

Pharmacy Technicians

Own your role in patient safety

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The Technician's Role in Workplace Environment & Patient Safety

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Learning Objectives:

At the completion of this program, the attentive pharmacy technician should be able to:

1. List at least 3 workplace safety issues appropriately addressed by the pharmacy technician
2. Describe how an unsafe workplace can jeopardize patient safety
3. Recognize that safety is an on-going issue



True / False

Pharmacy Technicians are legally allowed to use judgement when working in the pharmacy or hospital?



Own your role in patient safety

The safety of the patient is our job

If patient safety isn't at the center of every decision, we have lost our vision

Who has a better view of the situation than the pharmacy technician?



Considerations:

Poor workflow

Poor communications

Unnecessary distractions

Unsafe conditions -

if you aren't safe, your patients cannot possibly be safe



Work Flow

Is it logical?

Where does the system fail most often?

Can that be changed?



Communications

What does your shift hand-off look like?

Is this a formal process?

Where are longitudinal communications maintained?

Does everyone document the same way? In the same place?



A proper shift to shift hand off

1. Organized and systematic
2. Reproducible from shift to shift & from person to person
3. Complete
4. Valued



Distractions

Patients

Phones

Order delivery

Overhead announcements / music

Doctors / nurses / management

Cell phones

Chatter

Employee training or other obligations



Unnecessary Distractions

Those things that can be removed from the patient care area or unnecessary distractions!

If you cannot remove them, can you mitigate them?



So.... That judgment question?



**Some solutions require
creativity**



Some are obvious



You fixed a problem

Does it stay fixed?



Pharmacists want your help!



APhA Stepping up for all of us

Sufficient Staffing

Performance metrics based on patient care

Teamwork approach to improving safety



Own your role in patient safety

Be a part of the solution - always

Advocate for the patient - always

Weird scientist humor:
If you aren't a part of the solution,
you're a part of the precipitate

The lead in the water in Flint, MI
is precipitate



Multiple Choice Questions

When are pharmacy technicians allowed to use judgement at work?

- A. When it is a business decision, but not a patient care decision
- B. Never, judgement is for pharmacists only
- C. When running the cash-register
- D. Pharmacy technicians are always expected to use judgement, the problem is the definition of "professional judgement"



Which is a common pharmacy distraction?

- A. Unauthorized people in the pharmacy
- B. Ringing phones
- C. Poorly organized inventory
- D. Drug diversion



What are the key elements of a shift change?

- A. An appropriate hand-off of information
- B. Clear arrival and departure protocols
- C. Timeliness
- D. All of these are important



What is an “unnecessary” distraction?

- A. A distraction that can be moved or eliminated
- B. A distraction caused by upset patients or customers
- C. A distraction caused by unnecessary management requirements
- D. A distraction that you cannot control



Which of the following is necessary for patient safety?

- A. Attention to detail
- B. Planning
- C. Awareness
- D. Communication
- E. All of the above



Resources & References

Expert Panel

Kenneth Baker, RP, JD

Charles Krobot, PharmD, RP

Judy Neville, CPhT

Jeff Hines, RP

Scholarly Articles

*Odukoya OK, Schleiden LJ, Chui MA. The Hidden Role of Community Pharmacy Technicians in Ensuring Patient Safety with the Use of E-Prescribing. Kayyali R, ed. *Pharmacy: Journal of Pharmacy, Education and Practice*. 2015;3(4):330-343. doi:10.3390/pharmacy3040330.

*Fabilli NA and Powers MF. Roles for Pharmacy Technicians in Medication Reconciliation During Transitions of Care. *Journey of Pharmacy Technology* Volume:33 issue: 1, pages: 3-7.

*Kjos AL and Andreski M. Pharmacy technician's attitudes about their roles in Iowa public safety. *JPhA*. Volume 55, Issue 5, Sep-Oct 2015, pp 493-502



Policy Statements from APhA Adopted March 2018

APhA Supports staffing models that promote safe provision of patient care services and access to medications

APhA encourages the adoption of patient-centered quality and performance measures that align with safe delivery of patient care services, and opposes the setting and use of operational quotas or time-oriented metrics that negatively impact patient care and safety

APhA denounces any policies or practices of third-party administrators, processors, and payers that contribute to a workplace environment that negatively impact patient safety. APhA calls upon public and private policy makers to establish provider payment policies that support the safe provision of medications and delivery of effective patient care

APhA urges pharmacy practice employers to establish collaborative mechanisms that engage the pharmacist-in-charge of each practice, pharmacists, PHARMACY TECHNICIANS, and pharmacy staff in addressing workplace issues that may have an impact on patient safety



APhA Policy Statements cont.

APhA urges employers to collaborate with pharmacy staff to regularly and systematically examine and resolve workplace issues that may negatively have an impact on patient safety

APhA opposes retaliation against pharmacy staff for reporting workplace issues that may negatively impact patient safety



FYI

