THE PHARMACY TECHNICIAN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

TABLET

Summer 2020
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Accreditation Standards for Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Programs

2020 Annual Survey

The 2020 Annual Survey will be distributed in early summer. Submission of a crosswalk will NOT be required this year – the survey will only collect demographic data. Note – the response due date will be extended to mid-July in recognition of the challenges presented by COVID-19. All programs MUST complete the survey by the designated due date to maintain accreditation.

Note: All programs currently have the ability to update their own program information in the directory with the exception of the program director and organization names. These items must be reported to asd@ashp.org as soon as possible and office staff will update the information listed as exceptions.

Most Frequently Cited Areas in Program Reviews Using the New Accreditation Standards

An analysis of the most frequently cited areas was completed following the review of the programs evaluated under the new accreditation standard at the May 2020 and October 2019 PTAC Biannual Meetings. A total of thirty-five program survey reports were analyzed and the following trends were observed.

Most Frequent Citations for Both Entry- and Advanced-level Programs[1]:

- **Standard 4.10 (Additional Key Element – Advanced-level):** Perform point-of-care testing to assist the pharmacist in assessing patient's clinical status.
- **Standards 7.2a-7.2f (Strategic Plan):** The strategic plan reflects the role of the program within the community; includes short-term and long-term program goals; has measurable objectives; has strategies for achieving the goals and objectives of the strategic plans; has a schedule for analyzing and evaluating the plan and progress on the plan; and, addresses program outcomes.
- **Standards 8.1-8.5 (Advisory Committee):** An advisory committee, comprised of a broad-based group of pharmacists, faculty, pharmacy technicians, and others as deemed appropriate, is established and meets at least twice a year. The advisory committee has specific authority for approving the curriculum; experiential training sites; criteria for admission and dismissal; criteria for successful completion of the program; and, the training program's strategic plan.
- **Standards 10.2b and 10.2c (Simulation Component):** The simulated component includes sufficient equipment and supplies for each student to realistically simulate an actual work environment and achieve the program's educational competencies; and, while each skill may be taught in isolation, by the end of the simulated component, students will be able to perform each skill in a sequential manner the way the skill is performed in an actual pharmacy setting.

- **Standard 11.6j (Information Provided to Applicants):** Information provided to applicants: graduate performance on national exams.
- **Standard 14.2c (Program Assessment):** Program assessments include program satisfaction, including student, graduate, and employer satisfaction.

[1]*Each standard was cited more than 10 times for Both Entry- and Advanced-level Programs.*

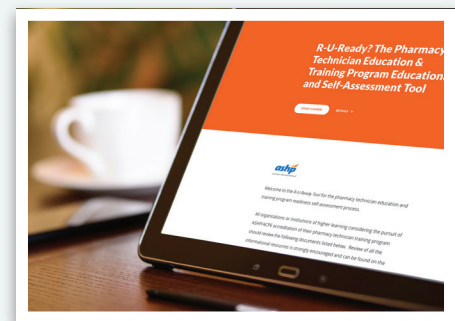Most Frequent Citations for Advanced-level Programs[2]:

- **Standard 7.2a (Strategic Plan):** The plan reflects the role of the program within the community.
- **Standard 7.2d (Strategic Plan):** The plan has strategies for achieving the goals and objectives of the strategic plans.
- **Standards 8.1-8.5 (Advisory Committee):** An advisory committee, comprised of a broad-based group of pharmacists, faculty, pharmacy technicians, and others as deemed appropriate, is established and meets at least twice a year. The advisory committee has specific authority for approving the curriculum; experiential training sites; criteria for admission and dismissal; criteria for successful completion of the program; and, the training program's strategic plan.
- **Standard 10.2b (Simulation Component):** The simulated component includes sufficient equipment and supplies for each student to realistically.

[2]*Each standard was cited 5 or more times for Advanced-level programs.*

Educational Tools for Pharmacy Education and Training Programs

R-U-Ready Tool

The R-U-Ready Tool for New Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Program Directors is now available here. The tool includes key elements of the new standard and will help new programs to identify any gap areas while also providing interpretive information.

