

**Ignite Your  
Passion**

**Exploring  
Career  
Pathways**



At the conclusion of this presentation, I hope you are excited about the many opportunities out there for pharmacy technicians and:

1. Think about what your key strengths and interests are and how you can pivot towards a path that utilizes these and fuels your sense of purpose.
2. Identify the many opportunities for pharmacy technicians beyond the traditional dispensary roles.
3. Know what beginning steps you can take towards creating a fulfilling career path. Great resources and mentors can make all the difference!



# Presenter Disclosure:

I, Melissa Murach

Have no current or past relationships with commercial entities.

I have received a speaker's fee from PTSA for this presentation.



# Commercial Support Disclosure

This presentation has received no financial support from any other organization or commercial entity



Are you fulfilled in your job?

Have you found purposeful meaning  
to your daily work?

Looking for a new challenge?







There are many different career paths available to you if you have training as a pharmacy technician.

We are going to explore just some of these alternative pathways and hopefully ignite your passion to learn more and use your strengths for a lifelong career that excites you and gives you purpose!



Retail is the most creative and progressive for growth opportunities! There are multiple technician roles in direct patient care.

- immunizations, medication synchronization, point-of-care testing, remote therapeutic monitoring, and tele-health/tele-pharmacy.



# Automation

Some of the major types of pharmacy automation systems:

- Automated pharmacy prescription dispensing systems
- Automated packaging and labelling
- Table-top tablet counters
- Automated compounding systems
- Automated checking/verification machines
- In-Home auto dispensing machines (for example the Karie device)
- Narcotic Dispensing Cabinets (Inventory Control)
- FluidDose unit cup machine
- Diana (IV Compound packaging machines)



**A pharmacy technician can become an expert at these technologies and have several pathways within this expertise – from becoming a machine maintenance technician or an educational trainer for the companies who make them, to an IT/helpdesk service technician for the pharmacy chain to an information technologist who helps with set up maintenance and coding of these technologies.**





# EDUCATION

Pharmacy Technician Programs

Pharmacy Assistant Programs

Preceptors

Nurse/HCA Educators



Content Writer

# **Reimbursement/ Client Care (Specialist**



Claims Specialist

# Patient Advocate

A patient advocate helps people who need medical care complete the tasks they need to receive treatment. Patient advocates can bring patients to doctor's appointments, facilitate communication between a patient and their insurance company and interview new patients to determine which types of care they might need. A patient advocate can also refer patients to specialists or particular physicians who they think can best treat the patients' conditions.

# Medical Receptionist

A medical receptionist facilitates communication across a health care facility, such as a hospital or private practice. Medical receptionists can welcome patients when they arrive at a hospital, process patient records and payments using a computer and gather additional information from patients using intake forms. A medical receptionist can also answer and redirect phone calls to the necessary people or departments within a facility.



# Medical Assistant

A medical assistant offers support to professionals in the clinical and administrative areas of a medical facility. Medical assistants can organize forms like billing documents and patient records, conduct diagnostic tests on samples from patients and confirm refills for patients who need prescriptions. A medical assistant can also sometimes perform physical examinations on patients. If you want to take your medical career to the next level in terms of being more hands-on with patients, a patient care technician job might be perfect for you. Patient care technicians support medical staff including nurses and doctors as they care for patients. The job involves roles from other healthcare fields like phlebotomy and respiratory care. Patient care technicians will observe patients and catalog their needs to ensure their comfort. In some facilities, a patient care technician may also take patient calls to answer questions and solve problems. As a patient care technician, you may be required to use pharmaceutical and pharmacological knowledge that you gained as a pharmacy technician as well as interpersonal skills. You will be required to take a short training course and be certified.

# Pharmaceutical Sales Representative

A pharmaceutical sales representative visits health care facilities/pharmacies to sell new medications and products to doctors/pharmacies. Pharmaceutical sales representatives can meet with doctors/pharmacy managers to inform them about the medications they sell, process orders for doctors/pharmacies who decide to purchase medication from them and answer questions about the products they have. A pharmaceutical sales representative typically travels frequently to visit facilities in different locations. Sales is a great opportunity for those who really like to work with people on a day to day interaction. There are plenty of opportunities in sales, not only dealing with sales of compounding, but also devices, equipment, and in some cases, there are products that are used for educational purposes – companies who make products for education and will sell it to long term care facilities, or even compounding pharmacies who sell with a large patient base.

