

PHARMACIST

What is a pharmacist?

Pharmacy is the science of medicines. Pharmacists are involved in the discovery of new drugs, their development into usable medicines and their use by patients. Pharmacists advise and educate on all aspects of the properties and use of medicines.

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What do they do?

Pharmacists are considered one of the most visible and one of the most accessible health care professionals in the world. Modern medicines are very powerful and have a great potential for relieving suffering and curing disease but also for misuse and inducing dangerous side effects. The pharmacist is the focus for all strands of knowledge that support the rational and safe use of medicines. Practising pharmacists are part of the healthcare team along with doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and dietitians. The three main branches of the profession are community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy and the pharmaceutical industry. Community pharmacists, working from high street, local and rural pharmacies, use their detailed knowledge to ensure that the medicines ordered on the doctors' prescriptions, or bought over

the counter, are correctly and safely supplied, with appropriate patient counselling on use, adverse side effects, etc.

Hospital pharmacists work directly with doctors, nurses and other health professionals to ensure that both in- and out-patients receive the most appropriate medicines and that those medicines are used in the most effective way.

The pharmaceutical industry employs a large number of pharmacists in many diverse and interesting roles. Pharmacists are experts in the development, preparation and usage of medicines. On a daily basis, many pharmacists dispense medications to patients in accordance with doctor's orders and consult patients on medication usage. They are regarded as one of the most trusted professions in the world.

As a pharmacist you could...



work in a ward pharmacy interacting directly with the medical teams and patients



ensure that patients get the maximum benefits from medicine with the minimum incidence of side effects



supply information on drug-related issues to medical and nursing staff



manufacture dosage forms and procedures

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Career opportunities

The excitement and challenges in biochemical and medical research have never been greater than they are today. The pace and diversity of scientific advances are breathtaking. Coupled with developments in technology, they offer society unrivalled opportunities in health care.

A person taking up pharmacy as a career can be assured of a challenging and interesting job, one that changes rapidly in response to developments in the health care field. Pharmacy offers many career options with the majority of pharmacists practicing in the community. By definition this involves the greatest degree of interaction with patients and their families. Pharmacists may be involved in drug discovery, development

of final products, large-scale manufacture of medicines, quality assurance, regulatory affairs and sales and marketing. Pharmacy offers a stimulating, challenging and varied career for persons interested in the rapidly developing science of drugs and medicines and who are keen to work for the well-being of the community. The broad scientific base of the pharmacy programme provides the graduate in pharmacy with employment opportunities in community, hospital and industrial pharmacy in Ireland and throughout the world. Pharmacy has always been an exciting and rewarding career, but has recently become one of the most pursued fields in the health care industry.

Did you know?

Coping with cardiovascular disease

Community pharmacists collaborate with doctors in order to detect early warning signs for cardiovascular diseases? For example, pharmacists measure blood pressure, cholesterol levels, weight and blood sugar levels to detect risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death in the developed world.

Did you know...

that community pharmacists undertake pharmaceutical care programmes for asthma sufferers? The WHO report that asthma affects 100-150 million people in the world and the proportion of the population suffering from asthma is increasing by 50% a decade. Although there is as yet no cure for asthma, the condition can be managed with a combination of medication and environmental control.