



Advocating on behalf of Michigan's pharmacy professionals for quality patient care

KEY STATEMENT

Licensing pharmacy technicians keeps patients safe, ensures better care and helps decrease drug diversion.

BACKGROUND

Michigan is one of only seven states in the nation that does not have any baseline standard for pharmacy technicians. Pharmacy technicians play an integral role in the medication dispensing process, and currently in Michigan, they are not even required to have a high school diploma or receive any ongoing training. This is certainly disappointing, considering that Michigan is one of the first states to provide pharmacy technician training. In 2010, legislation was introduced to amend the Michigan Public Health Code by formally recognizing pharmacy technicians and requiring licensure and certification. Unfortunately, the bill languished in the Health Policy Committee.



WHY IS PHARMACY TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION IMPORTANT?

- Currently there are no requirements in the state of Michigan to validate the minimal standards, knowledge or understanding of the individuals currently assisting pharmacists. **Licensure and certification of pharmacy technicians will ensure appropriate and consistent care and safety of patients served by pharmacies.**
- Pharmacy technicians play a sensitive and critical role in preparing medication orders and prescriptions; however, even if certification is present, **law still requires the accountability** of the supervising pharmacist, who is legally responsible by virtue of state licensure for the care and safety of patients served by the pharmacy.
- With the ever changing nature of medications and new advances in pharmacy, **continuing education is necessary for pharmacy technicians in order to keep patients safe.** Certification would require ongoing continuing education.
- Certification with a nationally approved, psychometrically evaluated exam (the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board exam) ensures validity and measurable statistics for pharmacy technicians consistent with nationally approved and recognized exams given to pharmacists. The examination is supported by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, the same entity responsible for providing a national examination that provides assurance pharmacists applying to their respective board for licensure have the knowledge and skills necessary to safely practice entry-level pharmacy.
- **Pharmacy technicians have access to controlled substances.** The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) has reported that most cases of diversion that occurs within a pharmacy can be attributed to unlicensed individuals. By licensing pharmacy technicians, it provides a more stringent disciplinary approach to inappropriate behavior, holding pharmacy technicians accountable.

BOTTOM LINE

Support pharmacy technician licensing and certification in order to safeguard the health of your constituents. Integral members of the pharmacy team must have minimum standards of education to ensure the best care possible for patients depending on medications to get well and maintain their health.



Additional Information

If you have questions regarding this issue, please contact:

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