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Opella and EOP launch pharmacy programme to advance allergy self-care in Egypt

Opella and the Egyptian Organization of Pharmacy, Development and Training (EOP) have launched an educational initiative to train pharmacists in managing air pollution-aggravated allergies, aiming to reach approximately 50,000 people in Egypt by the end of 2026.

The organisations signed a memorandum of understanding to implement the standalone programme, titled "the Air and Allergy Care with Your Pharmacist", during the 9th Egyptian Pharmacists Conference & Middle East (EPC) on Oct. 24.

The pilot phase will initially train about 400 pharmacists, equipping them with scientific knowledge, air-quality information and practical tools to support consumers experiencing allergy symptoms linked to environmental factors.

"Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare professionals in our communities," said Feirouz Ellouze, General Manager for Opella Africa, Middle East and Türkiye. "Through our commitment to pharmacist education and professional development, we are putting scientific knowledge, environmental information and practical tools directly into their hands, helping them turn knowledge into meaningful conversations at the pharmacy counter. By strengthening pharmacists' ability to support informed self-care, we are helping make self-care as simple as it should be."

The four-hour curriculum covers air pollution and allergic rhinitis, symptom recognition, the supporting clinical evidence, and the pharmacist's role in respiratory health. Participating pharmacists will receive a certificate, a pharmacy badge, and a toolkit designed to aid consumer consultations.

The initiative is also expected to introduce Air Quality Index (AQI) screens in pharmacies to facilitate discussions on how air quality changes affect allergy symptoms, serving as an awareness tool rather than for diagnosis.

Marwa Mazen, Vice President of EOP, noted that pharmacists are uniquely positioned to translate scientific evidence into practical guidance.

"Strengthening their understanding of the relationship between air pollution and allergic rhinitis, and giving them resources they can use in practice, will further support their contribution to respiratory health, health literacy and responsible self-care," Mazen said.

The initiative addresses the heavy reliance on community pharmacists for everyday health decisions in Egypt. A 2024 study of 1,630 Egyptian adults found that 62.8% had self-medicated during the previous three months, with 53.61% of those respondents citing a pharmacist's recommendation as their most common source of guidance.