# Customer Service Representative

The focus of your job as a customer service representative will be to ensure that the customer has a positive experience. The customer service skills that are essential for work as a pharmacy technician will serve you in pretty much every other retail job. The inventory or services that your employer offers may be different from those of a pharmacy but the requirements of the job will be the same. In customer service positions, you will be required to interact with customers in person, on the phone and via email. Customer service representatives will need to be able to provide accurate and timely information while being polite and friendly. Employers may find the technical skills that you gained on the job as a pharmacy technician useful. Most customer service jobs will not require you to seek additional training.



# Inventory Control / Procurement / Supply Chain Positions

A pharmacy supply chain manager or procurement specialist is also known as a pharmacy purchasing agent or pharmacy purchaser. Your job will be to ensure that the right amount of inventory is purchased for your employer. To do this, you will need to manage orders for drugs and medical equipment from the wholesalers. The pharmacy buyer role will require skills that you use every day as a pharmacy technician. For example, you will learn which medications to purchase in high volumes which you only need to stock in small amounts. Other skills that you will need as a buyer include the ability to work as part of a team and to analyze data. You must be able to interact with staff and to use purchasing database systems.

# REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE / QUALITY ASSURANCE LEAD

Quality Assurance has become a big focus for pharmacies. Key responsibilities for this type of position include assessing the pharmacy operations and systems to be sure they are operating within all regulatory needs as well as the quality and safety of the medication and services. Making sure all licenses and documents are updated and in place. You may need to further train pharmacy staff to ensure safe, effective, and responsible pharmacy practice; and help to develop and implement educational programs and tools to promote quality assurance and quality improvement initiatives. Budgets are increasing to hire professionals for quality assurance, in particular in the compounding and specialty pharmacy industries. Although you will need to learn and keep up to date on all practice standards and laws for your region.

If you have a lot of knowledge and experience in sterile compounding you may be a great candidate for helping pharmacies to ensure the regulatory compliance is met for their compounding practices.

Having experience in patient safety, quality assurance, root-cause analysis, training, and education will also be beneficial as you can help with quality assurance initiatives. You will investigate and report medication incidents and near misses – to your team, nursing staff, medication safety advisory committees, etc.

# A PHARMACY PRACTICE CONSULTANT

is similar to the job above but externally (not as a part of the pharmacy team) as you would be working for ACP or another jurisdictions regulatory body performing the practice and operations assessments and inspections to ensure compliance with legislation, standards, and the Code of Ethics, and develop practice change goals to address deficiencies. You would be provide pharmacy consultations which include:

- conducting assessments and inspections of pharmacy practice and operations to ensure compliance with legislation and standards;
- documenting assessment and inspection findings through written reports;
- identifying and evaluating sources, events, and trends within the pharmacy practice that may negatively affect quality practice such as operational systems, human resources, and the general practice environment;
- reporting to a director any events, occurrences, sources, and trends in pharmacies that may affect quality practice;
- promoting a culture of patient safety and continuous quality improvement by educating licensees, their pharmacy staff, and management teams, regarding legislation, practice standards or guidelines; and
- collaborating with licensees and pharmacy staff on developing practice change goals that address areas of improvement identified through the assessment of the pharmacy.

# OPERATIONS / MANAGER POSITIONS

Increasingly, pharmacy technicians are finding themselves in lead, supervisory and managerial roles. Being able to operate a pharmacy at its highest effectiveness is leading to more and more technicians finding educational opportunities to become a lead or supervisor or a manager, and more technicians are starting to fill those roles instead of pharmacists. There are now many pharmacy managers and even owners of pharmacies which are regulated technicians.



Pharmacy operations managers need the following skills in order to be successful:

**Leadership:** Leadership skills allow you to motivate and inspire others to work toward common goals. As a pharmacy operations manager, you may be responsible for overseeing a team of pharmacy technicians and pharmacists. Leadership skills can help you to motivate your team and encourage them to work hard to achieve company goals.

**Communication:** Pharmacy operations managers communicate with many different people in their roles, including other managers, employees, suppliers, customers and regulators. Effective communication is an important skill for any manager to have, as it allows them to convey information to their teams and help them understand their expectations. It also allows managers to receive feedback from their teams and understand how they can improve their leadership.

