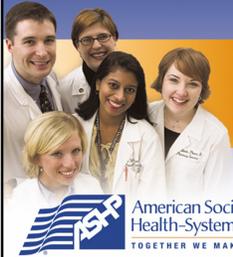


Pharmacy Technician Issues Demystified: Past, Present, and Future



Douglas Scheckelhoff, M.S.
Jan Keresztes, Pharm. D, R.Ph.

ASHP American Society of
Health-System Pharmacists
TOGETHER WE MAKE A GREAT TEAM

Today's Speakers

Douglas Scheckelhoff, M.S.
Vice President, Professional Development
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
dscheckelhoff@ashp.org

Jan Keresztes, BS Pharm, PharmD
Coordinator, Pharmacy Technician Program
South Suburban College
Email: jkeresztes@ssc.edu

Together we make a great team



Objectives

- Define and distinguish between registration, certification and accredited education and training, and licensing.
- Discuss the Pharmacy Technician Initiative.
- Explain the importance of standardized accredited technician education in the Pharmacy Practice Model Initiative.

Together we make a great team



Polling Question #1

Which of the following best describes your current position or title:

1. Inpatient Pharmacist
2. Pharmacy Technician
3. Pharmacy Director/Manager
4. Pharmacy Resident
5. Other position

Together we make a great team



Pharmacy Technicians

- Estimated to be 400,000 or more
- Training varies greatly
- Certification requirements vary greatly
- Registration not required in all states
- Role continues to evolve
 - ❖ Preparation of medications for dispensing
 - ❖ Pharmacists shift to more direct patient care roles
 - ❖ Impact of automation, IT, purchasing, other responsibilities

Together we make a great team

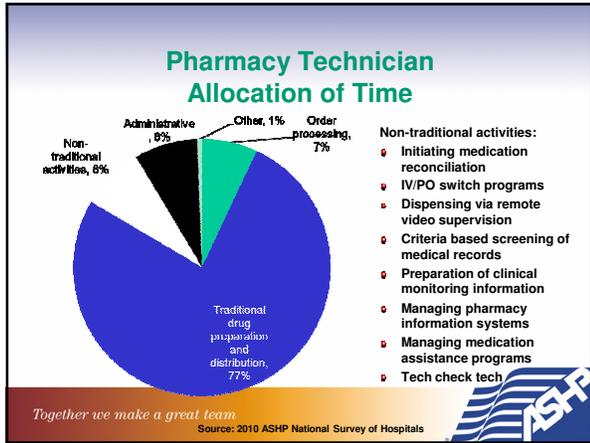


Why Pharmacy Technicians are so important

- There is growing complexity in medication use and a continued focus on medication safety and quality
- There is a need TODAY for well-qualified, competent pharmacy technicians for the safe provision of medications in all settings
- The existence of a competent pharmacy technicians will be fundamental to advancing the patient care role of pharmacists in the FUTURE
- Yet, there is no defined standard

Together we make a great team





ASHP Position on Pharmacy Technicians

Well-qualified, competent pharmacy technicians are integral to the safe provision of medications in all settings. To achieve this, ASHP:

- ❖ Supports uniform training – ASHP-accredited
- ❖ Support certification through PTCB
- ❖ Support registration through state boards

(Ideally should be completed in this sequence)

Together we make a great team

Positions of other Organizations

- Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy
- American Pharmacists Association (APhA)
- American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP)
- National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP)
- Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)

Together we make a great team

ASHP Pharmacy Technician Initiative

- A partnership with ASHP affiliates
- Goal: to develop an educated, trained, certified and registered pharmacy technician workforce that will support the advancement of the pharmacist patient care role, promote safe medication systems, and improve patient care
- Supporting regulatory or legislative actions at the state level advancing pharmacy technicians
- Providing resources, education, information, web sites, to partners and members
- Promoting accreditation of training programs

Together we make a great team



Technician Education



● Need for:

- ❖ Mandatory education
 - proven pre-requisite capability (reading, English math, typing and computer skills)
 - follow set professional objectives (ie., Model Curriculum for Pharmacy Technician: ASHP Accreditation Standards)
 - evaluate technicians based on outcome criteria

Together we make a great team



Technician Training

- Should no longer be trained on-the-job
 - ❖ expense to do this at the work site is too high
 - ❖ no consistency in training depending on the employer
 - ❖ pharmacists no longer have the time to train 'apprentices' with today's stressful dispensing pace
 - ❖ liability is great if training is not successful

Together we make a great team



Education vs Training



- **Education:** The act or process of imparting knowledge or skill; systematic instruction; teaching.
- **Training:** Accustom to some mode of behavior or performance; to make proficient with specialized instruction and practice.

