



## PHARMACY AND MENTAL HEALTH: BRIDGING THE CARE GAP

# Executive Summary

- ❖ Ryculture Health and Social Innovation is a forward-looking socially conscious company committed to improving access to healthcare services and promoting general human wellbeing.
- ❖ Our mission is to build sustainable healthy and prosperous societies by nurturing competent and socially responsible individuals and build resilient, sustainable health systems. We do this through health research, health communication, health advocacy, health systems strengthening and human capacity development.
- ❖ **Vision:** A healthy, socially responsible and prosperous society.
- ❖ **Core Values:** Humanity, Integrity, Professionalism, Client Value Creation and Teamwork.

# Background

- ❖ Mental health refers to an individuals' emotional, psychological and social wellbeing.
- ❖ An individuals mental health status affects how one thinks, feels and acts. It also helps determine how one handles stress, relate with others and make life decisions.
- ❖ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his/her potential, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community.
- ❖ In the recent past, there has been a surge in mental health conditions ranging from mental distress to mental illnesses which have been compounded by COVID-19.

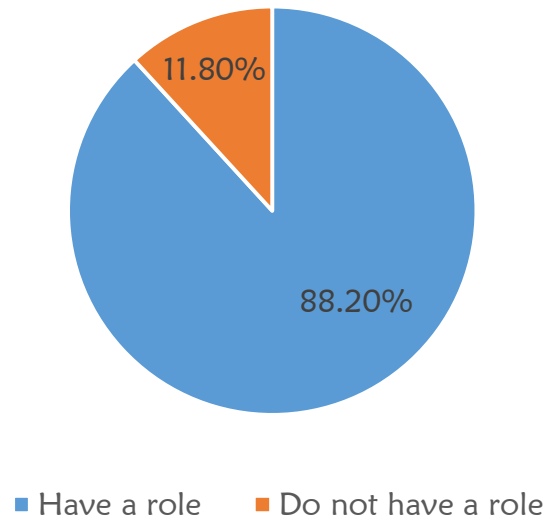
## Background cont.

- ❖ On 10<sup>th</sup> October 2020, the WHO launched a global report on the status of mental health globally which noted an increase in demand for mental health services while at the same time there had been a disruption or total halt of mental health services in 98% of 130 countries surveyed.
- ❖ According to the Kenya Mental Health Taskforce report that was launched in July, there was a noted shortage of qualified mental health practitioners.
- ❖ To assess the role of pharmacists in bridging the gap in accessing mental health services we recently launched a brief survey whose findings are herein reported.

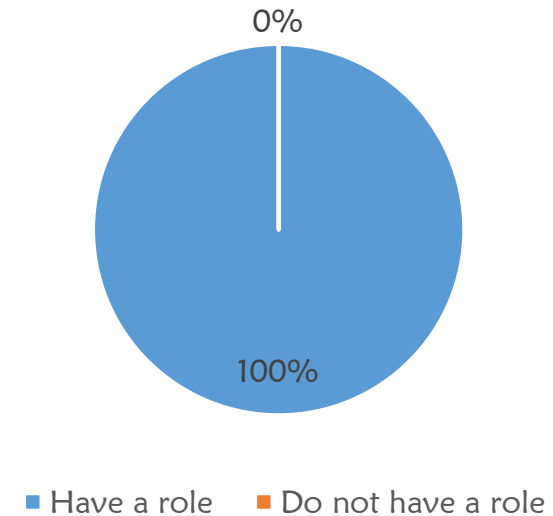
# Findings

## ❖ Do Pharmacists have a role in Mental Health?

Perceived Pharmacists Role in Mental Health: Public Perception



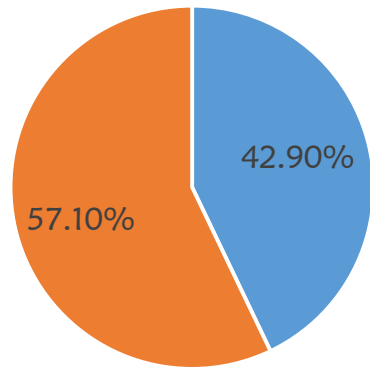
Perceived Pharmacists Role in Mental Health: Pharmacists Perception



# Findings

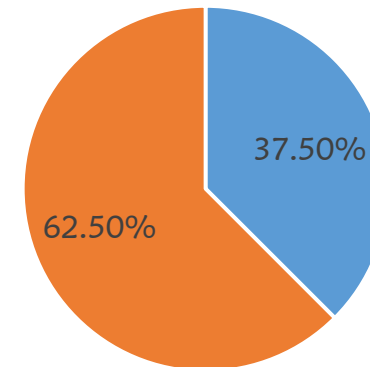
❖ Are pharmacists equipped to offer Mental Health services?

Equipped to offer Mental Health Services: Public Perception



■ Yes ■ No

Equipped to offer Mental Health Services: Pharmacists Perception



■ Yes ■ No

# Discussion

- ❖ With the growing burden of mental health globally, pharmacists have a role to contribute to the efforts to improve access to mental health services.
- ❖ Based on data, it's noted that pharmacists especially those in the community setting i.e. community pharmacies are the first point of contact for most people with the healthcare system.
- ❖ Additionally, in every health facility, the last point of contact with the health system is always the pharmacy as patients pick their medication before they go back home.
- ❖ These put the pharmacist at critical points of care to intervene for patients.

## Discussion cont.

- ❖ Considering some mental health conditions present with classical symptoms for physical conditions it's worthy to note that equipping pharmacists with the skills to offer mental health services is key in promoting access to care.
- ❖ The survey findings give a high confidence index in the role of pharmacists in promoting access to mental health services.
- ❖ Public perception on role of pharmacists in mental healthcare of 88.2% points to the willingness to seek mental health services from pharmacists.



## Discussion cont.

- ❖ Pharmacists perception on their role in mental healthcare at 100% depict willingness to offer mental health services.
- ❖ Pharmacists are not equipped to offer mental health services based on the survey findings which point to a shortfall in the care spectrum.
- ❖ With an existent gap and need for mental health services by the public coupled with willingness to receive them from pharmacists, equipping pharmacists with the skills is a necessary intervention. Additionally, pharmacists are willing to offer the services.

# Proposed Interventions

- ❖ To equip pharmacists to be able to deliver mental health services, the following were suggested for consideration:
  - ❖ Include courses/modules on mental health and care in the pharmacy curriculum.
  - ❖ Promote access to short courses and programs on mental health i.e. psychotherapy and counselling courses for pharmacists interested offering these services.
  - ❖ Develop a repository of mental health resources for pharmacists to use in offering mental healthcare services.
  - ❖ Include mental health services in the pharmacy service charter.

This is an accurate account of the findings from the survey conducted and is to be used for pharmaceutical systems strengthening with a focus on role of pharmacists in offering mental health services.

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Thank **You!**