**Decision-making:** Pharmacy operations managers make decisions on a daily basis, and their ability to make effective decisions can impact the success of their job. Your decision-making skills can help you make the best choices for your team, your company and your patients. You can use your decision-making skills to make important decisions about inventory, staff, marketing and other business-related topics.

**Problem-solving:** Pharmacy operations managers are responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a pharmacy. This includes ensuring that the pharmacy is meeting its goals and objectives. Pharmacy operations managers use their problem-solving skills to identify issues and develop solutions to ensure the pharmacy continues to operate smoothly.

**Organization:** A strong organizational skill set can help you manage the day-to-day operations of a pharmacy. You can use organization skills to manage inventory, track sales data and maintain employee records. Organization skills can also help you delegate tasks to other members of your team.

## Pharmacy Delivery Driver

Do you enjoy driving and have a good driving record? The position of pharmacy delivery driver might be a great option for your second career. You will be responsible for delivering medications to pharmacy customers within the service area. Elements of your pharmacy technician role will be important for this job as well. You should be proficient with paperwork and have solid interpersonal skills since you will be interacting with customers when making your deliveries.



## MARKETING

Pharmacy technicians are able to find themselves in a role with compounding pharmacies or pharmacies in general, across the nation now, as there are more facilities who are looking to advertise and expand their business. Having a pharmacy technician who has a background in web page development or marketing greatly helps and expands their ability to go out, market new customers, and bring in new patients. It's much more difficult for a web page designer who has no knowledge of the pharmacy industry to build websites or complete marketing for pharmacies, as many organizations have to meet guidelines when they are marketing. So, it's much easier for facilities to find technicians who have a pharmacy background and understand the laws when it comes to marketing of medications and services.

# VETERINARIAN

This is a market that many technicians aren't aware of. For those who don't necessarily like working with humans on a day to day interaction, they may find that veterinarian is a better space for them. There's compounding cells, regulatory and compliance, and in some cases, patient care. A pharmacy technician who is looking to work with animals can also work at getting a certification as a veterinary technician and may be dual certified as a pharmacy technician. When it comes to regulatory and compliance, their compliance and regulatory is quite different than the human market but with some further learning and education it might provide a great career choice for someone who loves working with animals.

# CANNABIS

The cannabis industry is an ever-growing market. There are legal, regulatory, and compliance opportunities for pharmacy technicians in this field with regards to the medical cannabis prescribing and distribution from the manufacturer. Although pharmacies cannot carry or distribute the products as of yet, you may be interested in working as a certified cannabis worker within the retail dispensary sector of the cannabis industry. Educating and helping clients with their decisions on products and dispensing them. There is much to learn in both retail and the medical cannabis fields.



**Lastly in today's society where many people are looking for remote positions I know you want to know - CAN A PHARMACY TECHNICIAN WORK FROM HOME?**

Absolutely. You can work as a remote pharmacy tech and while you won't be performing in-person transactions, you will still be responsible for other aspects of the job such as taking calls from customers and providing answers to questions. You may also have to coordinate with medical facilities and physicians' offices, pharmacy and information technology teams. There are other medical related jobs like medical biller/coder, transcriptionist or advisor that you can perform from home and that can make use of your skills and qualifications as a pharmacy technician.

In my company we currently have remote pharmacy technician in roles such as data entry, batch billing and insurance claim specialists, incident reporting, pacvision validation (remote checking of the accuracy of pouches), new business development projects, training and development content writers, Standards of Operation writers, technology team members and trainers.



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

The field of pharmacy has expanded over the last two decades with the introduction of new rules, regulations, and technology and the expansion of pharmacy technician roles and responsibilities.

This expansion of pharmacy has created new opportunities in nontraditional pharmacy fields, which require pharmacy technicians to continue to evolve. Through additional training and education, pharmacy technicians are open to explore the many alternative career options out there.

### *References / Images used:*

*PharmcanFreeCE.com/FreeCE: Exploring Alternative Career Paths for Pharmacy Technicians by Devin Wallace; Job Descriptions taken from: jobbank.gc.ca, Alberta Health Services-Career Job Descriptions, LinkedIn.com/Jobs, Neova Technologies Inc Job Descriptions, ResumeWorld/Career Profiles, abpharmacy.ca/careers, indeed.com/job descriptions, RXA.ca, CAPT Newsletters, CareRx.ca/Careers; ChatGP-OpenAI, FotorAI Image Generator & my own Photos and written words/job descriptions.*

**Thank You!**





