

# Technician Training and Roles in Institutional Pharmacy Practice

Cindy Wilson, Pharm.D.  
Harborview Medical Center

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Learning Objectives

- Understand laws regarding technician training, certification, licensure, and utilization
- Review types of training programs
- Understand role of technicians in institutional pharmacy

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Legal definitions

- "Pharmacy technician" is
  - (a) A person who is enrolled in, or who has satisfactorily completed, a board approved training program...or
  - (b) A person who is a graduate with a degree in pharmacy or medicine of a foreign school, university, or college recognized by the board
- "Pharmacy assistant" is a person registered by the board to perform limited functions in the pharmacy

RCW 18.64A.010

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## May I see your license and registration?

- Licensure = Agency of government grants permission to engage in a given occupation once the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency necessary to ensure that the public health, safety, and welfare will be reasonably well protected. Technicians are licensed by the state.
- Certification = Non-governmental agency or association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that agency or association (accreditation refers to an institution). Technicians are certified by their training site.
- Registration = to make or secure official entry of in a register. So, registration with the State means you are on their list of persons operating as an assistant. Assistants are registered.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## It's the law...

The board shall adopt...rules governing the extent to which pharmacy ancillary personnel may perform services associated with the practice of pharmacy. These rules shall provide for the certification of pharmacy technicians by the department....

RCW 18.64A.030

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## It's the law...

Pharmacy assistants may perform, under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist, duties including but not limited to, typing of prescription labels, filing, refiling, bookkeeping, pricing, stocking, delivery, nonprofessional phone inquiries, and documentation of third party reimbursements and other such duties and subject to such restrictions as the board may by rule adopt.

RCW 18.64A.030

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## It's the law...

Pharmacy Technicians may assist in performing, under the supervision and control of a licensed pharmacist, manipulative, **nondiscretionary** functions associated with the practice of pharmacy

RCW 18.64A.030

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Pharmacist's Responsibility

...the pharmacy or pharmacist shall retain responsibility for any act performed by pharmacy ancillary personnel in the course of employment.

RCW 18.64A.080

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Pharmacist : Technician

- ...no pharmacist may supervise more than one pharmacy technician...
- **EXCEPT** In the preparation of medicine or other materials used by patients within the facility, one pharmacist supervising no more than three pharmacy technicians

RCW 18.64A.040

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Pharmacy Assistants

- The pharmacy assistant may assist a pharmacist in performance of all tasks *except* those reserved to the pharmacist and pharmacy technician.
- Pharmacy ancillary personnel may record or provide medication data when *no interpretation* is required.

WAC 246-901-020

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Pharmacy Assistants

- May prepackage and label drugs for subsequent use in dispensing operations
- May count, pour, and label for individual prescriptions
- May stock medications
- Billing
- Clerical work
- Deliver medications

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Pharmacy Technicians may...

- perform certain **nondiscretionary** and specialized functions consistent with their training in pharmacy practice while under the immediate supervision of a licensed pharmacist
- perform entry of a new medication order into the pharmacy computer system and retrieval of the drug product to fill a prescription are tasks reserved to the pharmacist and pharmacy technician
- assist a pharmacist in the performance of all tasks *except those reserved to a pharmacist*

WAC 246-901-020

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**A pharmacist shall not delegate...  
professional responsibilities**

- Consultation with patients & providers
- Receipt of verbal order, other than refill authorization
- Professional judgment
- Interpretation of data
- Ultimate responsibility for all aspects of completed prescription
- Professional communications with providers
- Dispensing to patients with proper information

WAC 246-863-095

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What *can* technicians do?**

- Prescription preparation
- Compounding
- Computer entry of new order
- Retrieval of drug products
- Medication inventory management
- Information management when no interpretation is required
- Training

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What *can't* technicians do?**

- Receive verbal orders for prescriptions
- Consult with patients or providers, *except* providing information not requiring professional judgment like dates of refills or prescription price information
- Consult with providers regarding patients, *except* interpret data in patient medical record
- Final check on completed prescriptions

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Training requirements

- Pharmacy technicians must obtain education or training from one of the following:
  - Formal academic program
  - On-the-job training program
- The minimum educational prerequisite for entering a training program shall be high school graduation or G.E.D
- An out-of-state pharmacy technician applicant must meet the same requirements as a pharmacy technician trained in this state
- Applicants whose academic training has been obtained in foreign countries shall meet certification requirements

WAC 246-901-030

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Training requirements

Pharmacy technician and assistant applicants must complete four clock hours of AIDS education

WAC 246-901-120

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Technician training programs

- Community Colleges (NSCC, Edmonds CC)
- Trade/Technical Schools (PIMA, Bryman)
- Military
- On-the-job training (Board approved programs)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Basic competencies for technician training programs

- Chemistry & Pharmacology
- Drug info: classes, names (brand & generic), dosages, dosage forms, routes, etc.
- Interpretation of prescriptions
- Drug preparation & distribution

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Basic competencies for technician training programs

- Inventory control
- Safety and infection control procedures
- Pharmacy law
- Communication skills
- Professional development

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## American Society of Health-System Pharmacists

ASHP Technical Assistance Bulletin on Outcome Competencies and Training Guidelines....

- Outcome competencies and training guidelines for institutional pharmacy technician training programs
- Contains 11 primary objectives
- Intended to be general enough that the trained technician can function well in most hospital settings

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **American Society of Health-System Pharmacists**

- Model Curriculum for Technician Training
  - Developed in collaboration with APhA, National Assoc. of Drug Store Chains, two national technician groups
- ASHP accreditation of technician training programs
  - Over 90 programs accredited
  - 3 in Washington

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **National Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam**

Closed book exam of 125 multiple choice questions covering:

- Assisting pharmacist in serving patients (50%)
- Medication distribution & inventory control systems (35%)
- Operations, including administrative activities like human resources & information systems (15%)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Specialized and developing roles**

- Investigational Drug Services
- Unit-dose medication checking (tech-check-tech)
- Automation system managers
- Unit Pharmacy Technicians (UPT's)
- Pharmacy Benefits Managers (PBM's)
- Computer information systems
- Billing specialists

---

---

---

---

---

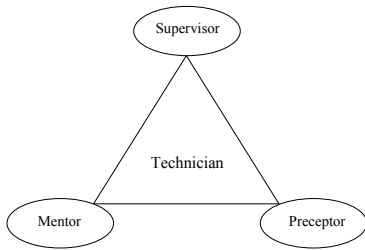
---

---

---



## Pharmacist–Technician Relationship



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---