

11/12/2020

R&E: How to Get Your Pharmacy Technician License

- Meeting starts at 6:03 PM
- Played an introductory ice breaker game in breakout groups (2 truths, 1 lie)
- Back in the main room at 6:08 PM
- Roles of pharmacy technicians
 - Receive written and electronic prescriptions
 - Fill prescriptions
 - Must have a CphT (pharmacy technician license)
 - Triage insurance rejections
 - Maintain patient profiles
 - Field phone calls
 - Manage inventory
- In hospital pharmacy, you will need to do more, such as mixing and preparing solutions
- Additional credentials
 - CSPT (certified compounded sterile preparation technician)
 - TPV (technician product verification certification)
 - CPhT-Adv (completion of 4+ certifications AND 3 years of work experience)
 - IAC (immunization administration certificate)
 - COMING SOON, not officially approved yet
- If you just want to explore pharmacy, working as a pharm tech is a good way to start
- Step 1: become eligible for the exam
 - Completing PTCB-recognized education program
 - PTCB has a list of programs on its websites that it recommends
 - Tuition varies based on program; anywhere from 100s of dollars to 1000s
 - Pharmacy technician equivalent work experience (minimum 500 hours)
 - Signed off by manager
 - Prepare for PTCE
 - Topics covered include: patient safety and quality assurance, medications, federal requirements, order entry and processing
 - 90 multiple questions in 2 hrs; 5 min is a tutorial on how to use comp system and 5 min on post-exam survey
 - 10 questions are unscored
 - FREE prep materials online
 - Passing score is 1400 on 1000-1600 range
- Step 2: take the PTCE
 - Schedule PTCE
 - Create a PTCB account and order the exam
 - \$129 to take the exam (temporarily reduced to \$115 due to COVID)
 - Once approved, an email is sent to schedule exam

- Exam is offered year-round
 - What to expect on exam day
 - Online proctored exam delivery is now available because of COVID-19
 - Some in-person sites are available
 - Arrive and check in early
 - Must bring approved ID (driver's license)
 - Preliminary unofficial exam result on the screen immediately after your test
 - Official test results will be posted on PTCB account 2-3 weeks later
 - Will receive online certificate if you pass
- Step 3: apply for license from CA State Board of Pharmacy
 - Get certified with State Board of Pharmacy
 - Application fee is \$195
 - Pharmacy Technician Application (must fill out in entirety)
 - Must include SSN or taxpayer identification
 - Passport style photo must be taken within 60 days of filling application
 - Proof of education (high school transcript, etc)
 - Have copy of PTCB certificate
 - Self-query report through NPDB
 - Fingerprint livescan
 - Taken within 60 days of filling the application
 - Submit application with all documents
 - The application may take 45 days to process
 - If you have something missing, they will reach out to you and you will have 60 days to send in what's missing
 - License will be mailed to you
 - Renew your Pharmacy Technician License
 - CPhTs are required to renew certification every 2 years
 - Renewal application opens 60 days before certification expiration date
 - Renew by continuing education
 - Complete minimum of 20 learner hours
 - 1 hr in pharmacy law
- Tips
 - Set a schedule for studying to give yourself enough time before the exam
 - Take advantage of online study resources
 - Make sure have your materials for the application (transcripts, etc)
 - Some are time-sensitive

- After you pass the exam, but haven't received your license yet, you can still apply for a job; just let your manager know that you are in the process of receiving it
- Q&A
 - Is it better to do an online program or professional college program before taking the test?
 - Rania - took her test before the requirements changed this Jan 2020, but her coworker took an online course
 - Working as a pharmacy technician, do you have to deal with insurance questions a lot? Is it a learning on the job kind of job or does someone teach you?
 - Rania & Cindy - depends on where you work; at CVS, where she works, there is some training, but a lot of it is learning on the job and asking for help when you need it; taking notes in a notebook and knowing to learn from your mistakes
 - Teaching is minimal in the beginning, new problems everyday; drop-off is where insurance problems are tackled in CVS
 - Did you find it hard to manage studying for the exam while also doing schoolwork?
 - Rania - took the exam during summertime in 2019, but she imagines that if you set a schedule for yourself, it will be manageable (so long as you stick to the schedule)
 - Cindy - the program requirement is probably to prepare students more on how to be a pharmacy technician, so helps you more with being prepared for the job rather than just the test
 - Mable - took the test during fall quarter; got the drug list from the Mosby prep book and made a quizlet (study the drugs everyday)
 - Also use the PTCB app because it has similar questions
 - Top drugs questions were there a lot, but there were a lot of what form do these drugs come in questions
 - Were a lot of conversion questions as well; grams to other units of measurements
 - Would you say the exam is difficult?
 - Rania - not that difficult, if you use the prep books and practice problems, you should be fine
 - There are 10 unscored questions, you can guess if you don't know the answer
 - Tip: top 200 drugs that you should know (generic/brand name and what it is for will help you)
 - Note: the actual exam in an in-person setting - sitting down in front of a comp with a whiteboard given to you as well

- Online proctored exam will probably also have a sheet for you to write on
 - Cindy - top 200 drug list is on the test a lot, so make sure you study that part well; no harm with just guessing a wrong answer (answer all questions and keep track of time)
 - Pace yourself wisely while taking exam
 - Do you literally have to memorize the top 200 drugs?
 - Rania - yes, you can make flashcards for them
 - One of the sides has a drug name and the other side has the generic name and function
 - Seems daunting, but is manageable
 - Mable - not that bad because many of them, the suffix gives you a clue as to what the drug is for so that can help you
 - Can make tricks to memorize them
 - Cindy - if you don't want to create your own flashcards, you can search up a quizlet for them; there are the top 200 already made on quizlet
 - Ariana - there's really awesome videos on youtube with pharm tech instructors going through drugs and making fun associations to them to remember
 - Do the top 200 drugs change yearly bc of new drugs coming out constantly?
 - Rania - for the most part, they don't tend to change drastically, they are pretty much standard over time
 - Know brand vs generic and whether the drug is helpful for diabetes, etc
 - Helps prepare you for what you actually do as a pharm tech
 - If cost is deterring you bc of the program you have to take before taking the exam, you can do the second pathway of working for 500 hours
- Meeting ends at 6:42 PM