

Career Profile PHARMACIST

What is a Pharmacist? – Career Description/Scope

A Pharmacist is a regulated health professional who is professionally trained and is a trusted and valued member of the healthcare team. Pharmacists work closely with patients, physicians, nurses, and other health professionals to ensure that medication use is safe and effective, by:

- partnering with patients to help them achieve their desired health goals and outcomes
- contributing to the development of treatment plans through participation in patient care rounds
- liaising with other healthcare providers to enable smooth transitions of care as patients move from one place of care to another, such as from hospital to home
- working with the patient and others (e.g., healthcare providers, insurance companies) to help patients obtain medications after discharge
- recommending alternative therapies and dosage forms for patients
- educating pharmacy students and other healthcare professionals
- conducting and supporting research

Education Requirements to Work in Ontario

- Pre-requisites
 - Cumulative university average of at least 70%
 - Successfully completed all prerequisite courses (English, Physics, Biology, Introductory Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Physical Chemistry, Biochemistry, Calculus, Statistics, Humanities/Social Sciences)
 - Complete College admission test and application interviews
- Length of education
 - Four years of Pharmacy University Education
 - Optional 1 year Hospital Residency
- Composition of education
 - In class courses
 - 50 weeks of Practical Experiential program
- Type of degree
 - Doctor of Pharmacy Degree (Pharm D)

Pharmacist Practice Requirements

To practice in Ontario, Pharmacists must be registered with the Ontario College of Pharmacists and perform the following requirements:

- Entry to Practice
 - Internship
 - National licensing exam
 - Jurisprudence exam
 - Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada qualifying exam

- Ongoing
 - Lifelong learning portfolio
 - College practice review – Review of learning portfolio, written examination, multiple mini interview scenarios

How does a Pharmacist Practice at TBRHSC?

- Works to scope of practice as outlined by various legislation and authorities including:
 - Ontario College of Pharmacists
 - National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA)
 - Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)
 - Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (CSHP)
 - Pharmacy Act
 - Public Hospitals Act
- In addition, may work under delegation through medical directives or direct orders

What does a Pharmacist Do?

Drug Information

- Provide the patient and the healthcare team with up-to-date drug information
- Answer requests for drug information. Topics include:
 - current approaches to therapy
 - clinical alternatives (e.g., in response to drug shortages)
 - compatibility and stability of drugs given by injection

Medication Safety

- Analyze data about medication incidents
- Share information to help prevent medication incidents
- Teach patients how to take their medication, monitor how it is working for them, and manage any adverse effects
- Follow up with discharged patients, particularly those with complex medication plans
- Ensure that drug therapy decisions are safe and appropriate

Drug Use Evaluation

- Study patterns of medication use (in terms of safety, effectiveness, and economics)
- Develop, implement and evaluate practice changes that promote safe, appropriate, and cost-effective drug use
- Evaluate each patient's medication needs on the basis of patient-specific information and best practice evidence
- Monitor, recommend or make changes to drug therapy throughout a patient's stay in hospital

Web Resources

- Ontario College of Pharmacists www.ocpinfo.com
- National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities www.napra.ca
- Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists www.cshp.ca
- Ontario Pharmacists Association www.opatoday.com
- Canadian Pharmacists Association www.pharmacists.ca