



REAL TALK PHARMACY JOBS HANDBOOK


Welcome!

...to the **Real Talk Pharmacy Jobs Handbook**

Excited to have you here!

This page serves as an introduction to set expectations for this resource.

How the **Real Talk Pharmacy Jobs Handbook** is organized:

1. Cover Page for each practice setting of pharmacy including general information.
2. Specific roles listed within each practice setting including "Real Talk" points of information on what it is truly like to work in that role. This information is based on pharmacists' experience.
3. This icon -  - indicates a live video interview is available from an expert! Click the icon next to the role to watch the interview.

***** DISCLAIMER *****

The **Real Talk Pharmacy Jobs Handbook** a continuously updated resource with new jobs, information, and live expert videos being added regularly.

Find Your Pharmacy Career students receive lifetime access to this resource and are entitled to any and all updates as they are made.

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COMMUNITY PHARMACY

Ah, community pharmacy. This is the most “traditional” practice setting, either in large chain retail or independently owned pharmacies. While it is still largely a dispensing role, there are new opportunities available that can break up the tedious dispensing role. These include initiatives like Medication Therapy Management (MTM) and flu clinics. Community roles require a wide (but not detailed) knowledge of medications, insurance billing, and pharmacy law.

Hours can include nights, overnights, weekends, and holidays (and do in most cases), but because there are so many pharmacies, you would likely be able to find a role with the hours that work for you. This just may require more flexibility on geographic location.

These roles do not require additional training after pharmacy school, offer high initial salaries, and a ton of public direct patient care. Growth follows a set pattern in retail chains (staff, manager, district manager, etc.).

JOBS IN COMMUNITY PHARMACY



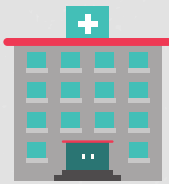
Large Chain Pharmacy

Multiple locations nationwide

Work with patients/doctors/insurance companies in a dispensing role

Weekends/nights

Managers = potential bonus earnings



Hospital Outpatient

Community pharmacy in a hospital setting

Blend between independent and large chain

Work closely with rest of hospital system team

More regular business hours



Ambulatory Care

Direct patient care in a clinical setting

Medication therapy management and prescribing through collaborative practice agreement

Specific area of focus (ex. diabetes)

Typically requires a residency



Independent

Higher risk, especially if sole owner

No corporate metrics or benefits

Control over operations and strategy

Potential for a higher salary

Deep connection with patients



Compounding

Provide medications in unique dosing forms
Higher legal risk due to heavy regulation
Creative work with patients unable to take regular forms of medications
Similar to typical staff retail pharmacist



Specialty

Work with rare patient conditions and high cost medications
Typically working from a central location and mailing scripts out
More traditional business hours



MTM



Work with insurance companies or within a chain to perform CMRs with patients
Remote opportunity available (usually within insurance company)
Part-time opportunities
Recommended to get APhA certification in MTM
Can be in-person or on the phone (most on phone)

A smiling male pharmacist in a light blue uniform is working at a pharmacy counter. He is looking down at something on the counter with a joyful expression. The background is a blurred hospital pharmacy setting with various medical supplies and equipment.

HOSPITAL PHARMACY

Just like it sounds, these are careers for pharmacists in a hospital setting. There is a wide range of careers available, as well as some common themes. Positions in the hospital largely follow a hierarchy, where there are varying levels within each department.

This can sometimes lead to politics within the organization.

Benefits tend to be good, especially when associated with an academic medical center.

Pharmacists are viewed more as doctors in this setting.

JOBS IN HOSPITAL PHARMACY



Generalist

Typically lower salary compared to community
Nights, weekends, holidays
Order verification and dispensing for inpatient services
Most shifts in central pharmacy
Pharmacists without residency or with PGY1



Clinical Specialist

Expert in field and highly valued resource on a clinical team
Heavy post-graduate and residency training (PGY1 & PGY2 residency)
More specialized = fewer positions available (limits flexibility in geographic location)
Longer hours plus nights and weekends



Administration



Business and operations focus
Typically work in an office setting with meetings
Often requires residency/further degrees (MBA, MA, etc.)
Higher earnings potential
Work with leaders in other departments of the hospital
Contend with organizational politics
Tough to separate work and home

A background image showing three business professionals in a meeting. A man in a suit is on the left, a man in a suit is in the center, and a woman in a white blouse and dark skirt is on the right. They are standing and talking. The text 'MANAGED CARE' is overlaid in large, bold, black letters in the center of the image.

MANAGED CARE

Managed care pharmacy works with all things related to insurance. This includes working with medication insurance in a variety of settings like health systems, retail chains, and other companies. These types of roles can vary from extremely clinical in nature to a more business or client-facing focus. Positions are very unlikely to include direct patient care.

Hours are typical “work week” hours with some positions offering remote work. Having experience in multiple settings (retail/management/hospital) can help build credibility when entering managed care pharmacy as there is a broad understanding of the entire health system.

