

American Association of Pharmacy Technicians

Pharmacy Technicians in 2020:
What You Need to Know



Meet the Speaker

I have been a pharmacy technician since...

Lotronex and Propulsid were still on the market...

Prozac was available only as a brand name medication...

Vioxx and Bextra were competing fiercely with Celebrex...

Lipitor and Baycol were locked into a head to head battle
for dominance of the statin market...

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Pharmacy Content Strategist

Session Objectives:



Discuss the increased level of responsibilities being seen with the technician profession and the roles that are requiring advanced skill sets.



Recognize that pharmacy technicians are lacking essential soft skills and identify the top three most valued soft skills.



Explain how certification is used as the top screening criteria for pharmacy technician applications.



**Three key findings to
guide you through
2020 and beyond.**



Pharmacy technicians are taking on more roles requiring advanced skill sets.

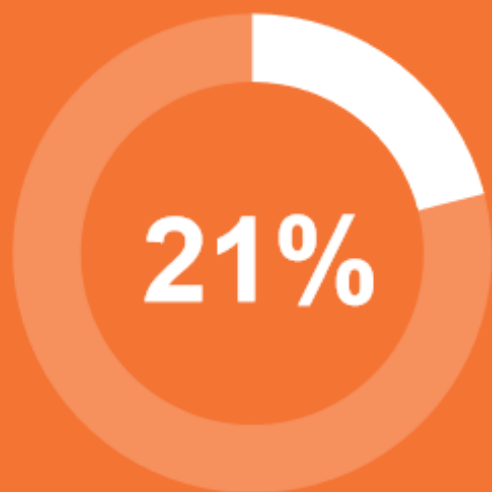


Employers report that pharmacy technicians are lacking essential soft skills.



Certification is the top screening criteria for pharmacy technician applications.

The pharmacy industry has experienced growth, yet faces growing pains



Pharmacists spend only 21% of their time performing non-dispensing duties instead of providing clinical services.¹

77%
of patients

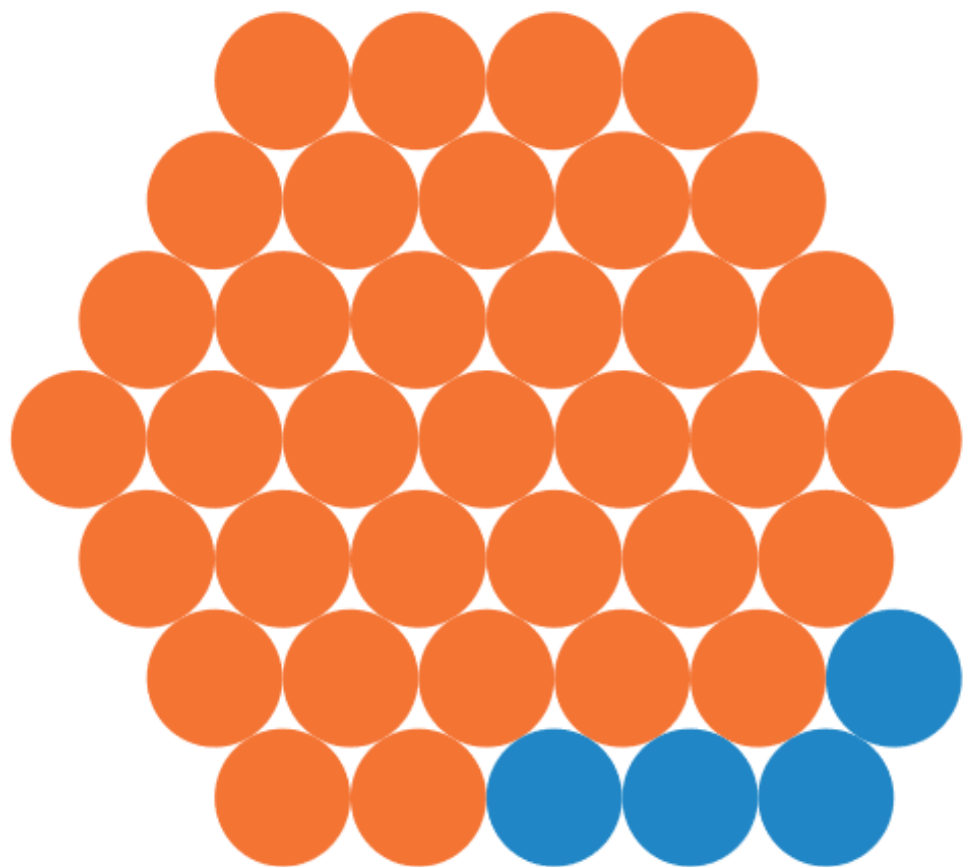
said that when they see their clinician is feeling burnt out, they become concerned about their own care and safety.²



