

GHAZANFAR HUSSAIN

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MUMTAZ GOOLAM

TASK 2

PHARMACY SERVICES

The creation and development of pharmacy services in the United Kingdom have evolved over centuries from informal medicines preparation to a highly regulated and professional healthcare service integrated into national health services. The development of pharmacy was shaped by scientific progress, public health needs, industrialization and government regulation aiming at ensuring safe, effective and accessible medicines for the population. The origin of pharmacy in the UK can be tracked back to medieval times when medicines were largely prepared and supplied by skilled practitioners who compounded and dispensed herbal remedies and medicinal mixtures. During this period, there was little formal regulation and medical knowledge was based on tradition rather than scientific evidence. The role of skilled practitioners gradually became more recognized as essential to healthcare, particularly as urban populations grew and demand for medicines increased. A major turning point came in 1617 with the separation of apothecaries from both barbers and surgeons through a legal ruling in the Rose case. This allowed apothecaries to both prepare and prescribe medicines effectively, establishing them as pharmacists and general medical practitioners. This decision helped formalize their role in healthcare and laid the foundation for modern pharmacy practice in the UK. The 19th century marked a significant transformation in pharmacy due to the Industrial Revolution and chemistry, and medicine began to be manufactured on a large scale rather than individually prepared by skill practitioners. The shift required greater standardization and professional oversight. The Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain was founded in 1841 to promote professional education and ethical practice. This was followed by the Pharmacy Act of 1868, which created the official register of pharmacists and made it illegal to practice pharmacy without proper qualifications. This established pharmacy as a regulated profession in the UK. Another key milestone was the Medicines Act of 1968, which introduced strict controls over the manufacture, sales and distribution of medicines. This legislation categorized medicines into prescription-only, pharmacy-only and general sales medicines, ensuring that patients received appropriate supervision when using drugs. This work remains central to pharmacy practice today. The creation of the National Health Service (NHS) in 1948 was perhaps the most influential development in UK pharmacy services. The first time communities' pharmacies formally integrated into the national healthcare system, pharmacists were contracted to provide essential services such as dispensing prescriptions, offering health advice and ensuring access to medicines across the country. This helped improve equity in healthcare, particularly for lower-income and population who previously struggled to get medications. Over

the time the role of pharmacists expanded beyond simply dispensing medicines. From the late 20th century onwards, pharmacies began offering additional services such as medication reviews and vaccinations, smoking cessation support, and emergency contraception. These changing shifts toward preventive healthcare and the recognition of pharmacists as highly trained healthcare professionals rather than just medicines suppliers in recent years. UK pharmacy services have continued to evolve in response to changing healthcare needs. The increasing prevalence of chronic disease, such as diabetes and heart disease, has made pharmacists important in managing long-term medication use, patient education. Additionally, digital technology and online pharmacies have transformed how people access medicines and healthcare. NHS pharmacy services have continually adapted to meet the needs of society today. Pharmacists play a crucial role in the healthcare system, ensuring safe access to medicines and supporting public health on a national scale.

HARVARDS REFERENCE

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