

2007 ASHP Pharmacy Staffing Survey Results

Background

ASHP has surveyed pharmacy directors since 1999 in order to gauge the supply of and demand for pharmacists and to measure perceptions about pharmacist workforce shortages. A core set of questions were designed to measure trends and other questions are added as needed to gather information on staffing-related issues. Beginning in 2007, ASHP discontinued the stand-alone staffing survey and instead included the core questions in the larger ASHP National Survey of Pharmacy Practice in Hospitals. This report reflects just the staffing specific information from that survey. More complete reporting of data, methodology, and results can be found in the *AJHP* publication: (Pedersen CA, Schneider PJ, Scheckelhoff DJ. ASHP national survey of pharmacy practice in hospital settings: Prescribing and transcribing - 2007. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2008; 65: 827-843).

While there can be some comparison of results from the annual staffing survey and those from the National Survey, the sampling methodology was different, thus making direct and statistical comparison impossible.

Detailed Results

Vacancy Rates

The average pharmacist vacancy rate in health-systems in 2007 was 6.4% (Table 1.) The average pharmacy technician vacancy rate was 4.1%. These vacancy rates are comparable to the 2006 and 2005 data obtained through the stand-alone staffing survey (Table 2). The average vacancy rate was calculated by dividing the number of vacant full-time equivalent (FTE) positions by the total FTE positions.

Smaller hospitals did not have a different percentage of vacant pharmacist positions as compared to larger hospitals. However, smaller hospitals were likely to have a lower vacancy rate for pharmacy technician vacant positions as compared to larger hospitals.

Key Findings

- The vacancy rate for pharmacist positions in hospitals and health-systems was reported to be 6.4%, while the vacancy rate for pharmacy technicians was 4.1%.
- Vacancy rates did not differ significantly between small, medium, and large hospital settings.
- The average turnover rate in 2007 was 7.7% for pharmacists and 13.6% for technicians.
- Smaller hospitals had more turnover for pharmacists, but less for pharmacy technicians, when compared to large hospitals.

Turnover Rates

Turnover for health-system pharmacist positions in 2007 was 7.7% (Table 3). This was less when compared to 2006 obtained from the stand-alone staffing survey (Table 4). The turnover rate for pharmacy technicians the rate was 13.6%, appearing to be greater than previous year. The turnover rate for pharmacist and pharmacy technicians was calculated by dividing the number of FTE resignations by the total FTE positions.

Larger hospitals reported less pharmacist turnover as compared to small hospitals. The opposite was true for pharmacy technician staff, with larger hospitals reporting higher turnover as compared to small hospitals.

FTE Positions for Pharmacy

The number of pharmacists, technicians, and other support staff position FTEs is shown in Table 5. Data reflects the number of FTEs per 100 occupied beds.

There was no significant change in the number of different types of positions in the past three years

Table 1. Inpatient Pharmacy Staffing in Prior Fiscal Year

Characteristic	Mean ±S.E.			
	No. FTE Pharmacists per 100 Occupied Beds	% Vacant FTE Pharmacists Positions ^b	No. FTE Technicians per 100 Occupied Beds	% Vacant FTE Technician Positions
No. staffed beds				
<50 (n=107)	19.8±1.8	7.7	19.0±2.0	1.7
50-99 (n = 82)	12.0±1.1	9.7	13.8±1.6	3.5
100-199 (n = 75)	9.8±0.6	6.2	9.6±0.6	4.2
200-299 (n = 103)	9.9±0.4	5.4	9.5±0.4	3.5
300-399 (n =74)	8.5±0.4	6.5	7.9±0.3	4.5
≥400 (n = 84)	9.7±0.5	6.3	8.5±0.5	4.9
All hospitals–2007 (n = 525)	13.2 ^d ±0.6	6.4	13.0±0.7	4.1

