

# ASHP Accreditation of Pharmacy Technician Education Programs



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American Society of  
Health-System Pharmacists®  
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***Christine Swyres reports no significant or relevant relationships or other affiliations to disclose.***



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## Objectives:

After this presentation, the participant will be able to:

- Recognize the benefits of attending an ASHP accredited pharmacy technician training program
- Describe the national movement towards certification
- Identify the ways certification and accredited training can improve career flexibility



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The counting and pouring now often alleged to be the pharmacist's chief occupation will in time be done by technicians and eventually by automation. The pharmacist of tomorrow will function by reason of what he knows, increasing the efficiency and safety of drug therapy and working as a specialist in his own right. It is in this direction that pharmaceutical education must evolve without delay.

—Linwood F. Tice, D.Sc.,

Dean, Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science (1966)

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## ASHP Pharmacy Technician Initiative

- **What:** Advocacy partnership with goal of developing an educated, trained, certified and registered pharmacy technician workforce.
- **Who:** ASHP and individual state affiliates.
- **How:** Joint advocacy to promote a qualified technician workforce, with strategies and tactics unique to each state.
- **Status:** Launched in May 2008. 19 states signed on so far. IL and MO are partners in this initiative.

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## ASHP Position on Pharmacy Technicians

Well-qualified, competent pharmacy technicians are integral to the safe provision of medications in all settings. To achieve this, ASHP:

- ❖ Support uniform training – ASHP-accredited
- ❖ Support certification through PTCB
- ❖ Support registration through state boards

Ideally, the actions should be completed in this order.

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## Positions of other Organizations

- **American Pharmacists Association (APhA)**
  - ❖ supports nationally recognized standards and guidelines for the accreditation of training programs.
  - ❖ supports the continued growth of accredited education and training programs
  - ❖ supports the following minimum requirements for all new pharmacy technicians by the year 2015:
    - Successful completion of an accredited education and training program
    - Certification by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)
- **American College of Clinical Pharmacy (ACCP)**
  - ❖ Pharmacy technicians are authorized by both state regulation and employment status
  - ❖ have successfully completed an education and training program that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body; and
  - ❖ are certified by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)

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## CCP Recommendations

- **Model curriculum for all technicians**  
*ASHP Model Curriculum*
- **National, Programmatic Accreditation of Technician Education & Training Programs**  
*ASHP Accreditation*
- **Competency Based Examination**  
*PTCB Examination*

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## National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP)– Task Force on Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Programs

- NABP Model Practice Act recommends that states that certify technicians recognize certification by PTCB and that all pharmacy technicians be PTCB certified by 2015.
- Recommended that NABP should:
  - ❖ Encourage boards of pharmacy to require completion of an education & training program that meets minimum standardized guidelines.
  - ❖ Encourage boards to require completion of an accredited education & training program by 2015
  - ❖ Assist in developing a national accreditation system for education & training programs that uses a single accrediting agency by 2015

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## NABP Task Force Recommendations (cont.)

- ❖ Assist boards in defining the evolving roles of pharmacists & technicians and technician education & training programs standards
- ❖ Encourage ACPE & ASHP to work collaboratively to develop accreditation system for technician training & education
- ❖ Should encourage PTCB to include completion of and accredited pharmacy education & training program and high school diploma or GED verification as criteria for taking the PTCB exam

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## Why Pharmacy Technicians are so important

- ❖ There is growing complexity in medication use with a continued focus on medication safety, quality.
- ❖ There is a need TODAY for well-qualified, competent pharmacy technicians for the safe provision of medications in all settings.
- ❖ The existence of a competent pharmacy technicians will be fundamental to advancing the patient care role of pharmacists in the FUTURE.
- ❖ There is need for defined, baseline skills and competencies obtained through standardized education, training, certification and registration of pharmacy technicians.

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## State Regulation of REGISTRATION

(Source: NABP Survey of Pharmacy Law-2010)

- ❖ 33 states require registration
- ❖ 7 states require licensure:
  - ❖ AK, AZ, CA, OR, RI, UT, WY
- ❖ 10 states, plus DC, have no registration or licensure requirements:
  - ❖ CO, DE, DC, GA, HI, IN, MI, NY, PA, WA, WI

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## State Regulation of: CERTIFICATION

### • **PTCB Recognition in 30 states as one option for registration or for expanded tech responsibilities**

- ❖ Department of Veterans Affairs now requires PTCB certification for technicians employed at GS-6 and above
- ❖ Texas Board of Pharmacy awarded PTCB contract as technician certification provider for state

### • **ExCPT exam now available as well**

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## Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)

- NCCA accredited
- Psychometrically-sound
- Nationally-administered exam for thirteen years.
- Over 370,000 Certified Pharmacy Technicians.
- Based on task analysis of pharmacy practice, across all practice settings.
- Has recertification process and CE requirement.