53% of pharmacists report feelings of burnout.²

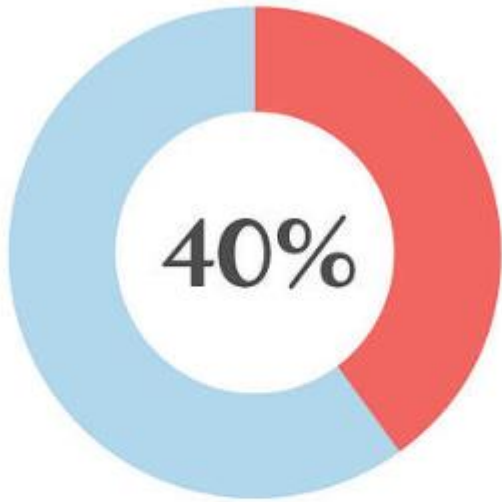
1. NACDS, Pharmacy Technician Role Expansion: An evidence-based position paper, 2018

2. ASHP Clinician Wellbeing Survey, retrieved from <https://www.ashp.org/news/2019/08/17/clinician-wellbeing-survey>



Annually, patients visit a pharmacy an average of **35 times** compared to just **4 visits** to see medical providers.¹

Pharmacy technicians are taking on more roles requiring advanced skill sets.



40% of employers report that pharmacy technicians have more responsibility this year compared to last.

- Technician Product Verification (TPV)
- Medication Therapy Management
- Immunizations/Vaccinations
- Medication History Collection

Technician Product Verification (TPV)



Pharmacy technicians complete
59% of product verification tasks.²²



Why are pharmacies now looking at technicians to take on this specific skill?

Community pharmacists are increasingly responsible for providing direct patient care services, including medication therapy management (MTM), acute diagnosing of influenza and strep throat via point-of-care testing (POCT), treatment of minor ailments (e.g., allergic rhinitis treatment, anaphylaxis, headaches [including prescribing triptans], human/canine and feline bite prophylaxis). Because of this added responsibility on the pharmacist, technicians are now taking on product verification.



What does the research say about it?

There is consensus that TPV is safe and effective based on several large prospective studies.^{10,11} Questions that remain include which pharmacies are best suited for TPV and what is the ideal training and credentialing for technicians providing TPV. Also, since TPV has been largely experimental at this point, a corresponding TPV-technician pay rate increase has not occurred, though this is anticipated as TPV spreads across the country.

Medication Therapy Management (MTM)

43%

Pharmacy technicians complete **43%** of tasks related to medication therapy.²²



Why are pharmacies now looking at technicians to take on this specific skill?

A recent report from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) noted lower than expected MTM completion rates across the country.¹⁵ As CMS is the largest payer of MTM services, this report was alarming to pharmacies and the industry as a whole. MTM represents a major departure from traditional workflows, and new approaches that involve technicians must be considered to boost the lagging adoption.



What does the research say about it?

Research supports technicians taking on advanced roles as a way to increase MTM delivery rates and as a means to improve technician job satisfaction.^{17,18} This represents a win-win for the industry. As one technician framed it in a recent study published in the Journal of the American Pharmacists Association, "... just being a part of [MTM] and seeing how beneficial it can be, I mean, [the patient] was nonfunctional because of all the medications she was on ... it's such a blessing to see what a small service can do to absolutely change somebody's life."¹⁷

Vaccinations



Pharmacy technicians prepare **37%** of vaccines for pharmacist administration.²²



Why are pharmacies now looking at technicians to take on this specific skill?