■ American Heritage Dictionary

Together we make a great team



Important Terms for Pharmacy Technician Practice Standards

- **Credentialing**
- **Licensure**
- **Registration**
- **Certification**
- **Accreditation**



Together we make a great team



Definition: Credentialing



- **A generic term used to designate formal recognition of professional or technical competence**
- **It includes licensure, certification, and graduation from accredited programs.**

Together we make a great team



Definition: Licensure

- The process by which an agency of the government grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon finding the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency necessary to ensure the public health, safety and welfare will be reasonably protected.

Together we make a great team



Definition: Registration

- The process of making a list or being enrolled in an existing list.
- Within pharmacy, some state boards have elected to register technicians who work under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist.

Together we make a great team



Definition: Accreditation

- The recognition of a program of study by a government or private agency as having met certain qualifications as specified by that agency.

Together we make a great team



Definition: Certification

- The process by which a nongovernmental agency or association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications, specified by that agency or association.
- Within pharmacy, technicians may voluntarily choose to be certified by passing the PTCB examination.

www.ptcb.org

Together we make a great team



Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) – Originated in 1995

- Consists of 5 organizations: APhA, ASHP, Michigan Pharmacists Assn., Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists, & NABP ('02)
- Psychometrically-Sound Exam
- Tests on three subject categories: pharmacy practice, medication distribution/inventory control and administrative/management of pharmacy practice

Together we make a great team



Voluntary National Certification Program for Pharmacy Technicians

- >383,500 PTCB-certified technicians (10/2010)
- Examination fee: \$129
- Eligibility: high school diploma or GED; no felony record
- 90 multiple-choice questions; 10 pre-test
- Computer-based testing since February 2007
 - Continuous: Spring 2009
- Does not replace the pharmacist's legal responsibility of drug distribution system oversight

Together we make a great team



Why Would the Technician Want to be Certified?

Pros :

- ❖ body of knowledge & skill attainment
- ❖ job flexibility, security & opportunities
- ❖ objective criteria for promotion & merit salary increases
- ❖ improved job satisfaction & sense of self-worth

Cons:

- ❖ cost
- ❖ variable employer support and recognition
- ❖ variable state board recognition
- ❖ recertification requirement
 - every 2yr
 - currently 75% complete

Together we make a great team



PTCB Statistics

- About 383,500 pharmacy technicians have been certified through the PTCB exam process as of October 2010.
- 36 states have accepted the PTCB exam process into their state pharmacy laws

Together we make a great team



Accreditation

A voluntary means of providing:

- ❖ Quality assurance
- ❖ Credibility
- ❖ Patient Safety
- ❖ Continuous monitoring and improvement



Together we make a great team



ASHP Accreditation Standards for Pharmacy Technician Programs

- American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) is the only accrediting body for Pharmacy Technician Programs
- Standards are set; can be found through the www.ashp.org website
- Programs must follow the established Model Curriculum for Pharmacy Technicians.

Together we make a great team



Why Become Accredited?

- Instant credibility
- Competitive advantage over other programs
- Undergone a peer review process
- Offer a didactic, laboratory and experiential components in the training program
- Shows high quality for public safety
- Commitment to excellence

Together we make a great team



Model Curriculum for Pharmacy Technicians

- Contains 32 goal statements, objectives and instructional objectives
- Has a sequence of 37 different instruction modules which can be used to achieve the ultimate goal of becoming an educated pharmacy technician

Together we make a great team



Pharmacy's Responsibility toward the Pharmacy Technicians' Status

- Pharmacy technicians are playing a much larger role now in the delivery of pharmacy services.
- Are the current systems of education, training, credentialing, and regulation adequate to:
 - 1) safeguard the public?
 - 2) promote public health with the best use of medications?
 - 3) meet the needs of pharmacy's future?

