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# The role of pharmacists in community education to promote responsible self-medication in Indonesia: an application of the spiral educational model

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## Abstract

**Background** Community empowerment is one key strategy to improve the health of Indonesians. In 2015, the Government initiated the ‘Smart Use of Medications Campaign’ to empower Indonesians to practice responsible self-medication. Analysis of a pilot training program established in 2016 identified that improvements were needed in the content and organisation of the module. **Objective** To evaluate a revised module (applying a spiral model approach) to guide community training as part of the ‘Smart Use of Medications Campaign’. **Setting** The Ngawi District, Indonesia in May 2018. **Method** Eight pharmacists (trainers) and 39 community representatives (participants) were involved in the training based on the revised module. The module adopted the spiral approach and consisted of three progressive steps: (1) understanding basic concepts of information on the label/package of one medication product; (2) re-enforcing that concept to understand medication classification (applied using three products); and (3) expanding the concept to understand medication classification (applied using a pack of 40 products). Pre-/post-test scores were used, and Focus Group Discussions were conducted to explore the participants’ knowledge gain. Main outcome measure: participants’ and trainers’ views on the spiral process. **Result** Participants’ mean overall knowledge gain increased from 12.53/15 to 13.44/15 ( $p=0.001$ ). Six focus groups of participants and two focus groups of trainers perceived that both trainers and participants found the spiral model better facilitated understanding, as it involved step-by-step learning. They also indicated the importance of the role of pharmacists as suitably qualified trainers as well as the development of appropriate training aids/media and arrangements. **Conclusion** Training based on the spiral model has the potential to be implemented in community training to improve self-medication literacy among the Indonesian public. Support from pharmacists as well as the relevant national and professional bodies is essential for successful implementation of the training.

**Keywords** Community-based education · Indonesia · Pharmacist · Self-medication · Spiral educational model

## Impacts on practice

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- The employment of a spiral educational model for community training in self-medication has the potential to improve community self-medication knowledge.
- The spiral model facilitates an improved learning process since it involves a step-by-step learning process, initially from one medication which is applied step-wise to a range of medications.
- Support from pharmacists as suitably qualified trainers as well as the development of appropriate training aids/media and arrangements are essential to implement the