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SOCIAL PHARMACOLOGY AS AN UNDERAPPRECIATED FIELD IN MEDICINE

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Relevance. Social pharmacology, also known as sociopharmacology, is a field within clinical pharmacology that focuses on the social determinants of drug use and their impact on health outcomes. While traditional pharmacology has primarily focused on the chemical and biological properties of drugs, social pharmacology takes into account the complex social and cultural context in which drugs are used.

Aim: the field explores factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural beliefs, and social support networks that can influence medication adherence and efficacy. By understanding and addressing these contextual factors, social pharmacology aims to optimize drug use and improve health outcomes. This can involve interventions to improve medication adherence, reduce medication errors, or address health disparities related to drug use.

Materials and method. Despite its potential to improve patient care and outcomes, social pharmacology has received relatively little attention in the medical community. However, initiatives such as an elective course offered at the Medical University of Athens in Greece demonstrate the value of teaching social pharmacology to medical students. The course covers topics such as the misuse and overuse of drug prescriptions, drug use in specific population groups, and the effects of drug consumption on specific events. Various educational approaches are employed, including lectures, debates-discussions, and field trips to various work areas.

Results and their discussion. Incorporating social pharmacology into medical education is essential for healthcare professionals to understand the broader societal implications of their practice. By taking into account the social and cultural factors that influence drug use, healthcare professionals can provide more patient-, human-, and society-centered care.

Furthermore, social pharmacology often requires a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating insights from sociology, psychology, and other fields. While this may make it more challenging to implement in practice, it offers a more holistic approach to patient care and medication-related issues.

Conclusion: social pharmacology is a valuable but underappreciated field in medicine that has the potential to improve health outcomes and reduce healthcare costs. Incorporating social pharmacology into medical education is essential for healthcare professionals to provide more patient-centered and holistic care.