PTAC Biannual Meeting
May 6, 2020 Bethesda, MD

Program Accreditation/Reaccreditation

The Commission reviewed survey site visit reports for 7 new programs and 12 previously accredited programs seeking reaccreditation. Midterm reports (12) and special case reports (15) were also reviewed along with 10 applications for new program directors. As of the date of the meeting, 253 programs are in the accreditation process which includes accredited programs and programs in candidate status.

Congratulations to the following programs that were granted initial accreditation or reaccreditation!

Initial Accreditation

- The Praxis Institute, Miami, FL
- Schoolcraft College, Livonia, MI
- Central Community College, Grand Island, NE
- Warren County Career Center, Middleton, OH
- Avera Health, Sioux Falls, SD
- Health Mart Systems, Inc., Irving, TX
- Utah State University Blanding, Blanding, UT

Reaccreditation

- North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene, ID
- Louisiana State University at Alexandria, Alexandria, LA
- Northland Community and Technical College, East Grand Forks, MN
- Jones County Junior College, Ellisville, MS
- Cape Fear Community College, Wilmington, NC
- Davidson County Community College, Lexington, NC
- Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Asheville, NC
- Bidwell Training Center, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA
- Fortis Institute – Cookeville, Cookeville, TN
- San Jacinto College, North, Houston, TX
- San Jacinto College, South, Houston, TX
- Mountwest Community and Technical College, Huntington, WV

COVID-19 Pandemic Update

Lisa Lifshin, senior director, pharmacy technician program accreditation and residency services with ASHP provided an update on the standards-related issues that began to arise in early March as programs were faced with a variety of challenges in delivering some of their program's experiential components. Due to the physical closure of some colleges, it began to be challenging to meet the experiential hours' requirements for both entry- and advanced-level programs. Initial decisions included accepting 75% fulfillment of required experiential hours for entry level programs as meeting the intent of the standard. For advanced level programs, students must complete 100% of their first rotation and 50% of the second. Didactic work could continue virtually and "lab in a box" offerings would be considered. The option of graduating some students currently enrolled in advanced level programs with an entry level certificate was offered as an option for those programs who could not fulfill the experiential requirements due to decreased access to practice sites. Other creative options included incorporating retail sites who were actively hiring pharmacy technicians as rotation sites which enables both the fulfillment of experiential requirements while providing students with potential job opportunities upon completion of the program.

Lisa also provided updates on the development of a virtual survey process which she is co-leading with another ASHP staff member. The basic concepts of the process will be applied to both pharmacy technician and post-graduate residency programs.

Update on High School and Health-system Programs

Lisa Lifshin provided and update on her work with the Commonwealth of Virginia and the development of a career path for high school students to become pharmacy technicians through joint ventures with community colleges or others. Pharmacy technicians in Virginia will be required to complete an accredited program to become a pharmacy technician in the Commonwealth of Virginia beginning in 2022.

Lisa also reported on the growing number of programs being developed within health systems. There are many models for these programs including tuition-based, combination of tuition assistance from the hospital and student-pay, free tuition in exchange for time commitment upon completion, and seeking external funding. Some health systems also offer participation in an accredited program to internal candidates (both for students and technician preceptors) that can be used as part of career ladder and/or retention program initiatives.

Legislative Updates

Janet Silvester, vice president of the Accreditation Services Office, provided an update on her participation in the New Hampshire Board of Pharmacy working group which is developing rules for a new category of licensure – Licensed Advanced Pharmacy Technician (LAPT). An LAPT would have some independent practice for which they would be accountable. The workgroup is looking at defining the scope of practice for the LAPT. In New Hampshire there will be three levels of pharmacy technician: registered, certified, and licensed advanced. The full process for implementation is still in discussion and a proposal to incorporate advanced level technician training and education program content as a prerequisite to take New Hampshire's licensing test which is different than the PTCB test.

Other legislative areas that are being monitored include states that are relaxing some requirements and allowing practice across state lines, issuing temporary licenses, and changing required pharmacy technician to pharmacist ratios which may have an impact on employment.

The Role of Pharmacy Technicians in Public Health

Michael Diamond provide a perspective on the opportunities for expansion of the roles of pharmacy technicians due to the gaps in care that may occur due to labor shortages. Potential roles for pharmacy technicians include those in community education, training to provide public health information, assisting in point of care testing, contact tracing, and other outpatient services.

