Development and Implementation of a Pharmacy Technician Ladder for Multiple Practice Settings

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Disclosure Statement

None of the planners for this activity have relevant financial relationships to disclose with ineligible companies.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the process of ladder implementation in different pharmacy practice settings.
- Identify baseline and advanced pharmacy technician competencies.

Pre-Test Questions

True or False

- The same baseline competencies for a Certified Pharmacy Technician should be expected in any setting?

- All ladders will be structured the same?

Ladder Implementation Process

- Evaluation of your practice setting and pharmacy technician roles within your setting.
  - Roles requiring a higher level of expertise/responsibility (Senior Technicians/Leads)
  - Roles requiring advanced certifications (Immunization, Compliance, Etc.)
  - Not all settings have multiple roles/responsibilities, best practice to implement if this is the case
    - Creation of skill based, and subject matter expertise evaluation will create the ability for advancement in role

Ladder Implementation Process

- Working with HR to implement/develop ladder
  - Dependent on health system and if there is union involvement

Personal Experience:
  - All job descriptions were recreated to reflect ladder
  - Evaluation by leader as to where current technicians should be placed in the ladder
  - Any represented location requires additional work with union

Baseline Competencies

Should be based of expectations of requirements of CPhT and knowledge needed for national exam (Notated per PTCB testing outline)

Medications

- Generic names, brand names, and classifications of medications

- Therapeutic equivalence

- Common and life-threatening drug interactions and contraindications

- Strength/dose, dosage forms, routes of administration, special handling and administration instructions, and duration of drug therapy

- Common and severe medication side effects, adverse effects, and allergies

- Indications of medications and dietary supplements

- Drug stability

- Narrow therapeutic index (NTI) medications

- Physical and chemical incompatibilities related to non-sterile compounding and reconstitution

Federal Requirements

- Handling and disposing of non-hazardous, hazardous, and pharmaceutical substances and waste

- Controlled substance prescriptions

- Controlled substances

- Restricted drug programs and related medication processing

- FDA recall requirements

Patient Safety and Quality Assurance

- High-alert/risk medications and look-alike/sound-alike (LASA) medications

- Error prevention strategies

- Issues that require pharmacist intervention

- Event reporting procedures

- Types of prescription errors

- Hygiene and cleaning standards

Order Entry and Processing

- Procedures to compound non-sterile products

- Formulas, calculations, ratios, proportions, allegations, conversions, Sig codes, abbreviations, medical terminology, and symbols for days supply, quantity, dose, concentration, and dilutions

- Equipment/supplies required for drug administration

- Lot numbers, expiration dates, and National Drug Code (NDC) numbers

- Procedures for identifying and returning dispensable, non-dispensable, and expired medications and supplies

Baseline Competencies

Should be based of expectations of requirements of CPhT and knowledge needed for national exam (Notated per PTCB testing outline)

Using baseline competencies for ladder – for practice settings that do not have "specialized roles"

- Evaluating technician based on skill level of competencies
  - Entry (New to Profession)
  - Mid Level (Still Learning)
  - Senior (Subject Matter Expert/Point Person/Trainer)
- Depending on health system/pharmacy guidelines may require years experience in ladder movement. i.e., 1 yr. to move from Entry to Mid

Advanced and/or Role Competencies

Advanced Pharmacy Technicians should meet all baseline competencies in addition to role specifics

- Any advanced certificates needed for role and maintaining any required education to keep active
  - Immunization
  - MTM
  - Regulatory and Compliance
  - Inventory Management
  - Controlled Substance Diversion
  - Billing and Reimbursement/Revenue Cycle

- Consistently meeting expectations of role and being a subject matter expert
- Advanced role competencies will be different based on setting
  - Specialty
  - Acute Care
  - Clinic
  - Ambulatory

Post-Test Questions and Answers

True or False

- The same baseline competencies for a Certified Pharmacy Technician should expected in any setting?

    True

True or False

- All ladders will be structured the same?

    False