

EXPLORE PHARMACY CAREERS

WHAT IS A PHARMACIST?

Pharmacists are medication experts who enhance patient care and promote wellness. They ensure medicines and doses are correct, prevent harmful drug interactions, counsel patients on the safe and appropriate use of their medications, and prepare and dispense prescriptions. As a pharmacist, you will have unique and specialized expertise about the composition of medicines, including their chemical, biological, and physical properties, as well as their manufacture and use. You may prepare personalized medications, participate in patient rounds at the hospital, reduce the spread of infections, conduct research or clinical trials for a biopharmaceutical company, or focus on a specific patient population or disease state (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, asthma, HIV, and pain management).

TYPES OF JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

CLINICAL FOCUS

- Advise doctors, nurses, and other prescribers about medication therapy
- Work with patients to counsel on medication use and provide clinical services to help optimize their care
- Provide follow-up primary care for chronic diseases with complex medication regimens
- Review medications to identify and manage possible drug interactions, adverse effects, and antibiotic-resistance risks
- Immunize patients and provide screenings for preventative care and conduct health and wellness programs
- Partner with veterinarians to provide customized medications for pets

INDUSTRY & MANAGEMENT FOCUS

- Manage pharmacy departments, including those within government agencies, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs and branches of the military
- Research, develop, and test new medications, as well as run clinical trials for new drug discoveries
- Work in all areas of the pharmaceutical industry, including drug development, medical affairs, clinical trials, and marketing
- Play a life-saving role in the event of an epidemic or act of bioterrorism
- Become entrepreneurs, creating and marketing new health-related products
- Evaluate best medications for prescription drug formularies

COMMON EMPLOYERS

- Hospitals and clinics: every unit, Veterinary hospitals
- Community pharmacies and mail order pharmacies
- Long-term care facilities, Hospices and home health care
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Universities and research institutions
- Pharmacy benefit management companies
- Government Agencies (FDA, CDC, NIH, public health departments)
- Medical insurance and communications companies, Startup companies

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KEY SKILLS & CHARACTERISTICS

- Communication
- Teamwork
- Leadership & Management
- Analytical thinking
- Counseling
- Problem solving
- Attention to detail
- Scientific aptitude
- Empathy
- Altruism
- Interest in life-long learning
- Cultural awareness

LICENSURE & CERTIFICATIONS

- The North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX)
- State of WI Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPA) - Pharmacy Examining Board

QUALIFICATIONS

- Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD)
- Optional post graduate education & training opportunities (residency, fellowship, board certifications)

ASSOCIATIONS

- American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACCP)
- American Society of Health Systems Pharmacists (ASHP)
- American Pharmacists Association (APhA)

RELATED STUDENT ORGS

- Pre-Pharmacy Club
- Health Occupations of America

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Talk with and/or shadow a pharmacist
- Connect with a pharmacy school admissions advisor
- Volunteer in a related healthcare setting
- Apply for research internships with a biopharma company