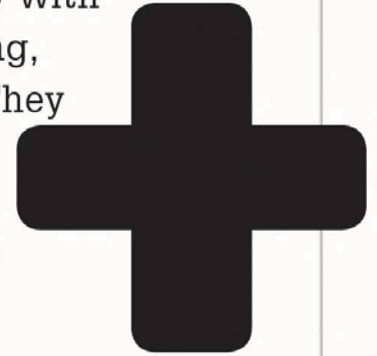


PHARMACIST



JOB DESCRIPTION

Pharmacists are responsible for the safe supply of medicines to hospital patients and the general public. They prepare medicines for use, checking the dosage, ensuring compatibility with other drugs a patient may be taking, and labeling the medicine clearly. They also counsel and give advice to customers on prescription drugs, over-the-counter products, and the treatment of minor ailments.



SALARY

Trainee pharmacist ★★★★★
Senior pharmacist ★★★★★

INDUSTRY PROFILE

Good employment opportunities • Expanding sector due to development of new medical products and increasing life expectancy, leading to rising demand for pharmaceuticals

CAREER PATHS

After a relatively lengthy training period and passing state and national exams, pharmacists can choose from a wide range of career options. Moving between the branches of pharmacy—such as clinical, hospital, or retail work—is common. Experience brings opportunities in management, sales, consultancy, research, or training.

PHARMACY ASSISTANT You can apply for jobs as a pharmacy assistant after a period of foundation-level study, but you will need a degree to become a pharmacist.



GRADUATE To obtain a license as a registered pharmacist, you need to obtain your doctor of pharmacy (PharmD) degree and complete internships for hands-on experience.



CLINICAL PHARMACIST

Works in a hospital, clinic, or doctor's surgery with other medical specialists, ensuring that patients receive the correct medication and that regulations on prescriptions are followed.



PHARMACIST As a pharmacist, you can study for postgraduate qualifications or take professional training to enhance your skills. You could choose to specialize in a particular area, such as complementary medicine, or move into research.

SKILLS GUIDE



Good communication skills to listen to patients' needs and give instructions on taking medicines.



Strong mathematical skills for using scientific formulae and making complex calculations.



Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to deal sympathetically and clearly with customers.



Good analytical skills and scientific understanding for diagnosing a patient's medication needs.



An eye for detail and a systematic approach to ensure medications are dispensed accurately.



COMMUNITY PHARMACIST Provides health care advice and dispenses or sells medications in a retail pharmacy. May also deliver medication to home-bound patients, visit care homes, and give immunizations.



INDUSTRIAL PHARMACIST Conducts research into the properties of new drugs, testing and developing products in order to bring them to market. Industrial pharmacists also perform checks to ensure that existing drugs meet safety and quality standards.



NUCLEAR PHARMACIST Specializes in preparing and dispensing radioactive drugs, which are used in hospitals and clinics to treat cancer, and to diagnose disorders.

RELATED CAREERS

- ▶ **PHARMACOLOGIST** *see pp. 140–141*
- ▶ **BIOCHEMIST** Studies chemical reactions in living organisms, proteins, cells, and DNA to understand the effects of drugs, foods, allergies, and diseases.
- ▶ **BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH SCIENTIST** Performs clinical trials and laboratory tests to research new methods for treating diseases, ailments, and health conditions.
- ▶ **HOMEOPATH** Treats physical, psychological, and emotional conditions by using natural substances to stimulate the body's natural healing processes.
- ▶ **TOXICOLOGIST** Conducts experiments to research the impact of toxic and radioactive materials on people, animals, and the environment.

AT A GLANCE



YOUR INTERESTS Medicine • Health care • Chemistry • Biology • Physics • Mathematics • Anatomy • English • Social welfare



ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS A degree in pharmacy is required, followed by study for professional qualifications needed by regulatory bodies.



LIFESTYLE Work can either be full-time or part-time. Some weekend work may be required for pharmacists who work in hospitals or in retail.



LOCATION The work is community-based, in a pharmacy or retail store, or in a hospital or clinic, either on the ward or in a dispensary.



THE REALITIES Mistakes in dispensing medication can endanger patients' health. Preparing and dispensing medicines can be repetitive in nature.