

PHARMACIST

Pharmacists dispense drugs prescribed by physicians or other health care practitioners. They also provide the patients with information about the medications and their use.

Employment opportunities in the health care field are currently at an exceptionally high level. No matter what the state of the economy, the demand for health care professionals will continue to grow. Individuals can start in entry-level occupations and advance their careers while enjoying the stability of employment. Also, individuals can start at the mid or advanced levels, depending on their education, training, and career goals. At each of the levels, there are many opportunities for more challenging and higher paying positions.



SAGINAW VALLEY

Each ladder depicts a series of work experiences that leads to more challenging and higher paying opportunities. While every level of the ladder can provide a satisfying job, some employees will choose to gain even more skills and responsibilities that will advance them in their careers. To do so, they will need more education, training, and work experiences. Some jobs will require a certificate, a license, or an advanced degree.

CLIMBING THE CAREER LADDER

ADVANCED LEVEL

Associate's, bachelor's, master's or doctorate degree required; must graduate from an accredited program; must obtain license or certification

Registered Nurse

\$19.30-\$27.64/hour

Pharmacists

\$31.83-\$41.95/hour

MID LEVEL

Associate's degree or graduation from an accredited program required; must obtain a license or certification

Licensed Practical Nurse

\$12.71-\$17.81/hour

Paramedic

\$10.30-\$18.04/hour

ENTRY LEVEL

Most occupations require a high school diploma or a graduate equivalency diploma (GED), three to six months training, and knowledge of medical terminology; certification is required in some of the occupations

Nursing Aide, Orderly, and Attendant

\$8.06-\$11.39/hour

Emergency Medical Technician

\$7.73-\$10.30/hour

Pharmacy Technician

\$8.74-\$13.19/hour

Wages will vary within this occupation based on the employee's education, training, and years of experience.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Each occupation is described in terms of specific tasks and typical job duties.

A PHARMACIST MUST BE ABLE TO:

- Understand the use of a drug, the effects, both good and bad, and how the drug might react with other medications
- Mix chemical ingredients to form powders, tablets, capsules, and ointments
- Advise physicians and other health practitioners on the selection, dosage, interactions, and side effects of medications
- Monitor the health and progress of patients in response to drug therapy
- Counsel patients and answer questions about prescription drugs
- Complete insurance forms and other paperwork
- Oversee the general operation of the pharmacy
- Work on multiple tasks at one time
- Work independently with self-direction, initiative, and motivation
- Work with others in a team approach
- Communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing

WAGES

Wage information was obtained from the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth and from local employers to give a general idea of the wages and salaries for this occupation.

WAGE RANGE

\$31.83-\$41.95/hour

WORKING CONDITIONS

Pharmacists work in retail drugstores or in health care facilities, such as hospitals, nursing homes, mental health institutions, or neighborhood health clinics. Pharmacists work in clean, well-lighted, and well-ventilated areas.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Courses, programs, and certificates that are needed for employment are offered by local education and training providers.



HIGH SCHOOL

- Completion of high school's Health Sciences Career Pathway requirements and/or appropriate career and technical education classes
- Algebra
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Physics
- Career studies, such as the medical careers program at the Saginaw Career Complex or health technology/medical science or the nursing assistant/health careers program at the Bay-Arenac ISD Career Center
- Co-op work experience
- Volunteer experience in a health care environment

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

- Delta College: associate's degree applied science – pharmacy technician program

UNIVERSITY

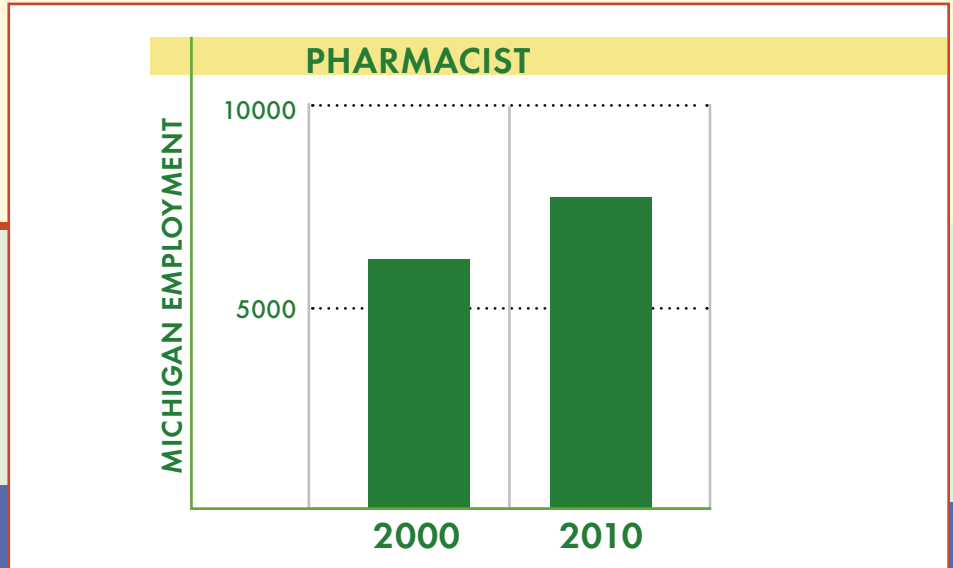
- Ferris State University: doctor of pharmacy degree
- Wayne State University: doctor of pharmacy degree
- University of Michigan: doctor of pharmacy degree
- Saginaw Valley State University: pharmacy tech certification exam training

LOCAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

- Local school districts
- Bay-Arenac ISD Career Center
- Saginaw Career Complex
- Delta College
- Ferris State University
- Wayne State University
- University of Michigan

JOB OUTLOOK

The rate of growth within this occupation is projected by data from local employers and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth.



ADVANCEMENT

Traditionally, a pharmacist position is one of the most advanced occupations on a health services Career Ladder. New opportunities are emerging for pharmacists in research, disease management, and in managed-care organizations.

WHAT THE EMPLOYER SAID



WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A POTENTIAL EMPLOYEE FOR THIS POSITION?

“We look for individuals who are patient advocates and who will go out of their way to help. This job is not just about dispensing medicine, but involves counseling patients and answering their questions. Patients need to know about the possible side effects or interactions among the various drugs that they are taking.”

Stacy Haman, office manager
Healthway Compounding Pharmacy

STAR PROFILE

This interview is intended to show you what is needed to be a star employee.



EMPLOYEE:
MICHAEL COLLINS

OCCUPATION:
PHARMACIST

COMPANY:
**HEALTHWAY
COMPOUNDING
PHARMACY**

TELL US HOW YOU ATTAINED YOUR CURRENT POSITION.

My father owned the business where he worked. Since I was in high school, I planned on someday owning a business too. When I was in pharmacy school, I decided that it made sense that my business would be a pharmacy. After graduation, I worked at two different pharmacies and then decided it was time for me to own my own business. I decided to buy an existing pharmacy because it would already have established customers. I bought my first pharmacy in the village of St. Charles. Since then, I have opened two more locations in Saginaw.

DESCRIBE YOUR TYPICAL DAY.

My pharmacy doesn't open till 10:00 a.m. I arrive at work between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. For the first couple of hours, I work on projects that I don't have time to work on during the day. Some of the things that I do during that time are researching answers to questions by doctors and patients and working on new formulas or solutions. My staff arrives at 9:30, and we then discuss what needs to be done and plan the day accordingly. During the rest of the day, I talk with patients about their medications and answer questions on nutritional supplements, talk with doctors and nurses, and fill prescriptions.

WHAT QUALITIES MAKE SOMEONE A "STAR" IN THIS OCCUPATION?

Being a great pharmacist means having the knowledge and the compassion to help people.

WHAT TRAINING AND EDUCATION DID YOU NEED TO ENTER THIS POSITION?

You must graduate from an accredited college of pharmacy and pass the North American Pharmacist Licensure Exam.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST/LEAST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

The best part of my job is making someone feel better, especially small kids. There is a lot of paperwork when you are a pharmacist – from labeling to insurance work. My least favorite part of the job is the time I spend on the phone working things out with the insurance companies.

WHAT ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE SOMEONE SEEKING A JOB IN YOUR FIELD?

If you hate chemistry, you won't like being a pharmacist. Preparing to be a pharmacist is studying chemistry for six years.

ARE THERE ANY LICENSES OR CERTIFICATIONS NEEDED FOR YOUR POSITION?

The Michigan license as a registered pharmacist as well as a current controlled-substance license are required.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Career Ladders project began as a Saginaw County Vision 2020 initiative. To date, more than 300 individuals have been involved in the project. It is impossible to list them all, but the Comprehensive Education and Workforce Development Committee appreciates each one and the incredible participation by our major employers and educational institutions, as well as the support from the Arnold and Gertrude Boutell Memorial Fund, The Dow Chemical Company, The Dow Corning Foundation, the Fordney Club, the Hospital Council of East Central Michigan, the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, the National Tooling and Machining Association – Saginaw Valley Chapter, the Saginaw Community Foundation, the Saginaw County Business and Education Partnership, the Saginaw County Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Saginaw County's local school districts, Saginaw County's Promise, the Saginaw County Vision 2020, the Saginaw Future Inc., the Saginaw/Midland/Bay Michigan Works!, the Saginaw Township Business Association, the Saginaw Valley Manufacturers' Association, and the Saginaw Valley Tech Prep Partnership. We also want to thank NOVA for their guidance.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROGRAM. AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.