



Literacy and numeracy on the job:

Pharmacy Technician

Overview of tasks for pharmacy technicians

- Read a range of prescription or product labels and customer information
- Count, weigh, measure and mix drugs or compounds
- Alert the pharmacist to patient history, contraindications and interactions information
- Work as part of a team
- Advise customers about use and care of products, medicines and prescription drugs
- Order and manage stock
- Reconcile and input prescription data to obtain funding
- Promote wellness
- Provide customer service and process sales



Reading

Every day, pharmacy technicians read:

- prescriptions and prescription labels
- customer records and prescription history
- drug charts, stock reconciliation sheets, batch and specification sheets
- product labels and information (packaging, brochures, catalogues and advertising material)
- notes and instructions from colleagues and other healthcare workers

On a fairly regular basis, pharmacy technicians read:

- error and near miss records
- staff rosters
- supplier order forms, invoices and packing slips
- details from their payslip
- company information (standard operating procedures, memos, rules and procedures)

Occasionally, pharmacy technicians read:

- wellness programme records
- industry rules, contracts, legislation and regulations (PHARMAC etc.)
- training materials
- employment documentation

Writing

Every day, pharmacy technicians:

- annotate drug charts and prescriptions
- update customer records and prescription history
- enter data into prescription labelling and point of sale systems
- reconcile prescriptions and input data for HealthPAC funding

On a fairly regular basis, pharmacy technicians:

- complete PHARMAC change forms
- fill out prescription error and near miss forms
- write email messages to customers, suppliers and colleagues
- fill out order forms

Occasionally, pharmacy technicians:

- create programme forms and activity plans
- complete accident, incident and hazard reporting forms
- complete training workbooks and assessments
- fill in employment related forms

Speaking and listening

Every day, pharmacy technicians:

- report issues to the pharmacist (patient history, contraindications, interactions and intolerances)
- ask questions to clarify customer needs and listen actively to the customer's response
- explain features of products and how to use products for best results
- listen to verbal explanations and instructions
- coordinate work with other staff

On a fairly regular basis, pharmacy technicians:

- communicate with other healthcare workers (doctors, nurses, carers)
- request assistance from or give instructions to co-workers
- participate in meetings (store, supplier, health and safety)
- verbally report prescription errors, incidents, accidents, near misses and hazards

Occasionally, pharmacy technicians:

- make presentations to groups and individuals
- listen to presentations from pharmacist, company management, suppliers and others
- answer oral assessment questions
- listen to and participate in training sessions and discussions

Numeracy

Every day, pharmacy technicians:

- count pharmacy issued drugs and products
- maintain filed prescriptions in numerical order
- calculate dosage
- measure and weigh products
- calculate percentage or ratios when mixing compounds and solutions
- manage a range of money transactions and payment methods
- estimate the best and quickest way to complete a job

On a fairly regular basis, pharmacy technicians:

- check their pay is correct
- calculate discounts, profit margins and GST amounts
- measure accurately or estimate area, capacity and volume

Occasionally, pharmacy technicians:

- prepare, analyse and interpret data and statistics
- calculate conversions
- work out how to use space efficiently

Critical thinking

Every day, pharmacy technicians:

- know when to ask for clinical advice or refer a customer to a health provider
- make customers a priority whilst completing other jobs
- plan and complete tasks in the right order for efficient work flow

On a fairly regular basis, pharmacy technicians:

- identify health and safety hazards
- quickly and accurately identify and report problems
- decide whether to accept returned or damaged goods

Occasionally, pharmacy technicians :

- deal with contingencies
- develop solutions to work issues and problems

Pharmacy ITO PO Box 11640, Wellington. Phone: 04 382 8058 Fax: 04 385 8668 www.pito.org.nz

Workbase: the New Zealand Centre for Workforce Literacy Development 2 Vermont St, Ponsonby, Auckland, PO Box 56571, Dominion Road, Auckland 1446, New Zealand. Phone: 09 361 3800 Fax: 09 376 3700 www.workbase.org.nz