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## **FACTS ABOUT PHARMACISTS: THEY DO MORE THAN FILL PRESCRIPTIONS**

- Pharmacy is expanding its role within the health care delivery system from a profession focusing on preparation and dispensing of medications to one that promotes pharmacists providing a range of patient-oriented services to maximize the medicine's effectiveness.
- Pharmacy is practiced in a wide range of settings: community pharmacies, hospitals, nursing homes, the pharmaceutical industry, mail service pharmacies, managed care and government.
- Pharmacists are the most knowledgeable health care professionals about medicines and their uses.
- Pharmacists are licensed professionals with at least five years of highly specialized pharmacy education. They often have completed doctoral degrees in pharmacy accredited from a college of Pharmacy (Pharm. D.) and post-graduate residency programs that make them experts in the use of medications.
- Wisconsin requires pharmacists to receive continuing education in order to maintain their license.
- Choosing a pharmacist is as important as choosing a physician:
  - Medicines today have great power to heal and improve the quality of life; medicines can also do serious harm if taken incorrectly. Medication counseling is one of the most important roles of a pharmacist.
  - Using only one pharmacy ensures that all medication records are at one location, reduces the risk of duplicating medicines or having prescriptions interact harmfully.
  - Consistent interaction between pharmacists and patients helps achieve the best results from medication; avoids possible harmful drug interactions or allergic reactions; provides essential information on correct usage, such as specific eating and drinking recommendations while taking medication.

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The Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin (PSW) is a 1,800 member professional association that represents pharmacy practitioners in all aspects of pharmacy, including hospitals, chain pharmacies, independent pharmacies, long-term care facilities, home care and other components of health care. PSW provides leadership in education, advocacy and innovative services which optimize patient care through the utilization and support of rational drug therapy as a primary resource in a changing health care environment.