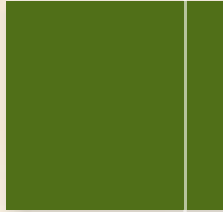
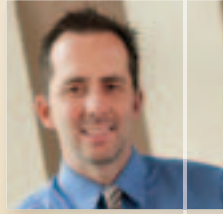
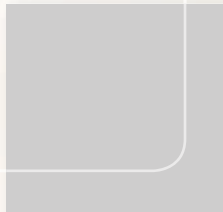
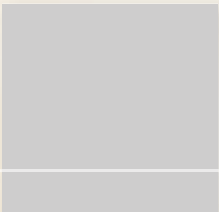
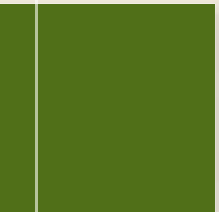
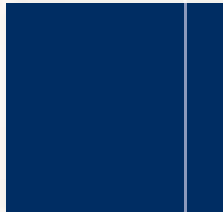
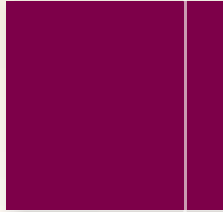
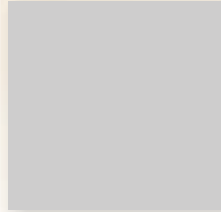


Roles of Pharmacists

IN MANAGED
HEALTH CARE
ORGANIZATIONS



AMCP | Academy of
Managed Care
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What Do Managed Care

Pharmacists in managed health care organizations, including health plans and pharmacy benefit management (PBM) companies, are responsible for the delivery of prescription drug benefits to over 200 million Americans.

Typically, a managed care organization contracts their services to a plan sponsor, such as a private company or a governmental organization. Pharmacists employed within these managed care organizations are responsible for a

broad and diversified range of clinical, quality-oriented drug management services.

There are over 18,000 pharmacists working for health plans

and pharmacy benefit management companies. It's their responsibility to make sure that the plan they design provides individual patients with

appropriate drugs and drug therapies, conveniently and cost-effectively. It's a complex job, involving the expert skills of clinically trained pharmacists at every step in the patient-care process. As with pharmacists who practice in other settings, pharmacists in managed care environments are committed to ensuring that medications are used appropriately to improve patient's health.

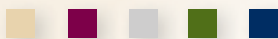
e Pharmacists Do?

They do this by performing functions within the following categories:

- Drug Distribution and Dispensing
- Patient Safety
- Clinical Program Development
- Communication with Patients, Prescribers and Pharmacists
- Drug Benefit Design
- Business Management
- Cost Management

This brief overview of the many roles of pharmacists within managed care organizations is meant to impart a very basic understanding of the wide range of activities that managed care pharmacists undertake every day. For more detailed information, see AMCP's Concepts in Managed Care Pharmacy Series on our website at www.amcp.org.



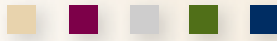


Drug Distribution Process in the Managed Care Setting

The pharmacist in the managed care setting manages the drug distribution process through one of four approaches:

- **Through the managed care organization's pharmacies:** Some managed care organizations operate their own pharmacies. These in-house pharmacies often provide enhanced pharmaceutical services because they are members of a fully integrated patient care system. Managed care pharmacists ensure that the services delivered by in-house pharmacies are of the highest quality.
- **Through community pharmacies:** Managed care organizations contract with broad-based networks of participating pharmacies to fill the prescriptions of their members. Managed care pharmacists manage the pharmacy network, perform drug utilization reviews, minimize fraud and abuse and initiate quality assurance programs to ensure that the organization's members have local access to high quality, affordable pharmacy services.
- **Through mail order or online services:** Some managed care organizations own or contract with mail order and/or online pharmacies. Managed care pharmacists manage these services to ensure quality.
- **Through collaboration with physicians and other health care professionals:** Managed care organizations have access to several databases of information that lead to a coordinated and safe drug distribution process. Pharmacists within managed care organizations review patients' medications to help safeguard against unintended side effects in new and existing prescriptions. They work with prescribers and other health care professionals to ensure that the medications prescribed are: eligible for coverage, of high quality, affordable and projected to do no harm.

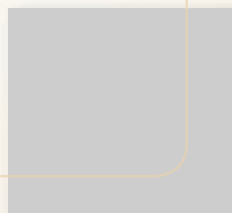
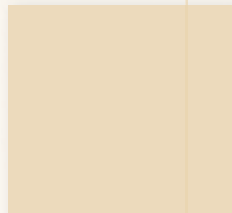
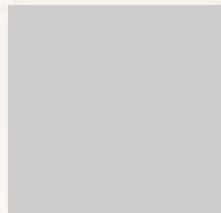
Pharmacists who practice in a managed care environment are committed to ensuring that medications are used appropriately.

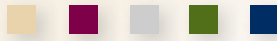


Patient Safety

Managed care pharmacists help ensure patient safety by analyzing prescription claims data to identify problematic prescription use patterns, intervening with prescribers and patients to help correct such problems and educating prescribers about best practices associated with the use of prescription drugs. They design and administer...

- **Drug Utilization Review (DUR) programs:** This process can identify potential prescription-related problems such as drug/drug interactions, duplication of drugs, known allergies, under- or overdosing or inappropriate therapy.
- **Prior Authorization (PA or “Prior Auth”) programs:** An approval process that encourages proper use of medications and discourages inappropriate prescribing of drugs.
- **Monitoring programs:** Some drugs require lab-based monitoring for dosage adjustment. Monitoring programs ensure that drugs are prescribed safely and used appropriately.
- **Quality Assurance (QA) programs:** Programs that enhance patient safety and improve the ways in which patients use drugs.