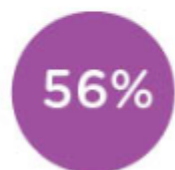
The increasing demand for clinical services, especially vaccinations from community pharmacists, has created unforeseen workflow problems. The physical act of administering a vaccine does not require clinical judgment, and with appropriate training and credentialing, a pharmacy technician who is skilled and knowledgeable on the vaccines available at their pharmacy can safely administer them, thereby helping to improve public health.



What does the research say about it?

Nearly 1,000 vaccinations were administered in the first six months after a pilot training program in Idaho involving 25 technicians. Since the completion of the pilot, more than 500 pharmacy technicians have received training to administer vaccinations.²⁰

Medication History Collection



Pharmacy technicians complete **56%** of tasks related to medication history collection and reconciliation²²



Why are pharmacies now looking at technicians to take on this specific skill?

Medication history collection is an important first step prior to MTM or medication reconciliation—two evidence-based practices proven to improve patient outcomes. When pharmacy technicians collect medication history, they can give time back to pharmacists, allowing them to provide these services to more patients.



What does the research say about it?

Of all the advanced skills technicians are taking on, this skill has the most evidence to support it. The American Society of Health-system Pharmacists (ASHP) specifically advocates for technician involvement in medication history collection and has even produced a toolkit compiling research, case studies, and best practices.²¹

Employers report that pharmacy technicians are lacking essential soft skills.

Most important soft skills

1 Critical Thinking

2 Professionalism

3 Verbal
Communication

Most lacking soft skills

1 Critical Thinking

2 Professionalism

3 Verbal
Communication

Skills for Success in Healthcare



Why a Gap in Soft Skills Exists

- Face-to-face interactions happen less
- Technology has impacted how society communicates with each other
- Standardized tests have been primary measures of success for both students and schools
- Society has evolved

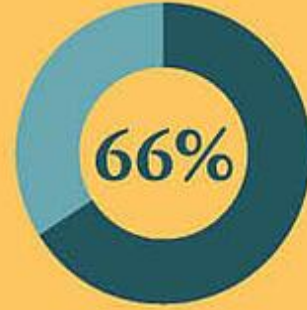


Digital Generations

Millennials and Gen Z by the numbers



Smartphone ownership:
97% of Gen Z⁷ and
93%⁸ of Millennials
own a smart phone.



64% of Gen Z and
66% of Millennials say
they are constantly
connected online.⁷



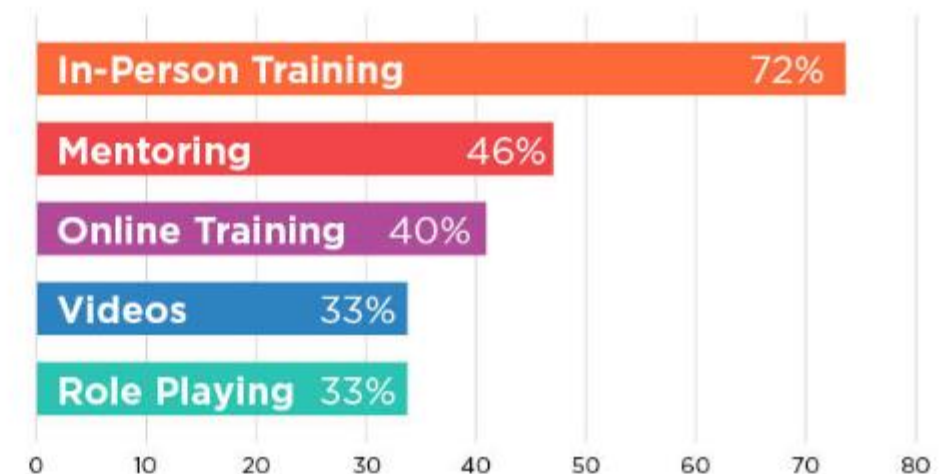
57% of Gen Z and **58% of Millennials** feel more insecure
without their mobile phone
than their wallet.⁷

Improving Soft Skills in the Healthcare Workforce

- Personality assessment test
- In-person training, mentoring, and coaching
- Online training
- Role playing
- Case Studies
- Lectures and webinars
- Auditing

