

Introduction

Due to the pandemic caused by COVID-19, the delivery of healthcare services have been dramatically impacted. There has been a dramatic increase in telemedicine usage due to the safety requirements as necessitated because of the pandemic. As a result, one of the primary services that have been impacted due to this restriction is receiving flu shot vaccinations safely.

Problem

Traditionally, the process of receiving a flu shot in a community pharmacy required an immense amount of physical documentation and paperwork. Because of COVID, a lot of things have gone digital to reduce physical touch and prevent the potential spread of the virus. Previously, the process involved a patient walking into a pharmacy where they were handed a piece of paper with a set of questions to be answered which the pharmacist had to assess to ensure safety. However, it is recommended that the documentation is performed digitally somehow to reduce physical contact and support social distancing.

Proposed Solution

A potential solution to ensure proper documentation and support social distancing is to implement an application that allows patients to book their flu shot appointments online using their phone or laptop, and also fill out the necessary documentation. The app will ensure a secure collection of information and also the management of such information on the pharmacy end. The system can automate all the communication via email, including appointment reminders, flu shot safety information, or proof of the vaccination, which certain employers require.

Scope

To analyze the feasibility of implementing the proposed app in a community pharmacy, I plan to research and inquire some of the pharmacy owners regarding:

1. Would using this application improve their workflow?
2. Would their patients find it convenient to use such technology?
3. Will this increase the overall health and safety of their patients and staff?
4. What kind of features and functionality will they require?
5. How will this lessen their burden this flu shot season?

I will be interviewing pharmacy owners virtually to gain more insight regarding these questions.

Qualifications

Having worked in a community pharmacy previously and currently being in the CS program at UBC, I believe I will be able to learn and gain insight from both perspectives. The solution to the problem, in this case, requires technological implementation, and to understand the problem

requires a deeper understanding of the pharmacy workflows. I believe my experience in both will be of an asset in writing this report.

Conclusion

I believe that the implementation of such a system could dramatically improve patient experience and safety. It will also improve the pharmacy's experience of providing services by augmenting online services and technology. I am interested in learning more about this specific area as the flu shot season is approaching and will be peaking over the next 1-2 months.