

# Career choices for **pharmacy students**



## What does being a hospital pharmacist entail?

The overarching goal of the hospital pharmacy service is to optimise patient outcomes through working collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams in order to achieve the responsible use of medicines across all settings.

To quickly summarise, the hospital pharmacist is responsible for providing the right medicines, at the right dose and the right route to the right patient at the right time with the right information and right documentation. More known as the 'seven rights'. This is not an exhaustive list of 'rights' and with the increase in the use of personalised medicines the 'right patient' has an additional meaning beyond just the identification of the individual. It also entails verifying if the medicine is genetically appropriate for that individual patient.

The hospital pharmacy profession is wide-ranging. The hospital pharmacist has **the role of a manager with an essential place close to the patient**. In this role, he/she carries out both "traditional pharmacy tasks" and clinical pharmacy services.

The daily work of a hospital pharmacist may differ from one hospital pharmacist to another. It depends on the size of the hospital he/she works in and the specialisation he/she decides to get. So, a hospital pharmacist can be polyvalent or specialised in a specific field.



## Why should students decide to become hospital pharmacists

Students should become hospital pharmacists if they want **to make difference in medication**. Indeed, hospital pharmacists as medication experts, optimise medication use for the best patient outcomes in the hospital setting where patient care is very complex.

Every day many patients enter hospitals across our countries. Taking care of patients with different diseases and complex conditions requires **multidisciplinary cooperation and high-level competencies**. Hospital pharmacists are fully part of this team effort.

Their role is promoted by public health authorities and other hospital professionals as indispensable and has been proven to improve patient care and provide better outcomes.

Furthermore, the job of the hospital pharmacist offers a very interesting and **valuable status**. In many countries, the diploma in hospital pharmacy is highly recognised and respected. This entails a secure job status with a well-balanced work/personal life and a very good salary.

So, **any student interested in making a difference using scientific and human skills while seeking to fulfil him/herself should consider seriously engaging in the hospital pharmacy profession**.

Due to an increase in tasks given to hospital pharmacists these last decades, there is nowadays a lack of hospital pharmacists in the job market. Any student would so easily find a job in this area.

Finally, thanks to the wide and multiple domains he/she has to deal with, many opportunities are offered to hospital pharmacists. Throughout his/her career, a hospital pharmacist can decide to **evolve in the expression of his/her work**. Hospital pharmacists of course work in public or private hospitals, in public health agencies (Ministries, national medicines agencies, etc.) but also in the army, for firefighter organisations or even in pharmaceutical industries as their profiles are very wanted at a senior level.



# Activities carried out by hospital pharmacists

The variety of possible tasks covers the following none exhaustive activities.



## CLINICAL PHARMACY SERVICES

- Conducting medicines reconciliation
- Checking prescriptions
- Fighting antimicrobial resistance
- Function as hotline and help for the clinical wards
- Counselling on the wards



## SELECTION, PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL DEVICES

- Ensuring there are no falsified medicines entering the hospital
- Providing appropriate storage
- Tackling shortages in the supply chain and finding the best solutions for the clinicians and patients
- Managing clinical trials to promote access to the best innovation



## PRODUCTION AND COMPOUNDING

- Producing medicines that are not commercially available such as personalised medicines:
  - IV chemotherapy drugs
  - paediatric formulation
- Working with Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs)
- Manufacturing medicines in the context of shortages
- Sterilising surgical devices

A **hospital pharmacist** assesses the status of the patient's health problems and determines whether the prescribed medications are optimally meeting the patient's needs and goals of care.

**Hospital pharmacists** do this by applying their specialised knowledge of the scientific and clinical use of medications, including medication action, dosing, adverse effects, and drug interactions, in performing their patient care activities in collaboration with other members of the health care team.

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website | [www.eahp.eu](http://www.eahp.eu)  
email | [info@eahp.eu](mailto:info@eahp.eu)  
phone | +32 (0) 2/699.25.16