Together we make a great team



State Requirements for Pharmacy Technicians

- 51% of states specify training requirements in their regulations
- 39% require state board of pharmacy review of the training
- Only three states require completion of an ASHP accredited training program
 - ❖ ASHP requires 600 hours of education and training over at least 15 weeks

Together we make a great team



Other State Requirements for Technician Employment

- 84% regulate pharmacy technicians (42 states)
- 72% recognize certification; 32% require it (16 states)
- 16% no pharmacy technician regulations (8 states)

Together we make a great team



More State Requirements for Technician Employment

- 72% of the states have minimum 'education' requirements (ie., high school graduation) because certification exam requires it
- Many states allow supervising pharmacists to determine the level of training and functions performed



Together we make a great team



More Questions Remain...

- Are the technician examinations meeting our needs?
- Is technician distance learning working?
- Are tech educators meeting basic instructional standards? How?
- Is the Model Curriculum reflective of Pharmacy Practice? and on....and on..and on.....



Together we make a great team



YOU are Pharmacy's Future

- Remain professional
- Volunteer in pharmacy organizations
- Be part of the solution; not the problem
- Keep the patients and their loved ones as your primary focus
- Always ask how YOU can make the profession better



Together we make a great team





- **Summit held November 2010**
 - ❖ Create a framework; determine services
 - ❖ Identify emerging technologies
 - ❖ Develop a template; implement change
- **Key recommendations (related to technicians):**
 - ❖ Training – should be ASHP accredited
 - ❖ Certification by PTCB
 - ❖ Traditional roles
 - ❖ Non-traditional roles
 - ❖ Licensure

Together we make a great team



What can you do?

If you are a Pharmacy Director:

- Require all technicians to have "ASHP-accredited" training and PTCB certification.
- Distinguish technicians who have completed "ASHP-accredited" training and PTCB certification from others.
- Promote and reimburse the training cost of technicians who complete an ASHP-accredited program.
- Inform your boss & Human Resources about the benefits of having trained and certified pharmacy technicians, add the requirement to job descriptions.
- Partner with unaccredited pharmacy training programs in your area to support them towards ASHP-accreditation.
- Support and promote your pharmacists and pharmacy residents by encouraging them to lecture at local accredited technician training programs.
- Organize an educational program at your hospital to promote accredited technician training and certification opportunities.
- Apply the "R U Ready" assessment* to your in-house pharmacy technician training program and apply for accreditation if you are ready!
- Team up with your ASHP state affiliate and advocate for PharmTech Initiative legislation at the state level.

Together we make a great team



What can you do?

If you are a Pharmacy Technician:

- Evaluate your own credentials! Be sure to have ASHP-accredited training, PTCB certification, and always look for ways to advance your education.
- Advocate with your employer to expand the role of pharmacy technicians while engaging the pharmacist more in direct patient care.
- Recommend speakers at your state/local affiliate health-system society meetings on technician training/certification standards.
- Advocate with your employer that they set the bar for education, ASHP-accredited training, PTCB certification; volunteer to help!
- Encourage technicians you work with to obtain the highest level of training and certification possible.
- Get involved with your ASHP State affiliate.
- Advocate at the state level with your Affiliates for legislation or regulatory changes that set a minimum requirement for education, certification, and registration for pharmacy technicians which is consistent with the goals of the PharmTech Initiative.
- Join PTI community on ASHP Connect.
- Visit and promote the website <http://www.pharmtechinfocenter.com>
- Make a list of ASHP-accredited programs in your state and promote it to others seeking technician education.

Together we make a great team



What can you do?

If you are a Pharmacist:

- Encourage technicians you work with to obtain the highest level of training and certification possible.
- Team up with your state affiliate and advocate at the state level for legislation or regulatory changes that set a minimum requirement for education, certification, and registration for pharmacy technicians which is consistent with the goals of the PharmTech Initiative.
- Support your hospital in forming partnerships with local pharmacy technician schools to provide experiential sites.
- Be a mentor. Educate technician as part of your daily activities as to why you do things, what certain medications are used for, ask thought provoking questions, ask the tech what their career goals are, and how can you help techs interested in more advanced roles to reach their goals.
- Get involved with your State affiliate and promote technician involvement & education at their meetings.
- Volunteer to teach or lecture at a local ASHP-accredited pharmacy technician training program.
- Contact non ASHP-accredited programs in your state and encourage them to seek accreditation.

Together we make a great team





Together we make a great team