
WHAT CAN I DO WITH A MAJOR IN ... PHARMACY

OCCUPATIONAL OVERVIEW

The [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) describes the typical duties of a pharmacist:

- “Fill prescriptions, verifying instructions from physicians on the proper amounts of medication to give to patients
- Check whether the prescription will interact negatively with other drugs that a patient is taking or conditions the patient has
- Instruct patients on how and when to take a prescribed medicine
- Advise patients on potential side effects they may experience from taking the medicine
- Advise patients about general health topics, such as diet, exercise, and managing stress, and on other issues, such as what equipment or supplies would be best for a health problem
- Complete insurance forms and work with insurance companies to be sure that patients get the medicines they need
- Oversee the work of pharmacy technicians and pharmacists in training (interns)
- Keep records and do other administrative tasks
- Teach other healthcare practitioners about proper medication therapies for patients”

EDUCATIONAL/ EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

According to the [BLS \(2012\)](#) the educational requirements for becoming a pharmacist are as follows:

“All Doctor of Pharmacy programs require applicants to have taken postsecondary courses such as chemistry, biology, and anatomy. Applicants need at least 2 to 3 years of undergraduate study; for some programs, applicants must have a bachelor’s degree. For most programs, applicants also must take the Pharmacy College Admissions Test (PCAT).

Pharm.D. programs usually take 4 years to finish, although some programs offer a 3-year option. A Pharm.D. program includes courses in pharmacology and medical ethics, as well as supervised work experiences in different settings, such as hospitals and retail pharmacies.

Pharmacists seeking an advanced pharmacy position, such as a clinical pharmacy or research job, complete a 1- to 2-year residency following their Pharm. D. Some pharmacists who own their own store may choose to get a master’s degree in business administration (MBA). Others may get a degree in public health.”

LICENSURE

All states require pharmacists to be licensed. Upon completion of their Pharm.D. program prospective pharmacists must successfully pass two exams. One of these exams covers skills and knowledge in the field of pharmacy. The other exam covers pharmacy law in the state issuing the pharmacy license [BLS \(2012\)](#).

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

The UNM College of Pharmacy offers graduate degrees in Pharmaceutical Sciences with research concentrations, in [Radiopharmacy \(MS\)](#), and [Pharmacoeconomic, Pharmaceutical Policy and Outcomes \(MS and PhD\)](#).

In the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, students may enroll in the [Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program \(BSGP\)](#) or the [Nanoscience and Microsystems \(NSMS\) program](#), depending on their background and research interests. The College also offers several [residency, fellowship, and post doctoral programs](#).

- [Toxicology & Pharmaceutical Sciences](#)
- [Radiopharmaceutical Sciences](#)
- [Pharmacoeconomics, Epidemiology, Pharmaceutical Policy and Outcomes Research \(PEPPOR\)](#)
- [Residencies, Fellowships, and Postdoctorals](#)

INDUSTRIES & TARGET EMPLOYERS:

A variety of employers specifically recruit UNM students and alumni. Consult UNM's [Lobo Career Connection](#) for a complete list of employers and current job postings. Speak with a Career Development Facilitator at the [UNM Office of Career Services](#) for help with identifying employers or additional resources for your occupation of choice.

Healthcare

Hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centers, acute care, neuro-rehab, out-patient, residential treatment centers, assisted living facilities, sports medicine facilities, group or private practices, K-12 school systems

Public Health

Occupational health and safety, community health workers

Education/Research

Research laboratories and institutes, University/college teaching/administration, consultation

Management

Administrator, manager, director

Government

National Institutes of Health, Armed Services

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Throughout your undergraduate degree, gain volunteer/paid hours of hands on experience/observation by volunteering or working in a healthcare setting where licensed pharmacists are employed.
- Shadow pharmacists of interest to gain a better understanding of their occupation and to build relationships with professional mentors.
- Maintain high achievement in undergraduate science courses such as: anatomy, physiology, biology, chemistry, and physics.
- Build your network and get involved on campus through student organizations and campus events. Such as: The Society Committed for the Responsible Induction of Pharmacy students of Today, Pre-S.C.R.I.P.T <http://unmprepharm.com/>
- Attend career related campus events such as career fairs, company information sessions, and or career workshops.
- Students who are interested in pharmacy should maintain a high undergraduate GPA, high "science" GPA, and perform well on the PCAT (pharmacy college admissions test) as well as develop relationships with faculty and community leaders.
- Speak with mentors and faculty about career opportunities.
- Job leads can be found on your department's website, list-serv, newsletters, and social media sites.

STATE AND NATIONAL WAGES:

[Adapted from CareerOneStop \(2013\)](#)

PHARMACIST

Location	2013				
	10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	\$89,300	\$103,400	\$116,700	\$133,700	\$145,900
New Mexico	\$96,800	\$105,300	\$118,400	\$135,800	\$145,600

OTHER INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES:



<http://online.onetcenter.org>



<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

REFERENCES

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, (2012, March 29). *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Pharmacists*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/ooH/Healthcare/Pharmacists.htm#tab-1>

State of Minnesota, U. S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (2013). CareerOneStop, Occupation Profile, Physician Assistants. Retrieved from www.careerinfonet.org