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Active PTCB CPhTs and State Regulations  
As of June 30, 2010



## Why there's a need to set the bar...

- ❖ On-the-job training is not adequate to provide a consistently competent pharmacy technician workforce
- ❖ Review courses designed to pass the certification exam are NOT comprehensive training.
- ❖ Establishing a standard level of training is the only way to achieve consistency
- ❖ The only current national standard for pharmacy technician training is ASHP-accreditation

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## Public mistakenly assumes that Pharmacy Technicians are trained and certified



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
December 5, 2007, 10:00AM ET  
CONTACT:  
Mark Franco, PTCB 202-429-7508  
Keith Alan, Kristanna Hillard  
202-429-4857 (office)  
816-304-8457 (cell)

Survey Shows Broad Support Among Americans  
For Pharmacy Technician Certification  
75% of Americans Believe Law Requires Certification for Pharmacy Techs,  
91% Support Standards in Every State

LAS VEGAS- A survey released today by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) shows that Americans have strong misperceptions about the required qualifications of the people helping pharmacists prepare prescriptions in pharmacies. The poll results, released today at the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) Midyear Clinical Meeting, show that the vast majority of Americans believe that all pharmacy technicians are required to be trained and certified, when in reality, these regulations vary from state to state.

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## What is Accreditation?

A means of protecting the public  
through meeting national standards

A quality process using experts to:

- ❖ Set acceptable standards
- ❖ Measure compliance against standards
- ❖ Provide periodic ongoing assessment

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## Accreditation

A voluntary means of providing:

- Quality assurance
- Credibility
- Patient Safety
- Continuous monitoring & improvement

Examples:

- The Joint Commission (hospitals)
- American Council on Pharmacy Education (colleges of pharmacy & pharmacist/technician CE)
- ASHP (residencies & technician training programs)

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## ASHP-Accredited Training

- Signifies that the training program has been reviewed and has met or exceeded national standards for pharmacy technician training, including an on-site survey by experts.
- The accreditation standards allow comparison to a model curriculum based on a task analysis and include goals and objectives.
- The program must demonstrate didactic, laboratory, and experiential learning and a minimum 600 hours instruction required.
- **The program is accredited** (as opposed to the individual or the school).

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ASHP Accreditation:

**Why is it important to a site?**

- Pharmacy profession develops the standards, assures teaching and training meet contemporary employment needs
- Shows sites commitment to excellence and consumer protection, motivates site to improve training
- Enhances credibility & marketing of the program
- Peer review improves the program & provides networking opportunity with other pharmacy technician educators
- Some sites are eligible for grants or funding for students in accredited programs

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ASHP Accreditation:  
**Why is it important to a site?**



- Some states require pharmacy technicians to complete accredited training
- Employers recognize the value of ASHP accreditation and will preferentially hire students from accredited programs
- On site peer review survey at least every 6 yrs (Reviews curriculum, laboratory, & experiential training)
- Accreditation staff available to answer questions

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ASHP Accreditation:  
**Why is it important to the student?**



- Consumer protection – assured they are learning what is required in the pharmacy profession
- Some states now require training in an ASHP Accredited Pharmacy Technician Training Program
- It builds their resumes.
- It helps them get hired.
- If students reciprocate to states requiring accredited training, student is covered

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ASHP Accreditation:  
**Why is it important to the public?**



- Prepares students to help protect the public, by being well trained to help prevent serious medication errors from occurring
- Pharmacists now require a Doctor of Pharmacy and are moving to a more clinical profession requiring well trained pharmacy technicians to support them with the distribution process
- Currently, there are no other national standards for the training of pharmacy technicians except ASHP accreditation.

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## ASHP Accreditation: Why important to Board of Pharmacy?



- Validation of training programs is an intensive resource & labor process
- Proven national accrediting body already has infrastructure in place

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## ASHP Accreditation



- Currently there are 160 ASHP-Accredited Pharmacy Technician Training Programs\*
  - ❖ Majority are Vocational-Technical Schools and Community Colleges
  - ❖ Several large chain drug store programs are ASHP-accredited
  - ❖ All areas of practice (community, military, hospital) are accredited
  - ❖ ASHP has accredited technician programs since 1982
- Oversight for accreditation process provided by ASHP Commission on Credentialing (19 pharmacists) including representatives from:
  - ❖ Pharmacy Technician Training Program Educator
  - ❖ AACP (colleges of pharmacy)
  - ❖ APhA (community)
  - ❖ AMCP (managed care)
  - ❖ ACCP (clinical)
  - ❖ ASHP (hospital & health system)

\*Accredited or in accreditation process as of 1/10

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## Illinois Updates

- Effective January 2010, must be certified within two years of hire
  - ❖ Required to have proof of training
  - ❖ Can be on the job
- IL Board of Pharmacy evaluating tech-check-tech in some situations
- ICHP advocating to consider ASHP accreditation to schools who are not currently accredited

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## Missouri Updates

- Survey to pharmacists, technicians and pharmacies
- Working group

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## Questions?

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ICHP/MSHP 2011 Spring Meeting  
ASHP Accreditation of Pharmacy Technician Training Programs  
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121-000-11-013-L04-T  
121-000-11-013-L04-P

Post Test Questions:

1. Some of the benefits of attending an ASHP accredited program include:
  - a. Assures teaching and training to meet contemporary needs in pharmacy
  - b. Can facilitate reciprocating to another state
  - c. Employers look for nationally standardized training
  - d. All of the above
2. The national movement towards technician certification has occurred because:
  - a. Several highly public medication errors
  - b. Growing complexity of medicine
  - c. Growing demands on pharmacist time
  - d. All of the above
3. Some ways that certification can improve career flexibility include:
  - a. Allows for reciprocity across states
  - b. Some employers will only hire certified technicians, like the VA
  - c. Experiential portion exposes student to a wide variety of pharmacy options
  - d. All of the above