

Pharmacy Technicians: Expanding Scope Is Key to Advancing Practice

Bill Shimmel, Executive Director and CEO of PTCB



Financial Disclosures

I declare that I have a current affiliation or financial arrangement with an eligible company that has a direct interest in the subject matter of this activity as an employee of the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB).

NABP staff involved in the planning of this activity do not have a current affiliation or financial arrangement with any ineligible companies that may have a direct interest in the subject matter of NABP's continuing pharmacy education program within the past 24 months.

All relevant financial relationships have been mitigated.

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Learning Objectives

- Explain the ways that some states have made certain amendments to the PREP Act permanent to expand pharmacy technician scope of practice.
- Describe various pilot projects that have been implemented to advance pharmacy practice.
- Discuss other programs that are being considered to further advance the practice of pharmacy.

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PTCB and Preparation for Advanced Pharmacy Technician Roles



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Mission Alignment

- PTCB advances medication safety by credentialing technicians who are qualified to support pharmacists and patient care teams in all practice settings.
- NABP is the independent, international, and impartial association that assists its member boards and jurisdictions for the purpose of **protecting the public health**.

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PTCB by the Numbers

- 760,334 pharmacy technician certifications since 1995*
- 283,000 active certified pharmacy technicians*
- 42,615 CPhT exams administered in 2021*
- 1,417 secure Pearson VUE testing centers
- Administered and accepted in all 50 states, DC, Guam, and Puerto Rico

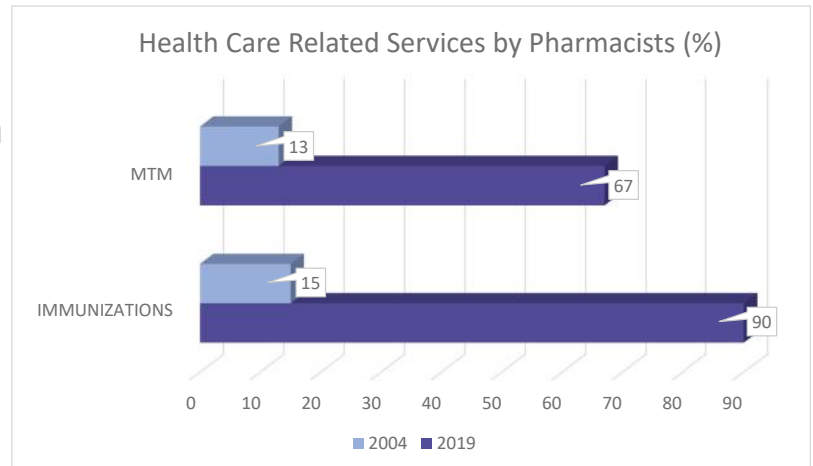
*as of 12.2021

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Pharmacy Technician Roles

There has been a dramatic **increase** in the past 15 years in the percentage of pharmacists performing health care-related services.



Pharmacy Workforce Center's 2019 National Pharmacists Workforce Survey

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Advanced Roles

- Administration
- Billing and reimbursement
- Clinical technicians (eg, chronic care, appt. scheduling, medication adherence, smoking cessation, vital signs measurements, data management, etc)
- Compounding (sterile and nonsterile)
- Education
- Immunizations
- Informatics
- Medication reconciliation/history
- Medication synchronization
- Medication therapy management
- Point-of-care testing
- Quality assurance and quality improvement initiatives
- Supply chain management
- Technician product verification
- Telepharmacy

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Top Requested Skills by Employers

