

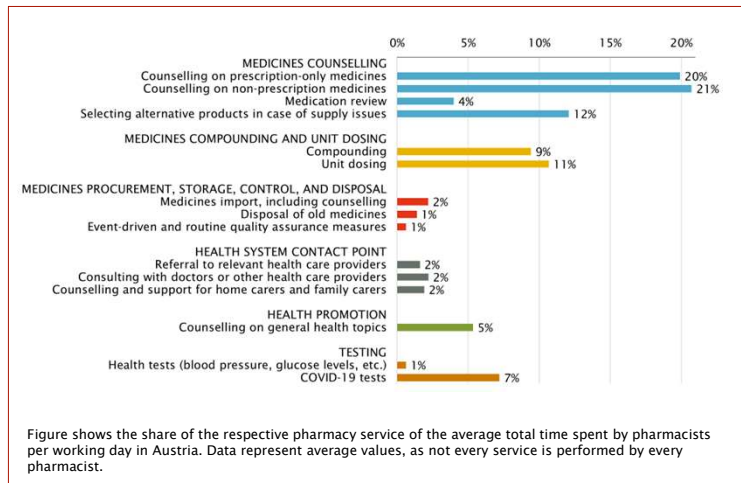
# Pharmaceutical care in Austria: A survey on services provided by community pharmacies

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## Community pharmacy is evolving internationally: is this also true for Austria?

- Background:** Internationally, the role of community pharmacies has evolved beyond dispensing, counselling, and producing medicines, moving towards pharmaceutical care (i.e. improving patient outcomes through medicines optimisation).
- Study aim:** To survey the range of community pharmacy services provided in Austria and to understand the role of community pharmacies in the Austrian health system.
- Methods:** Two-stage, representative survey of services provided in community pharmacies in Austria, conducted in 2023
  - Stage 1: detailed **tracking of activities** for one week in 25 pharmacies (January 2023)
  - Stage 2: **national online survey** among pharmacists working in community pharmacies on services provided and time spent on each service (March 2023)

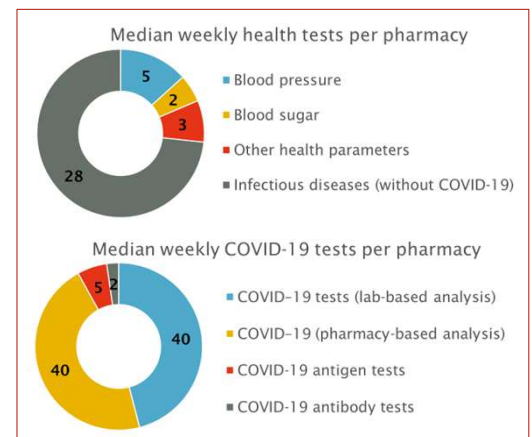
## Community pharmacies in Austria tend to focus on core pharmacy services



- Core pharmacy services** are provided by the vast majority of community pharmacists in Austria, including dispensing of medicines and counselling (99.7% of participants) as well as compounding (90.1%). Medication review was provided by 40.1% of participating pharmacists.
- Jointly, medicines related services **accounted for 81.0% of the time spent by participating pharmacists on all documented services.**
- The remaining 19.0% of the time was spent on **non-medicines related services**, including testing, referring patients to other health care providers, and health promotion.

## Pharmacy testing was dominated by COVID-19 tests

- While community pharmacies throughout Austria commonly offer various **health tests** (including for blood pressure, blood sugar, and other parameters), median weekly test numbers were a fraction of the tests conducted for **COVID-19** and other infectious diseases.
- Overall, this survey showed that community pharmacies in Austria have not fully transitioned towards providing pharmaceutical care.
- Changes to the **legal framework in Austria** introduced in 2024 **allow for an expanded role** with additional competencies for medicines optimisation and testing. The effects of these reforms on patient and health system outcomes should be evaluated.



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