

Health Observances Calendar

Every day, pharmacists in hospitals and health systems help patients use their medicines safely and effectively. But often consumers, patients, and even other health professionals don't really understand the vital role you play. That's why it's important to use national health observances to educate patients, peers, and the public about your role on the patient care team.

MARCH

8-14: National Patient Safety Awareness Week

Pharmacists are natural advocates for patient safety. Use this observance to emphasize the pharmacist's role in achieving safe and effective medication use (www.npsf.org).



15-21: National Poison Prevention Week

Medications are often implicated in accidental poisonings. The event is an ideal opportunity to raise consumer awareness about the valuable role that pharmacists play in ensuring medication safety (www.poisonprevention.org).

MAY

10-16: National Hospital Week

Make sure that the pharmacy department stands out this week by setting aside one day as "Pharmacy Day" to shine a spotlight on the activities of the pharmacy staff (www.aha.org).

OCTOBER

Make October the centerpiece of your efforts to promote the profession. Plan on and off-site events to raise public awareness about pharmacists' roles.



Talk About Prescriptions Month (www.talkaboutrx.org)

American Pharmacists Month (www.pharmacist.com)

18-24: Nat'l Hospital & Health-System Pharmacy Week
(www.ashp.org/pharmweek)

20: National Pharmacy Technician Day
(www.pharmacytechnician.org)



JANUARY							FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31							

MARCH							APRIL						
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30		

MAY							JUNE						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
31													

JULY							AUGUST						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER							DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
29	30						27	28	29	30	31		

Ideas to Try

Before planning an activity, meet with the public relations and marketing team at your institution to discuss the observance and how it can be incorporated at your practice site.

Sponsor an Open House:

An open house and/or a tour of the pharmacy will allow you to give your institution's administrator and other staff a glimpse into the daily operations of the pharmacy. During the tour, describe the range of pharmacy activities and share success stories about improved patient outcomes and enhanced medication safety. You can also:



- Provide statistics about the number and types of calls received from the medical and nursing staff
- Point out any technological advances, such as automated dispensing machines, and discuss their impact on your ability to provide clinical services.

Meet & Greet:

Invite patients and their caregivers to meet the pharmacy staff, ask questions about their medication therapies, and express any concerns they may have. Publicize your event using flyers, notes on meal trays, announcements on the public address system, or personal visits. Plan to give a short introduction at the Meet & Greet that includes:



- An introduction of the pharmacy staff in attendance,
- A description of the pharmacists' activities at your facility,
- An explanation of how those activities benefit patient care, and
- An invitation to ask questions about medication use.

Write a Column:

Offer to contribute to your institution's internal or external newsletters. You might propose doing a guest feature on health-system pharmacists and what they do, or you might offer to contribute to a regular column on medication issues.



Potential topics include:

- Preventing Misuse of Medications,
- Poison Prevention, and
- Using Antibiotics Wisely.

Host a Brown Bag:

Invite patients to bring their prescription and over-the-counter medications and discuss their drug therapy regimens with a pharmacist. Be sure to:



- Publicize the event at least four weeks in advance by posting flyers at your institution, notices in community gathering places like the library or grocery stores, and announcements in local papers,
- Have drug information references, such as *AHFS-Drug Information* or information about *Safemedication.com* available to share with patients, and
- Give participants handouts on safe medication use and gifts such as pens, bookmarks, or magnets that will remind them of the pharmacy staff's role in their health care.



For more information on health observances, check out www.ashp.org/pr or e-mail publicinfo@ashp.org.