Presented by: Don Carpenter, BS, CPhT III

Creating a Career Ladder for Pharmacy Technicians

Disclosure
- The company and brands discussed in this presentation are products used at SCR.
- I received no gratuities or compensation from any outside entity.

Objectives
After this presentation the audience will be able to
- Develop a pharmacy technician career ladder within their own institution.
- Demonstrate the essentials required to develop a pharmacy technician career ladder
- Define the steps necessary to promote the evolution of pharmacy technicians into career professionals.
Saint Claire Regional Medical Center

SCR Facts
- Licensed for 159 beds
- Approximately 1400 staff members
- Half-million annual patient encounters
- 31 Medical Specialties
- 5 Family Medicine Clinics
- 2 Specialty Clinics

SCR Pharmacy
- 24/7 pharmacy services
- 11 Full time & 3 part-time Clinical Pharmacists
- 2 PGY1 Pharmacy Residency positions
- 3 levels of Technicians adding up to 8 full time and 2 part-time positions
- 31 automated dispensing cabinets
- 350,000 + Orders entered per year
- 1600 formulary items
SCR Pharmacy Technicians

- 7-Level I positions (4 full time & 3 part time)
- 2-Level II positions
- 2-Level III positions

Technician History at SCR

- No recognition of certification prior to 1998.
- Pilot began for certified technicians in 1998.
- Level II positions implemented 2003
- Level III positions implemented 2010

Level I Technician Duties

- Rounds Technician
- IV Compounding
- Chemotherapy Compounding
- Omnicell Restocking
- Check in orders
- Fluid Cart Restock
Level II Implementation

- Implemented 2003
- 2 shifts for 3 positions
- Expanded Duties
  - All Level 1 Duties
  - Triage Phone Calls
  - Process Wholesaler Orders
  - Process Hospice Orders
  - Process Clinic and EMS Orders
  - Monitor Level 1 Workflow
  - Troubleshoot Problems
  - Check Rounds, Cart Fill, Premix IV’s, and Restocks
  - Unit Inspections
  - Control OR Satellite Pharmacy

Why is a Career Ladder Important

- Better patient care (always top priority)!!!
  - Create stability in the department.
  - Promote increase in quality of staff.

Where to begin

- Become active in the state and national organizations
Today’s Technicians

Today’s Technicians

Expanded Duties

- Buyer
- Compounding tech
- Chemotherapy tech
- Data entry tech
- Automation installer
- Inventory management
- Sales representative
- Nuclear tech
- Educator
- Director of Technicians
What is needed to develop a career ladder?

Patience

Keep in Mind
- What am I looking for in my career?
  - Is this my job or career?
  - Am I in it for the money?
- How can I help the department?
  - How much time can I save the pharmacist?
  - Will it save the department money?
- Will it benefit the patient? !!!!!!!!!!

First Step in Development

Self Evaluation
- What kind of technician are you?
- Are you willing to accept more responsibility?
- Are you a self-motivated?
- Are you the tech that the pharmacist depends on?
Second Step in Development

Departmental Evaluation
- What duties in your pharmacy can be done by a technician that a pharmacist currently performs?
- How can you improve workflow in your department?
- Are there opportunities to incorporate new innovations for the pharmacy?

Third Step in Development

Making the Proposal
- Sell yourself!
- Cost justification.
- **DO NOT FEAR REJECTION!**

Fourth Step in Development

(if needed)
- Work on your self evaluation weaknesses.
  - Further your education
  - Chose appropriate CE
- Continue to show professional development.
- Demonstrate your abilities.
Level III Proposal

To: Cathy Shely, Director of Pharmacy
From: Don Carpenter and Dale Craft
Subject: CPhT III advancement
Date: November 15, 2007

Cathy,

We feel that we have more talent and skill to offer the pharmacy profession and the St. Claire pharmacy department than we are currently permitted to do. We are both happy at St. Claire, but we would like the opportunity to work to our full potential. There is a lack of career advancement for distinguished CPhT II in the pharmacy department. We are proposing that two new shifts be created within the department. The title would be CPhT III. The positions, X and Y, would entail different duties for each tech.

The requirements would be:

Education: Minimum: Associates Degree in pharmacy related field or a Bachelor’s Degree in a pharmacy related field. Candidate may be pursuing a degree to procure the position.

Experience: Candidate must have at least four years at St. Claire as a CPhT II tech. Experience can be substituted for higher education and other work experience.

The proposed positions would be Monday through Friday 0700 to 1530. The suggested pay grade for the position would be between 11 and 13, depending on the qualifications of the candidate. Pay grade 11 would be appropriate for an Associate’s Degree with minimal experience, while grade 13 would be for the Bachelor’s Degree with ample experience. These pay grades are equivalents to what the same candidate could make outside of the pharmacy field.

