

Analysis of community pharmacists work patterns

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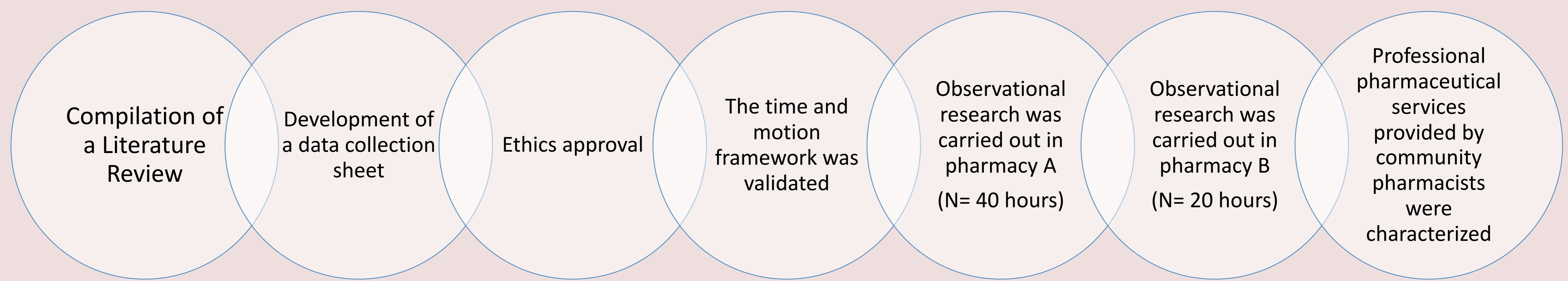
INTRODUCTION

Understanding how professional time is spent within a community pharmacy setting is of great importance as it allows for the identification of both the strengths as well as weaknesses in the flow of pharmacy operations.

AIMS

To understand how community pharmacists spend their professional time within the pharmacy.
To provide a clear understanding on the way professional time is distributed within the pharmacy

METHOD



RESULTS

The way in which pharmacists spend their professional time varied between the two pharmacies and this is a result of various factors namely layout of the pharmacy, the amount of human resources supporting the pharmacist and differences in pharmacist's working methods. The results of 40 hours of observation done in pharmacy A showed that medication dispensing is the activity which took up most of the pharmacists' time (33%). The results of 20 hours of observation done in pharmacy B showed that the activity which took up most time was direct patient care related to chronic medication repeat dispensing (16%).

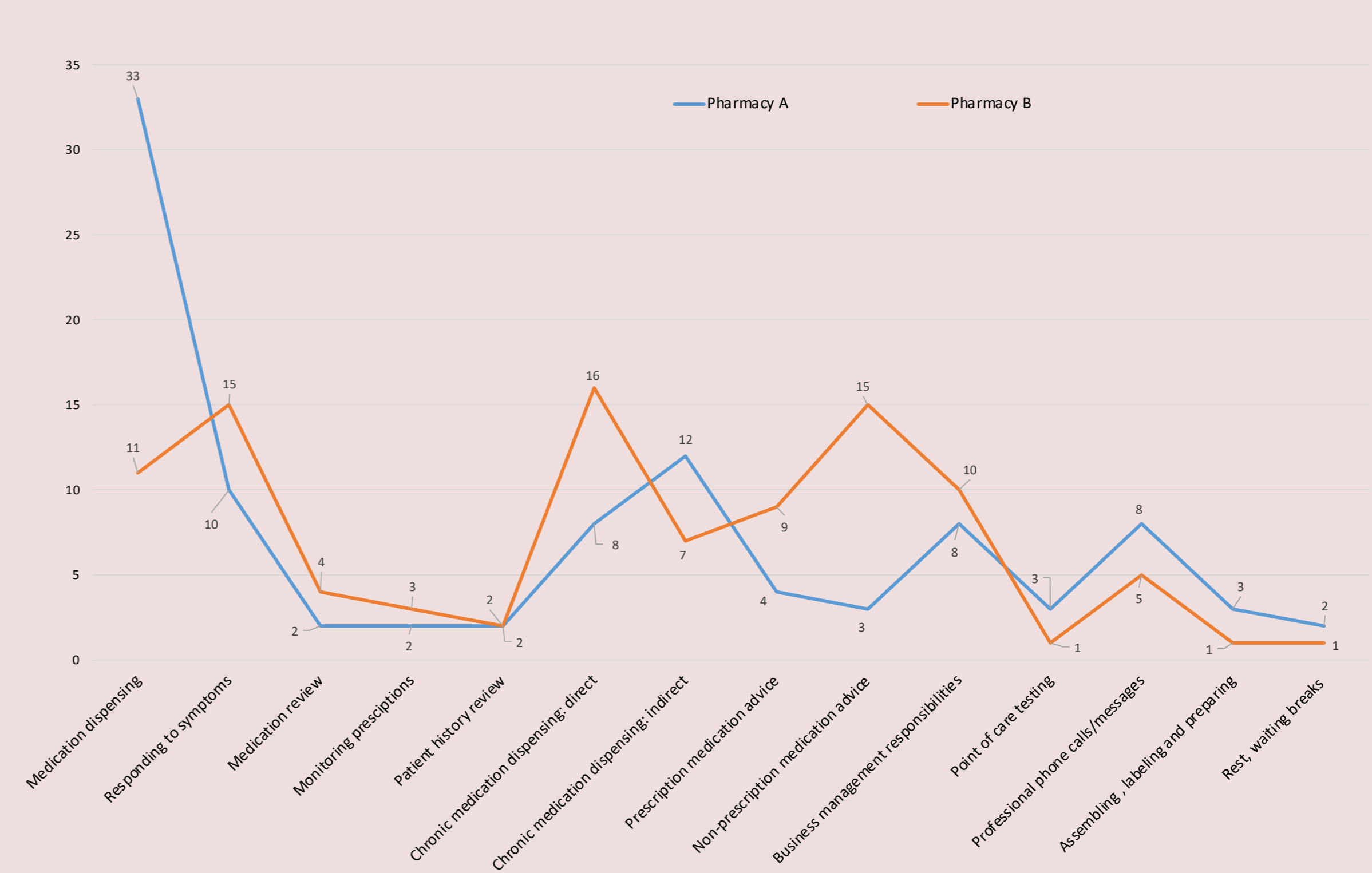


Figure 1: Observational results: a comparison between pharmacy A and pharmacy B

CONCLUSION

When classifying the activities into direct patient services and indirect patient services, both pharmacists spent the majority of their time on direct patient services, this highlights how the pharmacist health profession is one which is very frequently in direct contact with the patient, this is important as the pharmacists are some of the most easily accessible members of a person's health care team. Following analyzation of the data collected in these different settings a clear pattern can be seen. This pattern clearly highlights that pharmacists are spending a large amount of time on dispensing tasks leaving less time available for activities involving patient care and drug use management.