PTAC Board Members

- Barbara Lacher, BS, RPHTECH, CPHT Chair
- Charles E. Daniels, PhD Vice Chair
- Donna S. Wall, BCPS, FASHP Past Chair
- Michael Diamond, MSc
- Barbara Giacomelli, PharmD, MBA
- Denise Frank, BS Pharm, FACA
- Janet Kozakiewicz, MS, PharmD, FASHP
- Jeannie Pappas, RPT, CPhT
- Matthew A. Rewald, CPhT
- Tate N. Trujillo, PharmD, BCPS, FASHP, FCCM
- Lisa S. Lifshin, BS Pharm, ASHP, PTAC Secretary (non-voting)
- LIAISON TO ACPE BOARD OF DIRECTORS- Amy L. Seybert, PharmD, FASHP, FCCP, CHSE (non-voting)
- LIAISON TO ASHP BOARD OF DIRECTORS - Thomas J. Johnson, PharmD, M.B.A., BCCCP, BCPS, FASHP, FCCM, ASHP's President-elect (non-voting)

The next PTAC meeting is scheduled for October 27-28, 2020 in Bethesda, Maryland.

PTEC Updates

Annual Conference

The PTEC Annual Conference will be held virtually July 21-25, 2020. More information can be found at the conference registration page: https://www.pharmacytecheducators.com/2020-conference

Weekly ZOOM Meetings - COVID-19

PTEC began hosting weekly "Tuesday Zoom with PTEC" meetings on April 7, 2020 during which members discuss tips, tricks, and adaptations for their Virtual Classrooms. The link to register along with recorded videos from past sessions can be found here: https://www.pharmacytecheducators.com/covid-19

PTCB Updates

On April 14, 2020, PTCB announced that it will begin to offer proctored, online exams during the COVID-19 pandemic. More information can be found at the following links:

https://www.ptcb.org/news/ptcb-will-offer-online-proctored-exam-delivery-during-covid-19-pandemic

https://www.ptcb.org/news/ptcb-offers-online-testing-for-first-time-in-its-history

COVID-19-related Questions and Answers (reprinted from April issue)

Q: My college is closing, how can I conduct my program?

A: Didactic coursework may be offered virtually (online). Program directors may provide simulation products to students to take home and prepare compounds and simulated prescriptions at home with a Skype or other form of virtual assessment by the program director or other instructor during the COVID-19 pandemic. If possible, externship rotations may continue as usual.

Q: Externship sites are no longer allowing students to come for their rotations, what should I do?

A: During the COVID-19 pandemic, 75% completion of externship hours for one rotation will be accepted for completion of the experience for Entry Level programs. For the Advanced Level programs, students will need to complete 100 % of the first rotation and at least 50% of the second rotation.

Q: If my college offers both Entry level program and Advanced Level programs, can students graduate from an Entry level program even if they have signed up for an Advanced program if they have completed all of the requirements for an Entry level program?

A: Yes. The student may be awarded the Entry Level certificate of graduation and come back to complete the program for Advanced level graduation after the COVID-19 pandemic is over.

Q: My student went on Spring Break and is now quarantined and they will miss 14 days of school.

A: Go by the college's policy and your policy regarding leave of absence. The student must still successfully complete and pass the key elements and standards for graduation for the program.

Q: If your school is still open, and you would like to be considered to offer the simulation of externship in your simulation lab, only during this time, follow these guidelines. My college is staying open and I have a full lab. My externship sites are not allowing students to complete their rotations. Can I extend my simulation hours and provide externship activities in my lab?

A: Yes, you may offer simulation experiences in your lab per the following guidelines:

1. The simulation hours at the school's lab must be equal to the number of hours that were to be completed at the externship site; AND

2. the simulation experience must be in the same type of pharmacy setting in which the student's externship was scheduled; AND

3. the same key elements of the standard that were to be evaluated at the externship site must be evaluated.

Please contact Lisa Lifshin (contact information below) to discuss proposed scenarios and plans prior to undertaking this process for your program.

Updates will be emailed to program directors as they happen. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Accreditation Offices Staff (asd@ashp.org and 301-664-8835) or Lisa Lifshin (llifshin@ashp.org and 301-664-8720).