The proposed duties are:

1. Medication Reconciliation.
2. Create and implement annual competency evaluations for all technical positions.
3. Departmental scheduling.
4. Conduct monthly technician meeting, and typing minutes for review by the Director of Pharmacy.
5. Expand in house entry.
6. Oversees training new techs.
7. Assists in resolution of nursing/pharmacy issues.
8. Quality assurance checks.

First is the medication reconciliation. This is new ground for technicians and would be the main duty of position X. After a 4 week intense side by side training with current nursing staff, the tech would then be evaluated to determine their competence.

The goals and functions of the medication reconciliation tech would be as follows:

1. Establish a good rapport with all local pharmacies in the St. Claire region to gain their assistance in verifying patient medications.
2. Let the pharmacies know what we are doing and that it is a Joint Commission mandate.
3. Develop a fax with cover letter to send to each pharmacy for a patient’s specific prescription history for past 3 months.
4. Fax the needed pharmacies each morning requesting the return that day.
5. Check the list against the nurse list to validate their admitting patient history.
6. Interview the patient to make sure that they are taking the medications as directed by the prescription.
7. Interview the patient to determine if they are taking any OTC drugs or herbal supplements.
8. With patient's consent, their family may be contacted to read information from existing prescription bottles if needed.
9. Contacting the physician's office if needed to help achieve an accurate medication list.
10. After an accurate patient medication list is made, check against the physician's orders to look for discrepancies.
11. If all home meds are not ordered (unless justified on hold) write a memo to the physician.
12. Pharmacist looks at the memo to determine if the physician needs to be contacted by phone or if it needs to be placed on the patient chart until the next rounds are made.

Level III Proposal

Second is the creation and implementation of annual competencies for all technicians. This would include competencies for 30-, 60-, and 90-day, 6 months, and for each year of experience for each tech. This would assure the continued level of excellence in our department.

Third is the department scheduling. The level of maturity and professionalism for a level three tech should be high enough to properly develop a working schedule for all pharmacy members. The schedule would be checked by the director for any bias, until she feels confident that the schedule is unbiased.

Fourth is that the level three technicians could hold monthly tech meetings to discuss any new issues within the department and be responsible for direct correspondence to the director.

Fifth is order entry. By doing all of the order entry in the main pharmacy, this would free up the decentralized pharmacist to concentrate all of their energies to clinical patient care. It would change the duty of the C shift. They would primarily be responsible for the verification of the order entry.

Sixth is the oversight of new technician training. By doing the schedule we could ensure that the new hire is trained by a level two or level three technician. This is the most appropriate way to train the new hire to ensure that they receive the most accurate and efficient training.

Seventh is to increase the involvement between the pharmacy and nursing staffs. We could all in during part of the nurse managers meetings and respond to any issues that they may have. We could also bring any issues that the pharmacy has to the nurses.

Eighth is to increase and document all quality assurance checks. We could document all the checks we do on the fluid carts. We can routinely check for proper aseptic technique. We can also do random check of the omni cell to ensure accurate restocking. There are many options that could be monitored and documented.

Ninth is the option of doing the drip rounds for the pharmacist. If we choose not to do the order entry then this free up some of the pharmacist's time.
Level III Implemented 2010

- 2-positions
- Quality assurance
- Informatics

Level III Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Title:</th>
<th>Certified Pharmacy Technician Level 3</th>
<th>Position Code: 2407548</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Code:</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>FLSA Status: Non-</td>
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1. Minimum Requirements

- Education: Bachelor degree (BA or BS) or Vocational Certificate in Pharmacy Technology or related field with equivalent experience in pharmacy required.
- Experience: Three years experience in expanded technician role (in excess of experience in basic pharmacy services) equivalent to a SCR certified technician level 2 position. Prefer two of the three years of required experience in St. Claire Regional Medical Center’s Pharmacy. Must have experience with pharmacy operating software, automated dispensing cabinet software, barcoding technology, and quality management.
- Certification/License: Certification as a pharmacy technician as recognized by the Kentucky Board of Pharmacy; registered with the Kentucky Board of Pharmacy.
- Other: There are no felony convictions found on a criminal background check or any alcohol or drug related offenses.

