Expanding Roles, Expanding Pharmacy
Zachary Green
PTCB

Learning Objectives

• To track the evolution of the pharmacy industry’s definition of the pharmacy technician.
• To understand how the pharmacy technician’s responsibilities have expanded in recent history.
• To learn how pharmacy organizations are collaborating to support the expanded role of the pharmacy technician.

The Beginning

“Pharmacy technicians” did not exist. Instead:

• Clerks
• Cashiers
• Pharmacy assistants

Responsible for:

• Accepting payment
• Filling bottles
• Administrative duties

Defining the Role

In the late 1960s, pharmacy technicians were first being recognized on the national stage for their work.

• ASHP workshop defines professional versus nonprofessional tasks for hospital pharmacy services and recommends education/training for nonprofessional personnel
• Rhode Island Hospital initiates a formal pharmacy technician training program
• APhA conducts analysis of functions in providing community and hospital pharmacy services and whether pharmacists or pharmacy technicians should perform the tasks

I, Zachary Green, disclose no vested interest or affiliation with any corporate organization offering financial support or grant monies for this continuing education activity, or an affiliation with an organization whose philosophy could potentially bias my presentation.
1970s: Policy Process

- 1971: APhA House of Delegates endorses the appropriate use of supportive personnel as a positive step toward improving quality and quantity of pharmacy services
- 1972: NABP calls for a review of pharmacist’s roles before assigning “professional” functions to nonprofessionals
- 1973: NACDS supports greater use of pharmacy technicians and favors on-the-job training programs
- 1974: NARD opposes use of pharmacy technicians of limited training in the practice of pharmacy as a protection to the public

1981 & 1987: Exams

- 1981: Michigan Pharmacists Association initiates an exam-based certification program for pharmacy technicians
- 1983: ASHP begins accrediting technician training programs
- 1987: Illinois Council of Hospital Pharmacists begins to develop a pharmacy technician certification exam

1992: Scope of Pharmacy Practice Project

- Sponsored by AACP, APhA, ASHP, and NABP, the Scope of Pharmacy Practice project identified the functions and responsibilities of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, along with the skills and knowledge required to perform those responsibilities
- This project was considered to be the snapshot of pharmacy practice at the time

1995: Formation of PTCB

- 1993: Announcement was made at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting in December 1993 that a new organization would be formed to develop one national exam for pharmacy technician certification
- ASHP, APhA, the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (ICHP), and the Michigan Pharmacists Association (MPA), creates the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) as an independent body to create and administer national voluntary certification examinations. PTCB delivers the first exams in 1995.

2001: NABP Joins PTCB

PTCB expands its Board of Governors to include the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP).

2009 - 2010: Organization Input

- 2009: An NABP Task Force on Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Programs issued several recommendations that were subsequently accepted by NABP’s executive committee.
- 2010: ASHP embarked on the Pharmacy Practice Model Initiative (PPMI). The Pharmacy Practice Model Initiative recommended several national standards for the education, training and certification of pharmacy technicians.
WS12  Do pharmacy people know what NARD is?
William Schimmel, 4/9/2015
2011: C.R.E.S.T. Initiative

- C.R.E.S.T. Summit
  - Consumer Awareness
  - Resources
  - Education
  - State Policy
  - Testing
- 2 national surveys
- Recommendations similar to NABP and PPMI

State Regulations Vary Widely

- 45 states regulate pharmacy technicians
- 23 states include national certification in regulations
- 6 states require and accept only the PTCE
- 17 states require a background check
- 18 states require CE
- 6 states have a pharmacy technician serving on the state Board of Pharmacy
- 5 states and DC do not regulate pharmacy technicians
- Many states have pending legislation or regulations

Today: State Regulations

Some examples of expanded roles include:

- Supervisor
- Transitions of care
- Medication history
- Medication assistance
- Supply chain/logistics
- Working at PTCB

Defining Expanded Roles

su·per·vi·sor
ˈsü-pər-ˌvi-zər

: one that supervises; especially: an administrative officer in charge of a business, government, or school unit or operation

Robyn L. Parker, CPhT
Pharma Contract Compliance Manager
Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy, Flint, MI
CPHT since 2002

- Maintains the integrity between the pharmacy and pharma contracts including services, data and performance metrics
- Works with operations, sales, and IT staff regarding pharma contract compliance issues. Develops reporting, staff training, and process modifications