Midyear Clinical Meeting 2020 December 6-10, 2020, New Orleans, LA

Plans for the 2020 Midyear Clinical Meeting in New Orleans are on track to again provide over 50 pharmacy technician-specific continuing education (CE) programs. More information will be available in the coming months.

ASHP Pharmacy Technician Forum

As a reminder, ASHP technician members are automatically enrolled in the ASHP Pharmacy Technician Forum and will receive the following ASHP benefits:

- Access to PharmacyTechCE.org, which offers more than 40 hours of T-designated CE to meet requirements of PTCB certification, including law and medication safety
- A dedicated online resource center featuring valuable tools and information to help advance the technician profession at https://www.ashp.org/
- Exclusive access to technician-specific web resources and webinars
- Unlimited digital access to the world's premier pharmacy journal, AJHP—including the AJHP Pharmacy Technician Collection
- Free membership to any or all ASHP Sections
- Specialized email NewsLinks featuring technician-focused news and information
- A dedicated online technician community on ASHP Connect
- Exclusive member discounts on ASHP meeting registrations, publications and other products

Please share this information with your technician colleagues, and let them know to sign up for complimentary Technician NewsLinks to stay up to date with new developments from the Pharmacy Technician Forum.

To learn more about the ASHP Pharmacy Technician Forum visit www.ashp.org/technicians. Answers to commonly asked questions can be found in the FAQ section.

American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
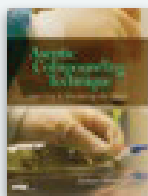
Products and Services

Earn an ASHP Professional Certificate in Sterile Product Preparation Training

This Professional Certificate program develops the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare sterile products safely and effectively. Participants will learn the history and evolution of aseptic processing as it relates to today's practice standards and will be taught the behaviors and skills required of all personnel engaged in compounding sterile products. The program reflects all pending changes associated with USP Chapter <797> and USP Chapter <800> has eight modules, provides 17.25 CE hours for pharmacists and technicians.
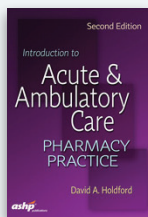
Learning and Mastering Pharmaceutical Calculations by Nicholas Ferencz

A valuable supplement to any pharmacy math course or textbook for students, technicians, or practitioners who look to sharpen their critical calculation skills.
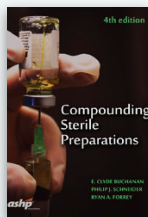
Aseptic Compounding Technique: Learning and Mastering the Ritual by Zachary Thomas Jordan

An in-depth guide to all aspects of aseptic compounding work, including proper hand techniques and maintenance of sterile supplies and equipment.

Introduction to Acute and Ambulatory Care Pharmacy Practice, Second Edition (used to be called *Introduction to Hospital and Health-System Pharmacy Practice*) by David Holdford

This book was originally intended for schools of pharmacy but drew lots of interest from the technician programs. The second edition was updated to incorporate more information specific to technicians.

Compounding Sterile Preparations, Fourth Edition by E. Clyde Buchanan, Philip Schneider, and Ryan Forrey

New updated edition includes information on Chapter 800 and regulations related to the Drug Quality and Security Act. Seven new chapters and extensive online references.

Resources

Resources for Program Development

Accreditation Standards, Regulations, and Other Tools

Guidance Document

Model Curriculum

Curriculum Crosswalk Example

Applying for Accreditation – Guidelines and Application Form

Informational Videos

10 Key Steps to ASHP / ACPE Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Program Accreditation (December 2018)

2019 ASHP/ACPE Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Accreditation Standards (video 1 of 2 – December 2018)

2019 ASHP/ACPE Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Accreditation Standards (video 2 of 2 – December 2018)

Governance

Pharmacy Technician Accreditation Commission (PTAC)

Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Pharmacy Technician Education Accreditation Collaboration

American Society of Health-system Pharmacists (ASHP)

Pharmacy Technician Forum

Other Resources

Pharmacy Technician Development: ASHP Store (search for Pharmacy Technicians under the Topics section)

PTCB's Practice Tools

Education and Workforce Development

Pharmacy Technician Educators Council (PTEC)

Pharmacy Workforce Center (PWC)

Comments and suggestions for upcoming Technician TABLET newsletter articles may be sent to asd@ashp.org