Expanding The Role Of Pharmacy Technicians

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Program Objectives

- Discover growth opportunities within the workplace
  - Is there a void that you feel needs to be addressed?
- Select a niche area that you are most interested in
  - Where could your talents be best put to use?
- Create a strategic plan to accomplish your growth goals
  - What tools are needed?
  - Is this a short term or long term goal?
  - Do you have a support system, mentor or a buddy?
What is the “traditional” role of Pharmacy Technicians?

- A pharmacy technician works under the direct supervision of pharmacists in hospitals, drug stores, grocery stores, and other medical settings to help prepare and distribute medications to patients. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
  - Reviewing patient prescriptions for accuracy and completeness
  - Preparing medications for distribution to patients (outpatient)
  - Triaging pharmacy phone calls
  - Preparing medications for patient administration (inpatient)
  - Maintaining appropriate drug inventory
Where can growth opportunities be found?

- Medication Reconciliation
  - Medication history and allergy information collection
- Medication Therapy Management (MTM)
  - Aiding Pharmacists in providing MTM services and scheduling outpatient visits.
- Discharge Services
  - Patient Bedside Delivery Service
    - [http://www.ashpmedia.org/pai/docs/casestudy-South-Pointe-Hospital.pdf](http://www.ashpmedia.org/pai/docs/casestudy-South-Pointe-Hospital.pdf)
  - Patient Discharge Prescription Compliance
- Supervising/Teaching
  - Training and managing technicians within the pharmacy department.
- Pharmacy IT Systems
  - EPIC, Cerner, Allscripts, I.B.M. units, BD/Carefusion, Omnicare
- Engagement and/or Community Outreach
Medication Reconciliation

The Emergency Department is an excellent area for Pharmacy Technicians to get involved. Under Pharmacist or Nurse supervision, Pharmacy Techs are able to review patient medication histories for accuracy and completeness.

- Has the patient stopped taking any medications?
- Is the patient still taking the medications as they were prescribed?
- What are the patients current allergies?

In this position the technician may be asked to contact the patients home pharmacy to get information for Nurses, Doctors or the Pharmacist.

- When was the medication last filled?
- What are the current medications that the patient receives?
Medication Therapy Management

Expanding the role of the pharmacy technician into MTM services ensures that the Pharmacist is available to spend more time working directly with patients. Technicians should be able to assist with:

- Gathering patient information
- Scheduling follow-up appointments
- Performing quality assurance reviews
- Reporting outcomes

Pharmacy Technicians may also be asked to run reports and conduct analysis concerning patient medication compliance and hospital readmission rates.
Discharge Services

- Does your pharmacy offer bedside delivery services?
  - Technicians can review the daily discharge list for the hospital and offer to fill the patients' prescriptions in house (with the proper outpatient/ambulatory pharmacy)

- Does someone review discharge prescriptions?
  - Is the patient compliant with taking medications as prescribed?
  - Can the prescriptions be called in?
  - Can the patient afford the medication?
  - Does the patient have any questions for the pharmacist? (triage)
Opportunities to Teach and Supervise

- Find areas where you excel and become the trainer/leader in that area.
  - USP 797 standards
  - Safety
  - Training employees in new areas/new systems
  - Maintaining competence in different areas (IV’s, Chemotherapy, Ordering)
  - Certification renewal
  - Professional Development (resume building and networking)
  - Onboarding new employees (CPhT students, Residents, Interns, Pharm.D.)
  - Rapid Response and Code Blue teams
  - Preceptor to students
Pharmacy IT Services

Pharmacy IT covers medication inventory and management software and dispensing cabinets. Who is the go-to person for pharmacy related IT issues? This person could serve as the point person between the pharmacy and outside agencies by:

- Coordinating new unit installations, software updates and moves
- Troubleshooting application issues
- Scheduling downtime
- Providing administrative maintenance of pharmacy applications
- Assisting contracted agencies in improving software and applications
- Teaching new application processes to employees
Strategic Planning

Ask for help and understand that you can’t always do it alone.

- Set up a plan for advancement
- Establish a core group or support team to help you accomplish your goals
  - Someone you can get advice from and bounce ideas off of
  - This can also be a buddy either within or outside of your organization
    - This person should have the experience that you are seeking to gain
- FIND A (long-term) MENTOR!
  - Someone who is dedicated to helping you succeed
  - This should be your go-to person whenever you need career advice
Engagement and Community Outreach

Technicians who choose to focus on engagement within the pharmacy department may opt to organize social events.

- Potlucks, waffle day, smoothie day, monthly birthday celebrations, work anniversary celebrations, bulletin board decoration, goal of the day, etc.

There may also be opportunities for community outreach and volunteering both within and outside of your hospital.

- Volunteering on your Hospital Emergency Response Team (HERT)
- Organizing donations for various causes
- Volunteering as Team Captain/Leader for fundraisers
- Volunteer as a representative for pharmacy at a health fair
Don’t be afraid to seek out new opportunities
Focus in on an area that you truly enjoy
Find the most efficient way to accomplish your goals
Contact Information

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