

# Health Providers

## Pharmacies



### Introduction

In many developing countries, retail pharmacies are often the first source of care, given their accessibility and hours of operation. In addition to quantifying the number of pharmacies (and to the extent possible, drug vendors or retailers), it is important to visit pharmacies, to observe what products are available at what prices; and to conduct interviews with pharmacy staff to understand services offered as well as levels of training, referral practices, and any challenges in procuring or distributing drugs or products.

### Questions

- Is there a trained pharmacist on site? If so, is the pharmacist male or female? What percentage of pharmacy staff overall is male/female?
- What would you show me for [health need, e.g. contraception or HIV prevention]?
- Which brands are most popular?
- What does [product or drug] cost?
- Do you sell generic medicines?
- Do you provide advice to your customers regarding medicines you dispense? [Depending on the focus of the assessment, you could ask about pre-test counseling for HIV tests, or advice specific to contraceptive products.]
- Have you received training on [specific health product or service]? If so, who provided the training? [Related to scope of the assessment, may ask about contraceptive methods or HIV tests.]
- Are stock-outs a challenge?
- Are you able to source products from the public sector?
- Which pharmaceutical distributors deliver stock to you on site? What are their credit terms?
- Are you a member of the pharmacist association?
- Are counterfeit medicines a problem for you? If so, what do you think needs to be done to eliminate the problem?
- How often are you inspected by the regulatory authority?
- Are there controls on prices or margins that you can charge? What are those limits?

[OBSERVE: Are there products, posters/information, brands and prices for products of interest? Is there a private area for counseling? Does the location seem like it would feel safe for a female client speaking with a male pharmacist?