

Pharmacy Storytelling: Documenting recent cultural and historical developments of pharmaceutical history in Norway - interviews with elderly pharmacists

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Background: Pharmacists are keen collectors, be it objects, interiors, written documents and equipment used for pharmaceutical production. In Norway there are several collections and museums that take care of this physical history. However, the cultural and historical development of the role of pharmacists is not similarly documented, for example because of major changes in the pharmaceutical industry, community and hospital pharmacies, emergency preparedness etc. Much of recent history is only available as anecdotes from each individual pharmacist. Little is documented as audio or video recordings. We thus saw the need to document the recent history of pharmacy through interviews about important events in their working life as pharmacists.

Aim: To document the recent cultural and historical developments of the history of pharmacy for use in education, public dissemination, and research. To establish collaboration between the five schools of pharmacy, the Norwegian Society for the History of Pharmacy (NFHS), and the Norwegian Pharmacy Museum.

Method: In 2019, AGG established a collaboration with NFHS, a professional photographer and journalist (KWA) and a digital learning designer (CF), to write an application for project funding. Given funding, the interviewees were recruited with the help of NFHS and authors of this abstract. KWA was responsible for the film and audio recordings, LK was the production coordinator, and AGG, LH and MW conducted the interviews. A semi-structured interview guide was developed with some common questions (tell us about yourself, what advice would you give to future pharmacists, do you have a person/situation that has made a particular impression/impact on you) as well as questions tailored to each interviewee.

Result: In total, 33 people accepted the invitation: 4 in Tromsø, 5 in Bergen, and 24 in Oslo. All signed a consent form and agreed to dissemination to students and/or the public. Some also provided photos or other printed material. The interviews were conducted in 2021 and 2022 and lasted ca. 30-60 minutes. The project was launched in August 2023 at the University of Oslo, where 22 of the 33 interviewees attended. Film clips (3-6 minutes) from seven interviews were shown to the audience. We then had a panel discussion where the interviewees were encouraged to reflect upon what they had said in the film clips. SR provided a student's view and ideas for how PharmacyStories can be useful for them. The following topics were discussed: Establishing pharmacy chains in the early 2000s, drug production in community pharmacies, ethical dilemmas and professional autonomy, building safe IT and logistics systems, humanitarian organizations and medicine preparedness after WW2.

Conclusion: We succeeded in documenting recent pharmaceutical history through unique testimonies of the gigantic changes that our profession has experienced from the early 1950s and the following 70 years. These stories and the insights they provide into our recent pharmaceutical history would have been lost if not recorded. The material was further be used 1) to make a national digital learning platform for the schools of pharmacy in Norway and 2) to establish a website with podcasts, films and photos: www.farmasihistorier.no