Clinical Program Development

In order to enhance patient care, particularly for patients with chronic conditions whose quality of life depends on prescription drugs, managed care pharmacists design clinical programs that...

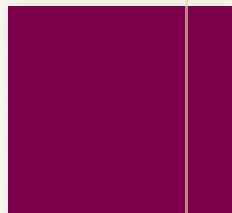
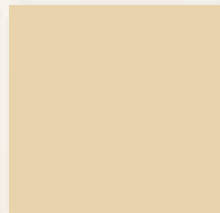
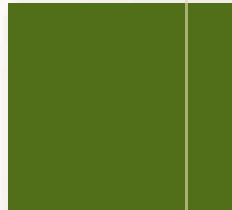
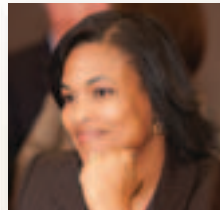
- **Evaluate scientific evidence** in order to select appropriate drugs for a patient population. A thorough evaluation of the scientific and clinical data regarding new drugs must be made by a panel of clinical experts within managed care organizations. Called pharmacy and therapeutic (P&T) committees, these panels generally include pharmacists, physicians and other medical professionals.
- **Assess the effectiveness** of new treatments for diseases compared to standards of care.
- **Use evidence-based clinical and research data to create disease management and medication therapy management programs** that help patients live more successfully with their medical conditions.
- **Increase understanding of the ways in which clinical therapies affect quality of life**, and implement programs that help ensure such quality is achieved.
- **Explore ways of managing patients** with chronic conditions who are dependent on comprehensive drug therapies.
- **Design and conduct outcomes-based research** in order to help patients achieve the desired results from their drug therapy, and enhance their ability to make quality-of-life decisions.

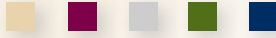


Communications with Patients, Prescribers and Pharmacists

Managed care pharmacists design and use communication protocols, such as those used within a call center or medication therapy management program, to ensure that there is an exchange of necessary information between patients, their physicians and their pharmacists. Communications are required to...

- **Help physicians and other prescribers choose drugs** that will meet patients' needs and be eligible for coverage.
- **Provide patients with information** on their individual prescription history through personalized reports.
- **Educate patients about drugs** they are taking or those being suggested by their physicians.
- **Provide the point of care pharmacist with a more complete patient profile and guidance on coverage issues** to aid them in their delivery of patient care.
- **Help patients manage their health care** and help physicians address complex medication therapy questions.

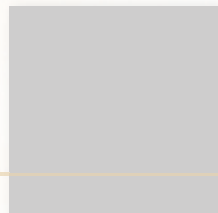


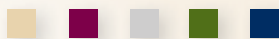


Plan Benefit Design

Managed care pharmacists collaborate with other health care professionals to design effective benefit structures that will service a specific population's needs. The pharmacist uses clinical knowledge and practical experience to address such design matters as...

- **Whether a formulary (the approved list of medications that a plan will cover) should be used** and, if so, whether it should be a “restricted” or “open” formulary; whether to establish a patient cost-sharing structure for generic, covered brand-name medications and non-formulary drugs.
- **Whether a “participating” pharmacy network should be established** and, if so, how expansive should the network of community, mail order and online pharmacies be to service the population properly; what criteria for quality assurance should participating pharmacies be expected to meet.
- **What criteria and procedures for drug utilization should be established** to help safeguard that (1) patient safety and best outcomes are maximized, and (2) that patients receive the correct drug at the correct dosage, understand why they are being asked to take the drug and are compliant in taking the drug.



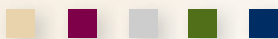


Business Management

Managed care pharmacists contract with employer and health plan clients, pharmacies and manufacturers to structure business arrangements that...

- **Allow their clients to customize clinical and reporting requirements** to meet their individual population needs.
- **Negotiate with manufacturers for discounts on drug prices** for clients in exchange for moving market share when clinically appropriate.
- **Assist clients** in assessing the appropriateness of new drugs compared to existing therapeutic options.
- **Establish networks of pharmacies** to provide accessibility for patient populations and assure participating pharmacy compliance with patient safety and quality programs.





Cost Management

Managed care pharmacists help their clients (employers, HMOs, trust funds, Medicaid, etc.) evaluate and improve their pharmacy benefit by...

- **Encouraging prescribers** to make cost effective drug choices that are clinically appropriate.
- **Integrating improvements** so that costs are actually saved, not merely shifted.
- **Introducing system interventions** that enhance the quality of patient care and save costs.
- **Using data to identify adherence and nonadherence** with prescribing guidelines, and, by creating measures for assessing physician performance, identifying prescribing patterns and determining opportunities for improvement.
- **Ensuring a scientific evaluation of cost** for new drugs by applying pharmacoconomics.



About the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy

AMCP is a national professional association of pharmacists and other health care practitioners who serve society by the application of sound medication management principles and strategies to improve health care for all. The Academy's nearly 6,000 members develop and provide a diversified range of clinical, educational and business management services and strategies on behalf of the more than 200 million Americans covered by a managed care pharmacy benefit. More news and information about AMCP can be obtained on its website, at www.amcp.org.



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