



Stanford
MEDICINE
Health Care

Evolving Roles of Pharmacy Technicians in the Health System Setting

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Historical Context

Pharmacy Landscape

- Many standalone hospitals and independent vs. chain retail pharmacies previously existed
- Technician roles were more commonly related to dispensing & distribution of medications

Inpatient Operations

Medication Procurement

- Developing and maintaining inventory PAR levels
- Placing medication orders to wholesaler
- Receiving and restocking medications

Medication Preparation

- Manual repackaging of bulk medications
- Compounding: sterile & non-sterile

Medication Dispensing & Distribution

- Drug delivery to patient care areas (e.g. cart fill)
- Maintaining floor stock on nursing units
- Loading & restocking automated dispensing cabinets

Present Day

Growing Complexity of the Healthcare Landscape Leads to New Roles for Technicians

- **Automation**

- Rise of new technologies that automate many dispensing and preparation functions

- **Financial Drivers**

- Organizations are incentivized to keep patients out of the hospital or to discharge them as quickly due to capitated payment models
- Ambulatory care is a significant source of revenue so very few stand-alone hospitals exist; most are now integrated health systems
- With ever-rising pharmaceutical costs, prior authorizations and patient assistance programs are necessary to ensure medication affordability for patients but the workflows are highly manual

- **Compliance Needs**

- Title 22 mandates crash cart checks and clinic inspections
- Enhanced USP <795/797/800> chapters increased compliance requirements to meet compounding standards
- DEA is becoming increasingly stringent with enforcement of controlled substance regulations
- Many organizations now qualify for 340B, a national drug discount program, which requires significant monitoring and compliance

Health System Operations

Procurement, Drug Preparation, & Dispensing

- Place medication orders to wholesaler
- Receive and restock medications in accordance with DSCSA
- Compounding: sterile & non-sterile
- Load & restock automated dispensing cabinets
- Utilize Tech-check-Tech to check packaged medications
- Utilize Kitcheck to prepare OR boxes and anesthesia workstation tray exchange
- Chain of Custody Technicians provide white-glove service to assigned floors/units
 - Triage MAR messages
 - Time drips/perform drip rounds
 - Troubleshoot missing medications and deliver medications

Clinical Support & Medication Access

- Collect medication histories
- Submit prior authorization for patients
- Investigate prescription benefit coverage for patients
- Explore and enroll patients in patient assistance programs

Automation & Analytics

- Operate & troubleshoot pharmacy automation systems
- Develop and monitor ADC reports to optimize inventory and limit waste
- Operate automation for prepacking, and drug storage
- Leverage inventory management systems to streamline inventory management and support more efficient procurement practices

Compliance & Business Operations

Title 22 & USP Compliance

- Perform crash cart checks
- Perform enterprise-wide clinic inspections
- Provide sterile & non-sterile compounding education, competency testing, and surveillance

Controlled Substance Diversion Prevention

- Perform surveillance utilizing diversion prevention tools/software
- Perform controlled substance reconciliation

340B/Finance, Revenue Cycle, Contracting

- Maintain charge master
- Review, negotiate, and optimize contracts
- Report relevant financial metrics to the organization (e.g. unit of service)
- Support billing integrity & compliance
- Support submission of waste billing claims to CMS
- Perform 340B compliance audits

**The Future is
Bright!**