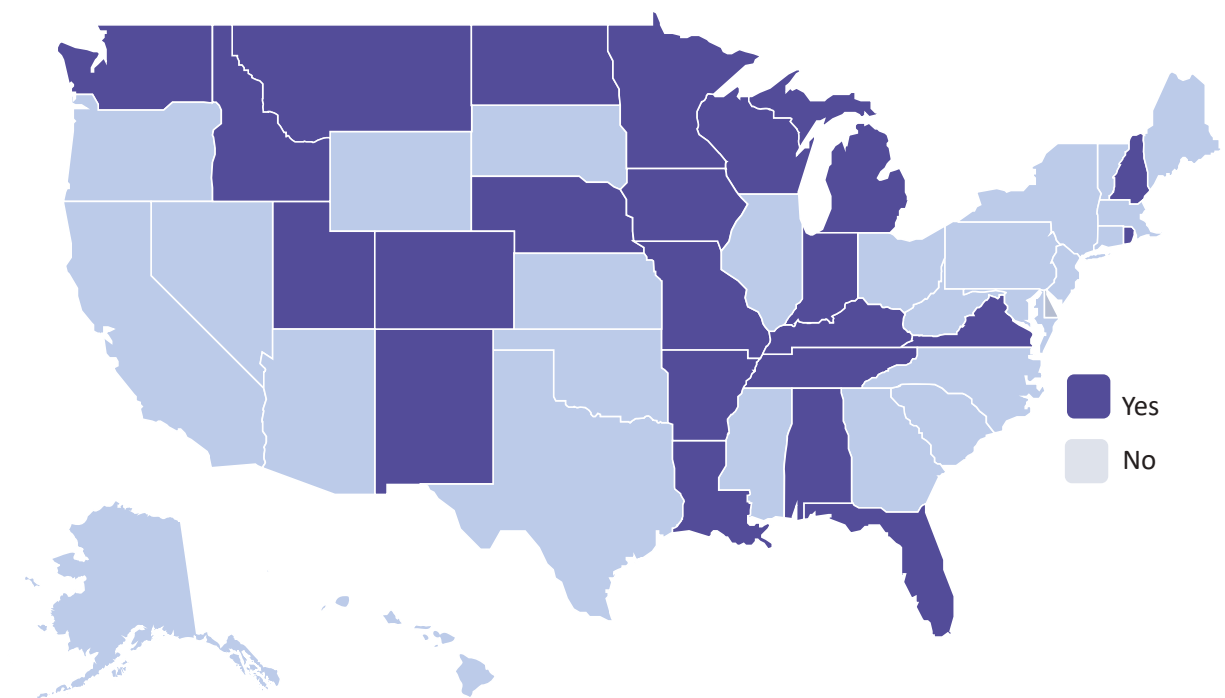
- Common Skills
 - Customer service
 - Compassion
 - Verbal communication
 - Skills communications
 - Mental concentration
- Specialized Skills
 - Medical prescription
 - Medical privacy
 - Pharmaceuticals
 - Pharmacist assistance
 - Immunization administration

Emsi Data Set | www.economicmodeling.com

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Technician Immunization Authority



Assessment-Based Certificate Programs

- PTCB considered the idea of creating one “advanced” exam.
 - Identifying a single body of knowledge that encompassed advanced-level practice for pharmacy technicians was not feasible given the variation of roles.
- Assessment-based certificate programs provide flexibility to pharmacy technicians, employers, and regulators to determine what is necessary for certain jobs or duties.

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PTCB Credentials



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Advanced Certified Pharmacy Technician



Individuals who earn the CPhT-Adv credential are required to earn 5 additional CE hours to maintain their certification.

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Credentials by the Numbers

Active Credential Holders as of April 30, 2022	
Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT)	283,190
Certified Compounded Sterile Preparation Technician (CSPT)	1,260
Advanced Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT-Adv)	898
Billing and Reimbursement Certificate	1,166
Controlled Substances Diversion Prevention Certificate	905
Hazardous Drug Management Certificate	614
Immunization Administration Certificate	1,588
Medication History Certificate	2,087
Medication Therapy Management	233
Point-of-Care Testing	79
Technician Product Verification Certificate	1,312

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Glen's Tech Trek

Glen Gard, CPhT-Adv, CSPT

- National director, sterile compounding at Option Care Health
- *"The certificates and certifications PTCB offers allow pharmacy technicians to demonstrate their commitment to the profession and show their dedication to providing the best patient care."*



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Autumn's Tech Trek

Autumn Hawks, CPhT-Adv

- Pharmacy technician specialist at Intermountain Healthcare
- *"I work with a variety of pharmacy technicians from a diverse group of backgrounds, areas of expertise, and geographical locations. By completing the PTCB certificates, I am able to gain greater perspective and provide mentorship for those seeking to advance in their careers."*



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Why the Tech Trek Matters



Assessment Question #1

Studies have demonstrated that specially trained pharmacy technicians can perform TPV as accurately as pharmacists.

