

PSW Technician Credentialing Taskforce – Recommendations

Approved by the PSW Board of Directors February 2009

Background

With the charge of the PSW Board of Directors to consider an action plan for proceeding with pharmacy technician credentialing in the State of Wisconsin, the Co-Chairs of the PSW Technician Credentialing Taskforce, Prati Wojtal, RPh, MS and Kelli Strese, CPhT, with PSW staff support, convened the first meeting of the group on January 27, 2009. The taskforce members represent pharmacists and pharmacy technicians from a variety of practice settings across the state. Three members of the Wisconsin Pharmacy Examining Board attended the meeting as resources and observers.

After thorough discussion, the PSW Technician Credentialing Taskforce brings forward the following recommendations to the PSW Board of Directors for consideration.

Recommendations: Requirements for pharmacy technicians

- Minimum requirements for pharmacy technicians
 - Minimum age of 18
 - High school graduate or equivalent
 - Criminal background check

Rationale

- Requires persons involved in dispensing of medications to be a legal adult
 - Considered by many other states to set a minimum standard
 - A minimum requirement for pharmacy technicians in WI Remote Dispensing Sites
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- All pharmacy technicians be registered/licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Regulation and Licensing

Rationale

- Can be used to safeguard the public through intrastate tracking of technician workforce
- When designated correctly, can prevent individuals with documented problems (i.e. drug diversion) from serving as pharmacy technicians
- Currently six states license pharmacy technicians and 35 states register technicians
- Would allow for the minimum requirements listed above to be ensured
- Registration/licensure would include a fee and would be administered by DRL
- Registration/licensure would be the responsibility of the person wanting to work as a technician

Recommendations: Requirements for pharmacies

- All pharmacies have a pharmacy technician training policy and program for new employees and maintain appropriate documentation

Rationale

- Recognizing the unique needs of various practice settings, site-specific training is important to the orientation and performance of new pharmacy technician employees
 - Establishes a minimum training requirement that is achievable for pharmacies
 - Recommendations for content (i.e. calculations, workflow procedures to ensure safety, customer service, patient safety and continuous quality improvement, pharmacy law, automation, sterile products procedures, etc.)
 - Many Wisconsin pharmacies do not currently have a defined training program for pharmacy technicians
- All pharmacies have an internal quality improvement program that focuses on medication error identification, review, and prevention

Rationale

- Approximately 90% of PSW survey respondents believed that the PEB should require pharmacy CQI programs
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that CQI programs implemented in over 50 WPQC pharmacies have made a difference in the safety of processes in these pharmacies.
- To resolve system problems and safety issues
- CQI programs will be expected to be protected from discovery

Further Recommendations

- Certification of pharmacy technicians should remain voluntary

Rationale

- Lack of evidence that certified pharmacy technicians are able to function at a higher and safer level than non-certified pharmacy technicians
 - Few states (10) require certification at this time
 - If certification is required in the future, then pharmacy technician responsibilities should be enhanced (i.e. transfer of prescription to another pharmacy, enhanced role in automation/verification, etc.)
- Completion of accredited training programs by pharmacy technicians should remain voluntary

Rationale

- No states require accredited training at this time
- Demand would exceed the current ability to provide training for pharmacy technicians in Wisconsin
- May create a severe workforce shortage if required
- If accredited training is required in the future, then pharmacy technician responsibilities should be enhanced (i.e. transfer of prescription to another pharmacy, enhanced role in automation/verification, etc.)