^aFTE = full-time equivalent

Table 2. Vacancy Rates from Previous Years

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2000	1999
Pharmacists							
Positions budgeted (FTE)	13.4	14.2	14.9	13.4	13.6	16.7	14.2
Positions vacant (FTE)	0.94	0.88	0.75	0.74	0.94	1.5	1.1
Vacancy rate	7.0%	6.2%	5.0%	5.6%	6.9%	8.9%	7.7%
Pharmacy Technicians							
Positions budgeted (FTE)	13.6	13.5	14.9	12.6	13.8	NA	NA
Positions vacant (FTE)	0.57	0.53	0.56	0.54	0.64	NA	NA
Vacancy rate	4.2%	3.9%	3.7%	4.3%	4.6%	NA	NA

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Table 3. Inpatient Pharmacy Staff Turnover in Prior Fiscal Year (2007 Data)

Characteristic	FTE Pharmacist Turnover		% Pharmacist Turnover ^a	FTE Pharmacy Technician Turnover		% Pharmacy Technician Turnover ^a
	n	Mean	%	Mean	%	
Staffed beds						
<50	108	0.3	13.4	0.2	9.2	
50-99	82	0.4	9.1	0.6	13.8	
100-199	75	0.7	7.4	1.3	14.2	
200-299	102	1.0	7.0	1.8	12.7	
300-399	74	1.3	6.7	2.5	13.4	
≥400	83	2.8	7.2	5.0	14.7	
All hospitals – 2007	524	0.8 ^b	7.7	1.3 ^c	13.6	

^a Calculated as number of FTE resignations / total FTE positions

Table 4. Turnover Rates from Previous Years^a

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Pharmacists					
Positions budgeted (FTE)	13.4	14.2	14.9	13.4	13.6
Resignations in last 12 months (FTE)	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.2
Vacancy Rate	9.0%	8.5%	7.5%	7.5%	8.5%
Pharmacy Technicians					
Positions budgeted (FTE)	13.6	13.5	14.9	12.6	13.8
Resignations in last 12 months (FTE)	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7
Vacancy Rate	12.4%	12.9%	11.8%	13.3%	12.3%

^a Calculated by dividing the mean number of resignations/the number of currently budgeted positions

Table 5. Pharmacy FTE's per 100 Occupied Beds by Type of Position^a

Characteristic	n	Mean FTE's per 100 Occupied Beds								TOTAL Pharmacists	TOTAL Pharmacy Technicians	TOTAL Other Support Staff
		Management Pharmacists	Clinical Pharmacists	Distributive Pharmacists	Integrated Pharmacists	Informatics Pharmacists	Medication-Use Safety Coordinator Pharmacist	Other Pharmacists	Residents			
Staffed beds												
<50	100	5.05	0.81	3.42	9.81	0.36	0.20	0.17	0.00	19.8	19.0	0.93
50-99	73	2.74	1.41	2.68	4.69	0.27	0.14	0.03	0.00	12.0	13.8	0.82
100-199	73	1.39	1.15	3.53	3.23	0.19	0.10	0.13	0.09	9.8	9.6	1.93
200-299	100	1.18	1.23	3.52	3.38	0.24	0.08	0.09	0.16	9.9	9.5	1.07
300-399	72	1.00	1.11	2.50	3.28	0.21	0.08	0.09	0.26	8.5	7.9	0.81
≥400	83	1.03	1.77	3.22	2.67	0.22	0.09	0.19	0.54	9.7	8.5	0.78
All hospitals – 2007	501	2.66	1.14	3.26	5.51	0.26	0.13	0.13	0.11	13.2	13.0	1.05
All hospitals – 2006	434	2.60	1.04	3.09	7.94	0.21	0.08	0.03	0.13	15.1	11.8	0.31
All hospitals – 2005	505	2.5	1.0	3.4	5.1	0.2	0.0	0.4	0.3	13.1	12.3	0.7

^a standard errors are available upon request from the authors of the study