your services**
   Patients will expect the pharmacist to advise on clinical issues so ensure that a pharmacist is readily available to talk to patients and customers.

5. **Regard talks with GPs and District Nurses and carers as networking opportunities**
   The more you interact with them, the more comfortable they will be in working with you and regard you as part of the team.

6. **Market your services**
   Tell people what you do. Promote your services in a professional manner to highlight that you are a health provider. Patients are much less likely to access your services if they do not know what you provide. Ensure that appropriate information is made available. Always take advantage of linked opportunities e.g. NHS health checks could lead to smoking cessation, a flu jab, an MUR and dietary advice.

7. **Engage with Commissioners**
   Social care, CCGs and hospitals. Develop into provider companies to act as a lead provider of pharmacy services. Going forward, Commissioners will prefer only to work with a single provider.

8. **Improve administration and record keeping**
   There must be someone in the team to build up the evidence base, because in the new market Commissioners will want evidence of service delivery and outcomes before commissioning.

9. **Invest in training**
   Ensure all members of pharmacies are trained for the roles delegated to them, e.g. administration, marketing, clinical care (specific patient groups e.g. for diabetes or COPD). It would be useful to conduct a training needs analysis. Ensure you allocate a budget for the training and development of staff.
10. **Use IT effectively**
   Use modern technology to communicate with patients and the NHS e.g. webinars, and identify prospective clients using PMR (patient medication records), Skype (you can Skype into meetings e.g. if GP has a multi-disciplinary team meeting, you could conference call or Skype in to be involved in the care of the patient).

11. **Recommend apps**
   e.g. “Care for Today” to patients. The apps are often free of charge and can aid patient compliance and concordance. Patients will feel that you are taking an interest in their care. Teach staff to download the app and set it up for the patient.

12. **Be a better leader**
   Know how to plan your services and healthcare business. The art of delegation and management will make your business more successful. Remember, staff are the most important asset of the business, so ensure you help them develop to their maximum potential.

13. **Collaborate**
   With other pharmacists and health professionals to secure better results for you, whether tendering for services as a joint venture, or creating a platform for the mutual introduction of business.

14. **Integrate**
   By being part of the patient’s healthcare team, patients will feel more comfortable dealing with you and so you will be better placed to secure more business from them and also get more patients introduced to you by them.

15. **Federate**
   Commissioners will be looking for single service providers in the future. If you do not participate in a federation, you may not have a say in the future opportunities these commissions may offer pharmacies and so lose out.

Remember your call to action:

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| Collaborate | + | Integrate | + | Federate |
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= Success

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