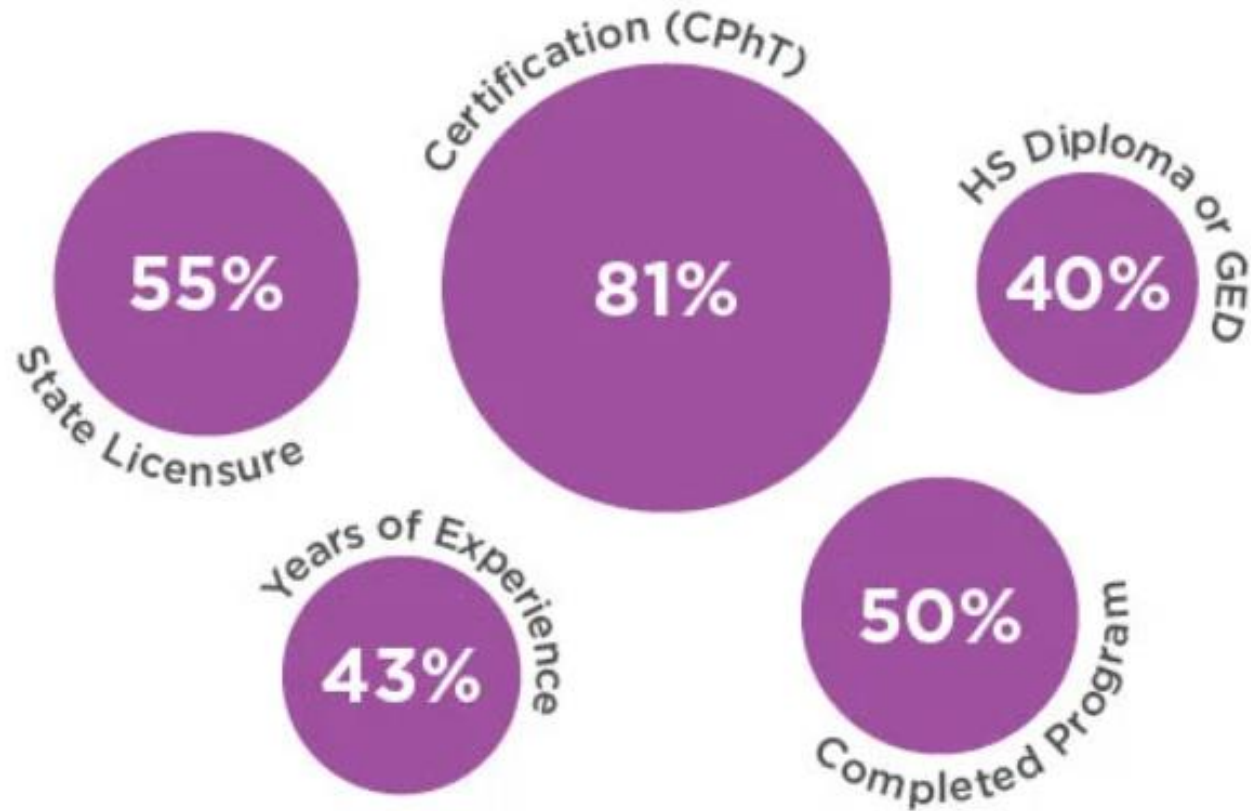
Employers' Top Soft Skills Training Methods

Source: National Healthcareer Association (2020). 2020 Industry Outlook.



Certification is the top screening criteria for pharmacy technician applications.