- A. True
- B. False



Assessment Question #2

According to the most recent data, Immunization Administration is one of the top five specialized skills requested by employers.

- A. True
- B. False

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Assessment Question #3

Which of the following is required of an individual seeking to obtain the CPhT-Adv credential?

- A. Have a minimum of five years of work experience
- B. Be an active PTCB CPhT
- C. Earn 10 hours of CE annually
- D. Successfully complete at least five assessment-based certificate programs
- E. None of the above

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Bonus Assessment Question

Who are the winners when pharmacies are filled with skilled, knowledgeable pharmacy technicians bearing credentials validating their knowledge and experience?

- A. Employers
- B. Pharmacy technicians
- C. Pharmacists
- D. Patients and the public in general
- E. All the above

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Questions?

Contact: Bill Schimmel wschimmel@ptcb.org

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Iowa Pharmacy Technician Practice

Andrew Funk, PharmD, Executive Director
Iowa Board of Pharmacy



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Assessment Questions

In Iowa, which of the following activities may be delegated by a pharmacist to a certified pharmacy technician?

- A. The transferring of non-controlled substance prescriptions
- B. The dispensing of a prescription in the absence of a pharmacist
- C. The final verification of product being dispensed
- D. All the above

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Assessment Questions

Uncertified registered pharmacy technician trainees may administer immunizations in Iowa under Iowa regulations.

- A. True
- B. False

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Background and History



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Current Statistics

- 862 pharmacies
 - 684 community
 - 131 hospital
 - 47 limited use
- 4,538 registered certified pharmacy technicians
 - 68% PTCB
 - 32% NHA
- 2,211 registered pharmacy technician trainees

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Recognition and Regulation of Pharmacy Technician Practice

- 1996: The state established pharmacy technician registration
- 2008: The state established “tech-check-tech” for institution and LTC
- 2010: The state required pharmacy technicians to be nationally certified and established a “tech trainee” registration
- 2011: The Iowa Board of Pharmacy permitted telepharmacy via pilot
- 2014: The Board permitted “tech-check-tech” in the community via pilot

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Recognition and Regulation of Pharmacy Technician Practice

- 2017: The state and the Board formally establish telepharmacy as a license
- 2019: The Board implemented rules relative to “technician product verification”
- 2021: The state simplifies language pertaining to pharmacist oversight
- 2021: The Board updated rules from listing what a technician could perform to what could **not** be delegated
- 2022: The Board established specific training requirements for immunizing technicians
- 2022: the Board issues NOIA for remote supervision of technicians

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Prohibited Functions



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Prohibited Functions: All Technicians

- Final verification*
- Prospective drug use review/evaluation of medication records
- Provide patient-specific drug information, counsel or offer to counsel, and accepting a refusal of patient counseling
- Interpreting prescription drug orders or applying information
- Transfer of controlled substance prescriptions
- Delegate technical functions to a pharmacy support person

*except within a technician product verification program pursuant to 657-IAC-40.

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Prohibited Functions: Tech Trainees

- Accept new prescription drug orders
- Transfer prescriptions

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Technology-Assisted Technician Product Verification



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Technology-Assisted Technician Product Verification 657-IAC-40

- Originally established as “tech-check-tech” in 2008
 - Institutional and LTC only
- Updated in 2019
 - Includes community
 - Requires technology: Minimum bar-code scanning
 - No consumer complaints alleging misfills
 - 46 pharmacies
 - 31 community
 - 13 hospital
 - 2 LTC

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Iowa TPV Sites



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Checking Technician Requirements

657-IAC-40.4

- Certification via NHA or PTCB
- Practice Experience
 - 2,000 hours as a technician (includes trainee hours)
- Training on the pharmacy's program and applicable policies and procedures

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Telepharmacy



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Telepharmacy in Iowa

- “Brick and Mortar” storefront
 - More than remote pick-up site
 - Fully functioning pharmacy
 - Staffed by a CPhT remotely supervised by an RPh
- Tested via pilot project between 2009-2013
 - Five sites
- Broadly authorized in 2017
 - Increased security requirements
 - 24 currently licensed, one pending license
 - No consumer complaints

