

# The Evolving Role of Clinical Pharmacy in Modern Healthcare

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## Introduction

Clinical pharmacy is a specialized area of pharmacy that focuses on the application of pharmacotherapy principles to patient care. The goal of clinical pharmacy is to optimize medication therapy in order to improve patient outcomes. Clinical pharmacists work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and community pharmacies.

One of the key roles of clinical pharmacists is to work as part of a multidisciplinary healthcare team to provide patient centered care. This involves collaborating with physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals to ensure that medication therapy is safe, effective, and appropriate for each individual patient. Clinical pharmacists also play a critical role in educating patients about their medications, including potential side effects and drug interactions.

Another important aspect of clinical pharmacy is medication management. This includes reviewing medication orders and ensuring that the prescribed medications are appropriate for the patient's medical condition and other medications they may be taking. Clinical pharmacists also monitor patients for adverse drug reactions and drug interactions, and work to prevent medication errors.

In addition to medication management, clinical pharmacists are also involved in medication reconciliation, which is the process of reviewing a patient's medication history to ensure that they are receiving the correct medications and doses. This is especially important during transitions of care, such as when a patient is admitted to or discharged from the hospital.

Clinical pharmacists also work to optimize medication therapy through Medication Therapy Management (MTM). MTM involves a comprehensive review of a patient's medication regimen, including prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, and dietary supplements. The goal of MTM is to identify any drug therapy problems and develop a plan to resolve them. This may involve adjusting medication doses, switching to a different medication, or discontinuing a medication altogether.

Clinical pharmacists also play a key role in ensuring medication safety. This includes monitoring for adverse drug reactions and drug interactions, as well as working to prevent medication errors. Clinical pharmacists may also work with healthcare organizations to develop and implement medication safety protocols and policies.

In order to become a clinical pharmacist, individuals must first complete a Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm D) degree. After completing their degree, they may choose to complete a residency program in clinical pharmacy. Residency programs typically last for one to two years and provide specialized training in areas such as pharmacotherapy, medication management, and MTM.

## Description

Clinical pharmacists may also choose to pursue board certification through the Board of Pharmacy Specialties (BPS). Board certification is a voluntary process that demonstrates a pharmacist's expertise in a particular area of practice. BPS offers board certification in several areas, including ambulatory care pharmacy, critical care pharmacy, and oncology pharmacy.

Clinical pharmacy is a specialized area of pharmacy practice that focuses on the provision of patient centered care and the optimization of medication therapy. Clinical pharmacists work as part of a healthcare team to ensure that patients receive the best possible care and achieve the best possible outcomes.

The role of clinical pharmacists has evolved over the years to become an essential component of modern healthcare. In the past, pharmacists primarily dispensed medications and provided basic drug information to patients. Today, clinical pharmacists are responsible for a range of activities that go beyond traditional dispensing.

One of the primary responsibilities of clinical pharmacists is medication therapy management. This involves working with patients to ensure that they are taking the right medications at the right time and in the right way. Clinical pharmacists also help

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patients manage any side effects of their medications and monitor for drug interactions and potential adverse reactions.

In addition to medication therapy management, clinical pharmacists also play a critical role in medication reconciliation. This involves reviewing a patient's medication history and ensuring that all current medications are appropriate and safe for the patient. Clinical pharmacists may also work with healthcare providers to identify potential drug interactions and make recommendations for alternative medications.

Another important area of clinical pharmacy practice is disease management. Clinical pharmacists work with patients to manage chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma. They provide education on disease management and help patients develop strategies for controlling their symptoms and reducing the risk of complications.

Clinical pharmacists also play an important role in medication safety. They help to prevent medication errors by ensuring that medications are prescribed and dispensed accurately and safely. Clinical pharmacists may also work with healthcare providers to identify potential medication errors and make recommendations for preventing future errors.

In addition to working with patients, clinical pharmacists also play a critical role in healthcare team collaboration. They work closely with physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals to provide comprehensive care to patients. Clinical pharmacists may participate in rounds, provide medication education to healthcare providers, and make recommendations for medication therapy.

To become a clinical pharmacist, a pharmacist must complete additional education and training beyond the requirements for a traditional pharmacist. Clinical pharmacists may complete a residency program or obtain a board certification in a specific area of practice, such as oncology or cardiology.

The benefits of clinical pharmacy practice are numerous. Patients who receive care from clinical pharmacists are more likely to achieve better health outcomes and have fewer hospitalizations and emergency room visits. Clinical pharmacy practice also helps to reduce healthcare costs by preventing medication errors, reducing adverse drug reactions, and optimizing medication therapy.

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## Conclusion

In conclusion, clinical pharmacy is a specialized area of pharmacy that plays a critical role in patient care. Clinical pharmacists work as part of a multidisciplinary healthcare team to provide patient centered care, optimize medication therapy, and ensure medication safety. Through medication management, medication reconciliation, medication therapy management, and other specialized services, clinical pharmacists help to improve patient outcomes and enhance the overall quality of healthcare.

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