“I went back to school at age 40 to begin my career. Being certified has given me the opportunity to achieve a self-sustaining career.”
**Supervisor**

Angie Mellon, CPhT  
Technician Supervisor, Tech IV  
Mount Carmel West Hospital, Columbus, OH  
CPhT since 2003

- Interviews and selects pharmacy technician and intern candidates
- Manages the schedules and attendance of pharmacy technicians and interns
- Maintains outdated tracking for multiple areas in the pharmacy: carousel, premade IVs, tube feeds, refrigerators/freezers, crash carts, IV room, Pyxis area, and storeroom

**Supervisor**

Teri Davis, CPhT  
Pharmacy Buyer/Lead Technician  
HCA Kingwood Medical Center, Kingwood, TX  
CPhT since 1999 (PCTB certified since 2004)

- Assists with drug shortage resolution, drug budget control, formulary upkeep and inventory control.
- Talks with patients to enroll them in an assistance program for obtaining outpatient prescriptions upon hospital discharge.
- Currently attending school pursing a degree in Business Administration

**Transitions of care**

Jahara Lynn Russell, CPhT  
Lead Pharmacy Technician for Transitions of Care  
Albert Einstein Medical Center, Philadelphia  
CPhT since 2008

- Interacts daily with physicians, nurses, social workers, and the multi-disciplinary Transitions of Care team.
- Interviews patients to enroll them in an assistance program for obtaining outpatient prescriptions upon hospital discharge.

“I feel especially useful when it comes to my uninsured patients. Enrolling them in our assistance program or setting them up with a social worker to obtain medications at no cost is the most rewarding part of what I do.”

**Transitions of care**

Yolonda Johnson, CPhT  
Pharmacy Access Coordinator  
Free Clinic of Central Virginia  
CPhT since 1998

- Initiated the FIRST Program, a partnership with local hospitals
- The patient is given a 30 day supply of prescribed meds upon being discharged from the hospital
- FIRST lessens the chance of gaps in therapy and decreases frequency of re-admissions

**Medication history**

Yolonda Johnson, CPhT  
Pharmacy Access Coordinator  
Free Clinic of Central Virginia  
CPhT since 1998

- The collection of accurate medication and allergy history for patients
medication history

Michelle Jackson, CPhT
Medication History Technician
Princeton Community Hospital, WV
CPhT since 2005

• Assisted in the implementation of the Medication History Technician program at PCH
• Obtains home medication information for patients seen in the ER by contacting nursing homes, retail pharmacies and physician offices
• Works closely with the nursing staff and the physicians in the ER

medication assistance

Heather Krehl, CPhT
Lead Pharmacy Technician, Texas Oncology
Pharmacy Technician Program Director/Instructor, Milan Institute
CPhT since 1999

• Works closely with patients having financial difficulties who need help paying for their chemotherapy treatments.
• Has regular direct contact with patients, and conducts patient support groups
• Works with drug companies, doctors, and insurance facilities to find ways to ensure every patient is able to undergo their critical treatments

medication assistance

Eric Piasecki, CPhT
Medication History Technician
Lancaster General Hospital, PA
CPhT since 2007

• Transitioned from a retail to health system setting
• Interviews admitted patients and updates electronic medical records with information on medications being taken before admission
• The Medication History team, comprised of pharmacy technicians and LPNs, also supports quality initiatives including post-op beta blocker surveillance, targeted vaccine administrations, and identification of opportunities to improve pharmacological adherence through pharmacist/provider intervention

medication assistance

Hannah Peabody, CPhT
Certified Pharmacy Technician / PTCB's 2014 CPhT of the Year
Hematology/Oncology Associates of Central New York (HOACNY)
CPhT since 2012

• Navigates the prior authorization process, continually communicating with providers, and managing multiple applications
• Has secured more than $1,500,000 to assist patients needing expensive medications at private practice of more than 40 providers

"Being a CPhT means serving patients in the best way possible, and making sure there are no barriers to prevent them from receiving the critical cancer treatments they need.”

medication assistance

Olevia J. Brown, MBA, CPhT
Pharmacy Service Manager
Harris Health System
CPhT since 1999

• After more than 10 years of outsourcing, Olevia created an in-house Drug Replacement Program (DRP) to streamline operations, improve service, and increase savings
• 2012: DRP achieved $17.5M in cost savings, shattering their SBM goal
• 40% of cases: DRP negotiates bulk contracts with pharmaceutical companies. After medication is dispensed, DRP submits data to the companies to receive replacement drugs at no additional cost
• 60% of cases: DRP enrolls patients in patient assistance programs (PAPs) so they receive free medications directly to their homes

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**Supply Chain / Logistics**

saˈpli-ˈchän-ˌlō-ˈjis-tiks

: the planning and management of all activities involved in sourcing and procurement, conversion, and all logistics management activities.