Screening
criteria for
pharmacy
technician
applications



Pharmacies with documented success allocate

**4 months for
technician
development**

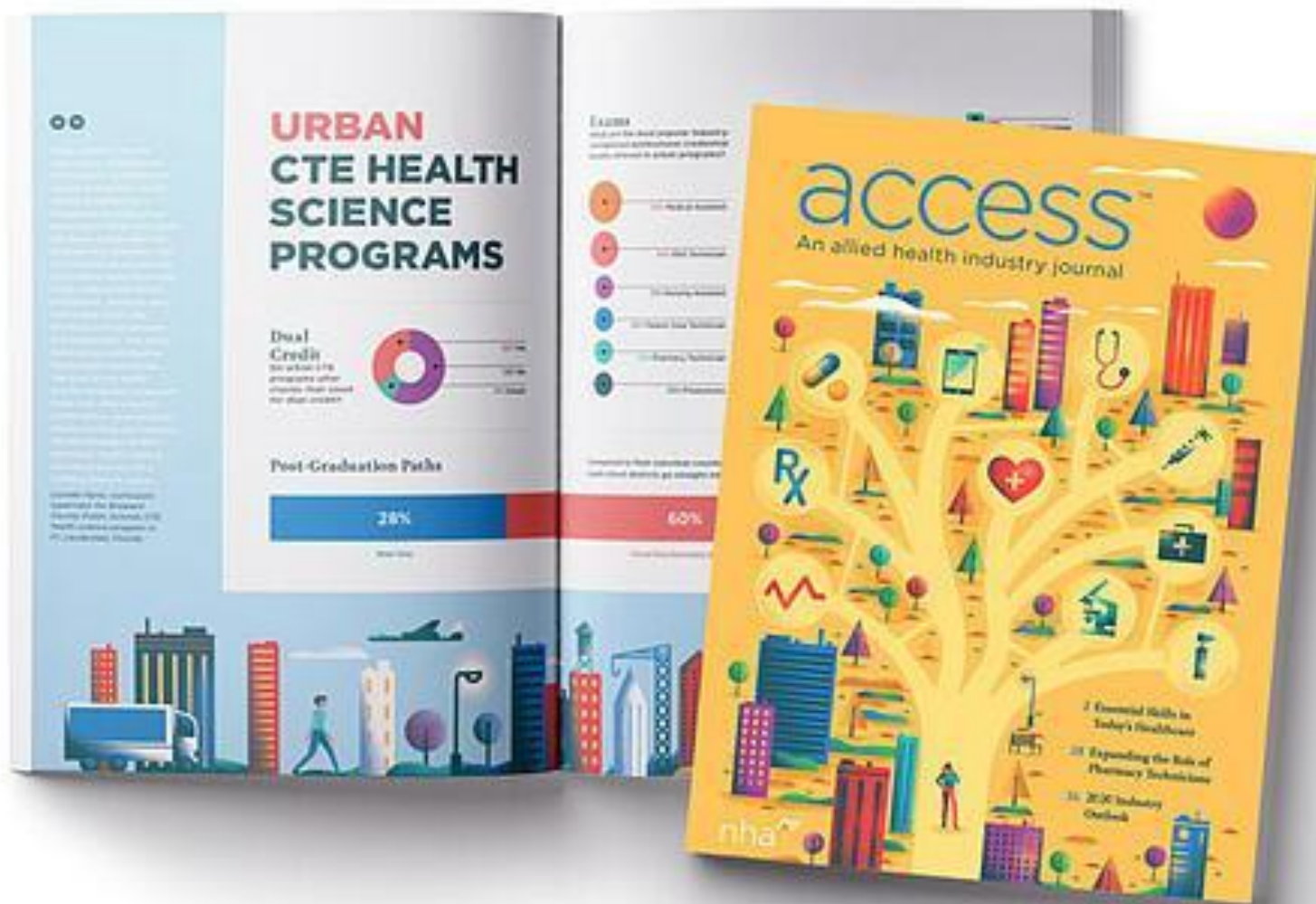
and utilize certified technicians

Pharmacy Technician Advocacy



**Pharmacy
Times**

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Key Resources for Technicians in 2020

- 1 [Access 2020](#) – An allied health industry journal.
- 2 [ONE Partner](#) – Successfully prepare your technicians with NHA, your one partner every step of the way.
- 3 [Pharmacy Technician Resource Center](#) - A collaboration between Pharmacy Times and NHA to put technician news, trends, and research all in one place.
- 4 [NHA Covid-19 Resource Page](#)- Information and updates to help during Covid-19.
- 5 [Pharmacy Technician Supplement](#) – The first ever supplement dedicated to the pharmacy technician industry and trends.



Additional Questions?

