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HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT AND USAGE OF PHARMACEUTICAL PICTOGRAMS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

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Since a pharmacist, originally a producer of drugs and medicines, had become a consultant on medicines in 20th century, new approaches to simplify this new role had to be investigated. Smečka et al. published an idea to use a set of 43 special pharmaceutical pictograms divided into 6 information groups (instructions for dispensation, use, bans, warnings, storage and clinical data) in 1978. According to the authors, small cards displaying appropriate pictograms should have been placed on front edges of shelves with drugs in pharmacy. Smečka's pictograms were also used in an information booklet of Pharmacy Development Centre published in 1981, which contained information about 500 medicines used in Czechoslovakia. The booklet could have been used for rapid information retrieval during dispensation. The third possible application of pictograms was to print them on wraps and packings of medicines, so a patient had instructions for proper usage and storage of them available in simple form. In spite of all effort, the pictograms were almost not used in Czechoslovakia. However, they attracted attention abroad, especially in Germany, where Framm utilized these pictograms in the book *Arzneimittelprofile für die Kitteltasche* in 1998. The pictograms are still used in some pharmacy information systems.