JOBS IN MANAGED CARE



Formulary Management

Great mix of in-depth clinical knowledge and financial considerations

Work to meet deadlines and create presentations about new drugs in the market

Internal role, less client-facing



Clinical Consulting

Liaison at PBM/Health Plan to maintain client relationships

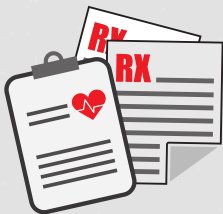
Retail salary potential with performance bonus available

Facilitate web meetings with team members and clients

Very traditional/flexible work hours

May involve monthly travel

Ability to work remote/from home



Prior Authorization Specialist



Remote position (100% from home)

Work for Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) to create formularies and manage costs for insurance companies and patients

Typically 9am-5pm, workload varies depending on time of year



Clinical Coding

Ability to blend clinical knowledge and computer/IT skills

Minimal patient/client interaction (internal contacts)

May require outside experience or previous PBM experience



Medical Affairs Managed Care

9-5 Hours, weekends/holidays off

Flexible schedule (can work from home ~2+ days per week)

Growth Potential (typical promotion every 1-2 years)

Significant amount of travel

High salaries with bonus potential (entry 125-190K)

Constant emails from colleagues (even on off hours)



Marketing Liaison



Work directly with client groups to educate them on their pharmacy benefits

Normal business hours (9-5)

Reducing cost/healthcare expenditure by enrolling groups in clinical programs

Educates members on an individual basis in the field during open enrollment meetings

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY



Similar to managed care pharmacy, industry largely focuses on the business of pharmacy. The roles in industry are wide-ranging with little to no patient interaction. This area of pharmacy offers very high earnings potential because you are working within organizations (in many cases, public) where profit is a high priority.

There are also many travel roles or remote work positions. Industry is very different than clinical or community settings. This can be a culture shock and adjustment for people. There is also a premium on additional training or credentialing through fellowships or board certification programs.

JOBS IN INDUSTRY



Drug Discovery

Drug development research for pharmaceutical company
Bench work may also require a PhD
Long hours in laboratory setting, less social
More scientific, less business/clinical
Ex jobs: Researcher, Drug Development Researcher



Clinical Development

Testing effects of drugs on healthy human subjects followed testing on the target population
Study protocol development
Publish clinical studies reports; report adverse events
Ex: Clinical Trial Manager, Clinical Development



Medical Affairs

Provide Information around products and disease states to both providers and patients
Managing the publication & presentation of scientific data
Educating HCPs on disease state, investigational and approved therapies
Managing post approval (Phase IV) studies and creation of protocols



Regulatory Affairs

Help ensure drugs under development meet regulations for FDA approval to bring to market
Work with strict government policies
Residency/fellowship or other Pharma experience almost always necessary



Medical Science Liaison (MSL)

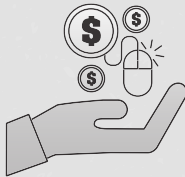


Works with physicians/prescribers to provide them with most current scientific evidence
Clinical expertise in a specific area
Extensive travel, client meetings and presentations
Higher salary, large bonuses



Drug Safety

Can be entry level job
Work involves reviewing clinical studies for adverse drug effects and communicating information with R&D department
Submission of safety reports



Commercial

Helps the company to make money through sales and marketing of the product
Culture more business oriented and less clinical
Example jobs: Market Access, Managed Care Liaison



Legal/Compliance

Helps to reduce overall risk to company through healthcare compliance advice internally
Ex jobs: Legal Operations and Litigation Counsel, International Privacy Counsel



Patient Advocacy

Work with patient and caretaker led advocacy groups to improve recruitment of patients to clinical trials, diagnosis and identification of potential patients
Gain feedback from patients to help develop patient centric clinical trials
Increase disease state awareness

Medical Communications and Publications



Create publication strategy of where to present data in scientific journals and conferences

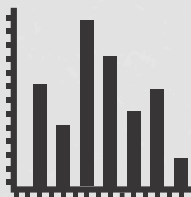
Build narrative/shape story of clinical data and product pieces including slide decks, handouts etc for MSLs to use in discussions with HCPs

Stay up to date with current scientific literature on disease states

Less traveling than MSL; however can be heavy travel during conference months

Usually 9-5 unless upcoming publication deadline or preparation of conferences

Health Outcomes and Economics Research



Gather data and study the economic effect of drugs
Help develop drug formularies and/or clinical practice guidelines

Develop proposals/manage products to evaluate a product's value

Must meet budgets and agreed timescales

Project Management (Industry)



Not pharmacy practice, work to manage the success and timing of companies projects

Can be different types of companies (Pharma, technology, etc)

Flexible schedules, typically 9-5

May have travel involved

TECHNOLOGY

Technology opportunities are increasing for professionals in every industry and pharmacy is no exception.