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Telepharmacy in Iowa



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Telepharmacy Technician Requirements

657-IAC-13.11

- Certification via NHA or PTCB
- Practice Experience
 - 2,000 hours as a CPhT
 - 1,000 of which must be in an Iowa-licensed pharmacy
 - 160 of which must be at a pharmacy that utilizes the telepharmacy software
- Training
 - Policies and procedures
 - Technician and Telepharmacy rules
 - Operations
- Continuing Education
 - One hour patient safety
 - One hour pharmacy law

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Iowa's Response to PREP and State Action

- Authorized technician immunizations
 - Updated legislation for broader board authority
 - Promulgated rules
 - Training, CE, CPR BLS
- Enforcement Discretion
 - Remote supervision of technicians
 - Data entry
 - Rules in progress: effective late summer/early fall, 2022

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Questions?

Andrew Funk
Iowa Board of Pharmacy
andrew.funk@iowa.gov
515/218-6364

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Pharmacy Technicians: Expanding Scope Is Key to Advancing Practice

Julie F. Lanza, CPhT-Adv, CSPT

NABP
National Association of
Boards of Pharmacy

118th NABP Annual Meeting
May 19-21, 2022

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Expanding Scope Is Key: A Personal Perspective

The scope of an activity, topic, or piece of work is the whole area that it deals with or includes. Expanding/advancing practice is multi level, multi thought, and multi layered.

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Key Achievable Topics to Think About

- Leadership
 - Technicians in leadership roles
 - Technicians supported by existing leadership
- Recognition
 - Finding ways to recognize with existing job structures
- Perception

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Leadership

Benefits of technicians in leadership roles:

- Job satisfaction
- Retention
- Sets an example (for other technicians)

Benefits of existing leadership supporting technicians in these roles:

- Job satisfaction
- Retention
- Sets an example (for other employers)

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Leadership – My Journey

- On same level
 - Scope of practice
 - Licensure
- Build programs just for technicians
 - Peer recognition
 - Buddy system
- Set an example
 - PTCB exams
 - Be a resource

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Recognition

- Career ladder(s)
 - Build both internal and external accomplishments
 - Develop job descriptions and levels that recognize advanced work
 - Find ways to recognize within existing levels

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Career Ladder – Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC)

Internal/External Accomplishments

- Writing policies
- SOPs
- Ces/presentations

Levels

- Pharmacy Tech I
- Pharmacy Tech II
- Pharmacy Tech III (trainer)
- Pharmacy Tech Lead

Existing Level Recognition

- 2% Compensation CSPT
- 2% Compensation CPhT-Adv*
- Reimbursement for exams

*approved subjects

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BIDMC

- 12 CPhT-Adv
- 15 CSPT
- 11 in progress
- Roles:
 - Sterile Products and Hazardous Drug Management
 - 340B
 - Controlled Substance Diversion
 - Medication History & MTM
 - Immunization



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Perception

Past:

- Technicians were glorified cashiers/delivery people
- No defined career path
- No real chance for advancement

Present/Future:

- Career path (in multiple areas) are clearly defined
- Constant opportunities for advancement
- Need will increase due to expanding pharmacist roles

Changing the perception of what a pharmacy technician is will be crucial to successful advancement.

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Board(s) of Pharmacy

- Only 13 states with technicians currently in seats
 - Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon (2), Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Vermont, and Washington
- With pharmacy continuously expanding, having the insights of a pharmacy technician on certain topics is beneficial in some decisions making processes
- Why not?

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Conclusion?

The scope of practice for pharmacy technicians will continue to expand with the ever-evolving pharmacy world. Expanding current roles and implementing advanced roles will be crucial to retaining the current technician's population as well as recruiting into a critically short-staffed field.

These small steps can be instrumental in building and sustaining a strong pharmacy technician team.

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Assessment Questions

1. How many advanced exams does PTCB offer for technicians?
 - A. 6
 - B. 9
 - C. 11

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Assessment Questions

2. How many states currently have technicians on their board of pharmacy?
- A. 13
 - B. 22
 - C. 35

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Assessment Questions

3. Job satisfaction and retention are two benefits of having technicians in leadership roles.

True or False?

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Questions?

Julie Lanza

jlanza@bidmc.harvard.edu

617/754-3813

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