



LOYALTY PROGRAM "HEALTH CLUB" FOR SYRIAN PHARMACIES

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Relevance: Pharmacies in Syria face chronic supply disruptions, price volatility, and reduced consumer purchasing power. At the same time, patients are increasingly sensitive to even small fluctuations in price, creating heightened demand for transparency and fairness in pharmacy–patient transactions. Local competition among community pharmacies adds another layer of pressure, as businesses must differentiate themselves not only by product range but also by the quality of service and patient engagement. Under such conditions, the absence of formalized loyalty mechanisms limits the ability of pharmacies to retain customers, who often switch providers in search of lower costs or better availability. Introducing a locally adapted loyalty program represents more than a marketing tool; it becomes a mechanism of social responsibility that provides immediate financial relief to patients, builds long-term trust, and establishes pharmacies as reliable healthcare partners rather than mere retail outlets.

Purpose of the study: To present a feasible loyalty program tailored for Syrian community pharmacies that increases customer retention, supports financially vulnerable patients, and elevates the positive image of the pharmacy.

Materials and Methods: Program design relied on a comparative analysis of Russian pharmacies loyalty programs and a survey of 417 Syrian respondents assessing factors affecting pharmacy image.

Results: The proposed model, “Health Club,” is structured as a point-based loyalty system with three progressive tiers designed to reflect patient engagement and purchasing behavior. At the Bronze level, every customer has access to the standard points mechanism, ensuring inclusivity and ease of understanding. The Silver tier is reserved for regular clients with expenditures of at least 1,000,000 SYP within six months, and it offers a 15% bonus on points in addition to eligibility for seasonal promotions on over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and cosmetics. The Gold tier targets patients with chronic diseases or high annual spending of 1,800,000 SYP or more, providing 25% bonus points, preferential discounts on essential chronic medications, and automated medication reminders delivered via SMS or WhatsApp to support adherence.

The financial mechanism is straightforward: 1 point is earned for each 1,000 SYP spent, and each point is equivalent to 50 SYP when redeemed. Points may be applied to cover up to 30% of the value of a purchase, ensuring that discounts are meaningful while maintaining pharmacy revenue stability. Beyond direct savings, patients can choose to donate accumulated points to a designated patient-support fund, thereby linking individual consumption with collective social benefit. The design is intentionally scalable. Pharmacies can start with low-cost solutions such as paper or virtual cards supported by a local database, then transition to digital tools (e.g., a WhatsApp-bot or a mobile application) as the program grows. By combining financial incentives, health-oriented services, and a social dimension, the “Health Club” loyalty program creates a sustainable framework that strengthens customer retention, improves medication adherence, and enhances the overall institutional image of Syrian pharmacies.



Conclusions: The proposed "Health Club" loyalty program provides a practical, low-cost, and socially oriented solution for Syrian pharmacies. By combining a simple point-based mechanism with multi-level participation, it directly addresses patient priorities such as affordability, and service quality. A phased rollout, starting with a paper-based pilot and gradually integrating digital tools, ensures feasibility under current economic conditions. The program is expected to improve customer retention, strengthen institutional reputation, and generate long-term social value by linking loyalty benefits with community support initiatives.