These opportunities are wide-ranging because the technology industry itself is becoming less isolated. Instead, technology solutions are providing the foundation for businesses, practice settings, and decision making.

As a pharmacy professional, you do not have to be a technology expert to have a successful career in technology. Roles in technology are more about using your unique skill set as a pharmacist to leverage technology in a valuable way for an organization.

Many remote and business focused positions exist, but there are also clinical focused advisory roles if the technology organization provides a clinical product or service

Most people in IT do not understand the clinical world and vice versa. If you can bridge that gap, you will have many opportunities available to you.

JOBS IN TECHNOLOGY



Informatics

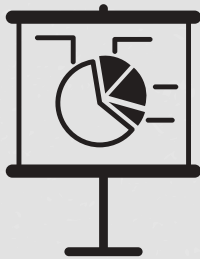


Work with technology and data to drive clinical and business decisions

Requires outside experience

New jobs constantly being created due to an increase use of technology

Link between clinical staff and IT staff



Project Management (Technology)

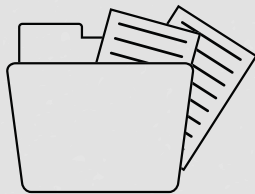


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Can be different types of companies

Flexible schedules, typically 9-5

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Clinical Content Specialist

Typically working for large tech companies that are developing clinical products

Drug info type position - Lot of time spent

researching and evaluating clinical literature

Ensure content provided in product is accurate and presented properly

Roles can be remote with regular contact with technical team



Healthcare Solutions Sales

MSL-like position representing specific software solutions (instead of meds/therapeutic areas) for providers, payers, or pharma

Different from MSL in that you assist clients from a business perspective instead of clinical

High degree of personal communication

High earnings potential with portion of compensation based on performance

NONTRADITIONAL PHARMACY



The pharmacy profession is not nearly as defined as it once was.

In these settings, pharmacists are not formally "practicing" pharmacy, but rather using their knowledge, experience, and skills in nontraditional ways.

This category is "everything else" in the profession of pharmacy.

JOBS IN NONTRADITIONAL PHARMACY



Nuclear Pharmacy



Compounding radioactive pharmaceuticals (mostly for diagnostic imaging)

Not much therapeutic application

Typical shifts start in the middle of the night

Additional training often required



Medical Writing



Can involve providing medical education, publications for Pharma companies, or regulatory documents

Work for pharmaceutical companies or medical communication agency

Regular work hours



Veterinary Pharmacy



Often at veterinary teaching hospitals

Office or lab setting; minimal contact with animals

May work in academia, veterinary teaching hospital, regulatory body, corporation

Compound/dispense medications prescribed by veterinarians



Medical Cannabis



Requires staying current with state and federal regulations

Entrepreneurial or not well-defined paths

Work against common social stigma

New opportunities emerging as field matures



Academia

Teaching specific area of focus at a pharmacy school
Typically accompanied by research or relevant practice for variety

Need to be a perceived leader in field of expertise
More prestigious, may get additional benefits being associated with a university



Finance/Equity Research



Conduct clinical and scientific research of a potential company to then advise investors.

No patient care

Day-to-day varies depending on news flow (ex: stocks)

Travel involved

Long hours, work-life balance can be difficult

Higher earnings potential



Sports Pharmacist

Help athletes manage their medications (dietary substances, help control banned substances)

Advise on safe and permissible drugs within sports organizations (local and national sports clubs)

Limited jobs available



Poison Control Specialist

Provide poison information to public/healthcare providers/public health agencies

Lower salaries than average pharmacist salary

Involves answering calls at a desk; protocol based



CDC Public Health

Execute programs that impact communities at a population level

Traditional business hours but may have to work more during unexpected outbreak/epidemic

Involves a lot of medical writing

Lower salary than traditional pharmacist



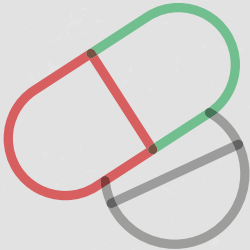
Herbal Pharmacy

Practice natural medicine such as herbs, vitamins, amino acids, minerals, and nutraceuticals

Requires a philosophy going against traditional pharmacy practice (ex: people are on too many medications), do not fill prescriptions but rather offer alternative approach

Entrepreneurial; similar to independent pharmacy

Not many formal positions available



Integrative Pharmacy

Incorporating natural products, dietary supplements, homeopathy etc. with conventional medicine

Includes one-on-one consultations with patients

Entrepreneurial; similar to independent pharmacy

Not many formal positions available



Financial Planning

Licensed similar to pharmacist

Work with office assistant and sit down with clients to put together an investment plan

Create your own schedule

A lot of upfront work to build a base of clients

Meet with clients in office (blend of office and remote work)

Great work-life balance (8-8-8 schedule: 8 hours in office; 8 hours sleeping; 8 hours with family)