Position Overview

The role of the Certified Pharmacy Technician Level 3 is to provide information technology support to the pharmacy department and coordinate and monitor the quality of medication distribution services provided by the Pharmacy Department under the supervision of the director of pharmacy or designee. Pharmacy IT support may include the pharmacy information system, automated dispensing cabinets, barcoding technology and any other software utilized by the department. Quality monitoring includes verification of adherence to best practice standards and departmental policies and procedures. The Certified Pharmacy Technician Level 3 must be able to perform the tasks given in the Certified Pharmacy Technician II job description, as well as the additional duties given in the core technical competencies below, as this individual is also required to support the patient care services of the pharmacy department. These duties require an in-depth knowledge of pharmacy practice, allowing independent functioning within the limits dictated by state and federal laws.
Level III Position
Core Technical Competencies
Demonstrates proficiency in all of the areas described in the Certified Pharmacy Technician II job description.
Coordinates and supervises functionality of the automated dispensing cabinets.
Troubleshoots automated dispensing cabinet technical problems, including drawer failures, cabinet malfunctions, database errors, and interface problems. Serves as primary point of contact for nursing and pharmacy staff and as liaison with the automated dispensing cabinet vendor technical support regarding issues resolution.
Acts as a liaison to other hospital departments for installation activities and post-installation maintenance. Accountable for proper system utilization, ensuring all parties have appropriate understanding of the system.
Reviews historical data on patient care unit-specific drug use trends, identify trends, issues and concerns in the data to provide a proactive approach to discrepancy management.
Serves as liaison to hospital staff for installation activities and post-installation maintenance. Accountable for proper system utilization, ensuring all parties have appropriate understanding of the system.
Performs a statistically valid analysis of overall automated dispensing system accuracy monthly, including overrides, stock-outs, refills, etc.
Performs periodic misadventure audits of technician tasks, refills and other functions for competency assessment and document findings.
Investigates narcotic discrepancy reports on a daily basis. Report to the Pharmacy Director any discrepancy unresolved after 24 hours. Identify trends, issues and concerns in the data to provide a proactive approach to discrepancy management.
Serves as liaison between pharmacy and patient care area managers. Serves as a liaison for installation activities and post-installation maintenance. Accountable for proper system utilization, ensuring all parties have appropriate understanding of the system.
Participates in review and implementation of pharmacy related automation and systems to ensure process efficiency and integration with existing systems and work processes.
Maintains the functionality of barcode verification systems.
Coordinates, monitors and assists installation activities conducted by hospital staff and outside vendors to ensure agreed timetables are maintained.
Troubleshoots reasons for barcode overrides and works with patient care unit managers to develop solutions, including staff education and product changes.
Serves as liaison to hospital staff for installation activities and post-installation maintenance. Accountable for proper system utilization, ensuring all parties have appropriate understanding of the system.
Provides support for the pharmacy operating system.
Advises with database development with emphasis in drug distribution functions.
Advises with scheduled upgrades with testing software changes in support under the direction of the Director of Pharmacy or designee.
Coordinates activities of the inventory management software system.
Advises with database development and maintenance of the system.
Troubleshoots reasons for program failures and works with pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, pharmacy vendors and nursing personnel to develop solutions, including staff education and process changes.
Advises with scheduled upgrades with testing software changes in support under the direction of the Director of Pharmacy or designee.
Core Technical Competencies Continued

Provides daily supervision regarding the quality of restocking of IV fluid carts in patient care areas and orderliness of the drug storage areas. Performs random audits of drug storage to ensure that drugs are stored in the appropriate bin (no misplaced products which contribute to dispensing errors) and that products are in-date.

Assigns responsibility for monthly inspections of all patient care areas and drug storage areas (including the Pharmacy) to assure drugs are stored in accordance to policies and other standards, and are in-date.

Supervises the quality control functions for sterile product compounding, performs staff competency assessments and maintains records of these reviews.

Tracks and reports staff compliance with all required all recordkeeping for drug storage, such as temperature monitoring logs, cleaning and disinfection logs for barrier isolators and so on.

Supervises the training of new technical staff, including demonstration of required skills, coordination of training experiences, and evaluation of the competencies attained at the 60 day evaluation. Develops remedial training to address inadequate knowledge base or performance.

Coordinates in-services for pharmacy technicians regarding new products, equipment and procedures.

Prepares the agendas for monthly technician meetings and provides minutes of these meetings. Provides follow up on issues identified at the monthly technician meetings.

Maintains inventory records of drugs requiring special distribution such as investigational drugs and drugs provided under FDA-mandated processes.

Performs other related tasks and projects independently as assigned by the Director of Pharmacy.

Success!!!!
Evolution

- Spread the news of your success so that other technicians can benefit.

Websites of Interest

- http://kphanet.org
- http://www.ptcb.org
- http://www.ashp.com
- http://www.kshp.org

Questions???

Thank you.

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