

PHARMACY PROGRAM

The Pharmacy Profession

The pharmacist is the drug expert on the health care team who has the ability to solve health-related problems of individuals and the community as they relate to the selection, use, delivery, and distribution of pharmaceuticals. The pharmacist, utilizing knowledge of disease states, therapeutics, and the pharmaceutical and biomedical sciences, assists in the management of the patient therapy by gathering information from the patient record, the patient, other health professionals and other resources. Pharmacy practice also includes selecting and implementing a therapeutic drug regimen, monitoring the outcome of that regimen, and providing drug information and education to patients and health professionals. Collectively, these responsibilities form the foundation of the professional mandate to pharmacists to provide pharmaceutical care. The pharmacist is also responsible for storing, protecting, compounding, and dispensing medication in its various dosage forms.

Pharmacists have more career opportunities available to them today than ever before. Many are staff pharmacists, some own a private community practice, and others are managers in hospitals. Pharmacists who elect to go on for advanced training in the form of a residency or graduate education beyond the PharmD degree may choose to teach at colleges and schools of pharmacy across the country. The pharmaceutical industry also provides opportunities in research, sales, information management, marketing, regulatory control, product development, quality control and production. Numerous employment opportunities also exist in governmental agencies.

Pharmacists have the professional responsibility to improve the patient's quality of life through proactive development, implementation and monitoring of therapeutic care plans. The knowledge and level of patient care provided by pharmacists necessitates education at the doctoral level. Creighton University instituted a Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.) degree program in 1976 and offered it exclusively to entering students beginning in 1994. Doctor of Pharmacy graduates who have accumulated a sufficient number of internship hours are eligible to sit for the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) and the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination (MPJE). Successful completion of the NAPLEX and MPJE is required for licensure in all states.

Creighton University has continued to show its leadership in pharmacy education by establishing the first distance pathway to earn the Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 2001. This innovative pathway mirrors the traditional campus pathway, but allows students to take didactic classes over the Internet from wherever they live. In addition, distance pathway students may be assigned to mentors in each course who will assist, guide and encourage them. Distance students are required to come to campus for a short time each summer for hands-on laboratory experiences in an accelerated fashion. Distance students complete rotations during their fourth year at practice sites arranged by the Office of Experiential Education.