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**Andrew Hash, CPhT**
Pharmacy Purchaser
Mount Carmel Medical Center, Ohio
CPHT since 2011

- Promoted to Pharmacy Purchaser after working at Mount Carmel for four years
- Responsible for: placing orders for the entire pharmacy and other hospital departments, helping maintain pharmacy contracts, updating drug and solution pricing, managing the pharmacy drug and IV solution inventory, meeting with drug representatives and helping make decisions on implementing new drugs, solutions, policies, and procedures

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**Tabitha C. Sineath, CPhT**
Traveling Senior Certified Technician, Walgreens
Certification Council Member, PTCB
CPHT since 1998

- Helps to direct the development of the Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam (PTCE) as well as the related policies and procedures of the overarching certification program
- Reviews test questions under the direction of psychometric experts. All questions and exams are reviewed and approved by the Council to ensure they are current and reflect the content outline

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**Mark Brunton, CPhT**
Pharmacy Technician Educator, Kaplan
Item Writer, PTCB
CPHT since 2003

- As an item writer, Mark assists staff in exam content development by contributing items for the PTCE

  "Item writing is a wonderful experience, and the ability to contribute to the development of a credential that improves the integrity and competency of technicians is very rewarding for me."

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**Zachary Green, CPhT**
Partnership Development Coordinator
PTCB
CPHT since 2008

- Manages the accounts of educator and employers in PTCB’s Advocate Programs
- Assists with state and national pharmacy associations as well as state boards of pharmacy
- Presents across the country about PTCB and pharmacy technicians to the pharmacy community and to the public

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p·t·c·b
Courtney Wiggins, CPhT
Certification Program Assistant
PTCB
CPhT since 2009

- Handles requests from interested candidate, and recertifying and reinstating technicians
- Determines eligibility of candidates, PTCE retake attestations, certification verifications, and special testing accommodations
- Evaluates continuing education programs and emergency withdrawals

“I find it most rewarding to help my peers of pharmacy technicians reach their goals in a gratifying career.”

Courtney Wiggins, CPhT
Certification Program Assistant
PTCB
CPhT since 2009

Collaborative Process

Who?
- State pharmacy associations
- State boards of pharmacy
- National pharmacy associations
- Hospitals and community pharmacies
- Individual pharmacy technicians and pharmacists
- Pharmacy technician educators

What?
- Collaborative movement
- Desire to move the profession forward

Collaboration Underway

Joint Commission of Pharmacy Practitioners (JCPP)
Vision Statement for 2015
Pharmacists will be the health care professionals responsible for providing patient care that ensures optimal medication therapy outcomes.

PTCB Program Growth

- 279,000+ actively certified pharmacy technicians
- 555,000+ certifications since 1995
- 975 Advocate Educators
- 659 Advocate Employers
- Streamlining recertification deadlines
  - Moving from 3x/year to 12x/year
- Developing advanced certification programs
  - Task force meeting in May 2015 for sterile compounding
  - Advanced retail and hospital exams under discussion

PTCB Program Changes

New PTCB requirements to become initially certified:
- By 2020, PTCB candidates will be required to complete an ASHP/ACPE-accredited education program

New PTCB requirements to become recertified:
- PTCB will require one of the 20 required CE hours to be in patient safety, in addition to one already required in law
- PTCB will only accept pharmacy-technician-targeted CE
- The number of CE hours allowed from college courses will be reduced and in-services will be reduced, then phased out

Moving Forward

Who or what is going to pave the road ahead?
Questions

1. True or False: All 50 states regulate pharmacy technicians.
2. In which of the following roles are pharmacy technicians working?
   a. Transitions of care
   b. Medication history
   c. Supply chain/logistics
   d. All of the above
3. True or False: PTCB currently only accepts pharmacy-technician-specific continuing education for recertification.

Summary

Questions/Comments?

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