

Pharmacy services play a vital part in care delivery.

Pharmacy technicians prepare medications, check work of other pharmacy techs, interview patients about their needs, and help distribute and reconcile medications.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, pharmacy techs ensured distribution to patients in hospitals and care at home. As technology changes and the pharmacist role expands, job security has grown for pharmacy techs.

BACKGROUND

Kaiser Permanente’s mission is to deliver high-quality, affordable care and to improve the health of our members and communities we serve. Our pharmacy program supports that by keeping costs down and helping improve outcomes. While the cost of many medications continues to climb, our integrated system is better able to address the challenge, particularly as new drugs enter the market.

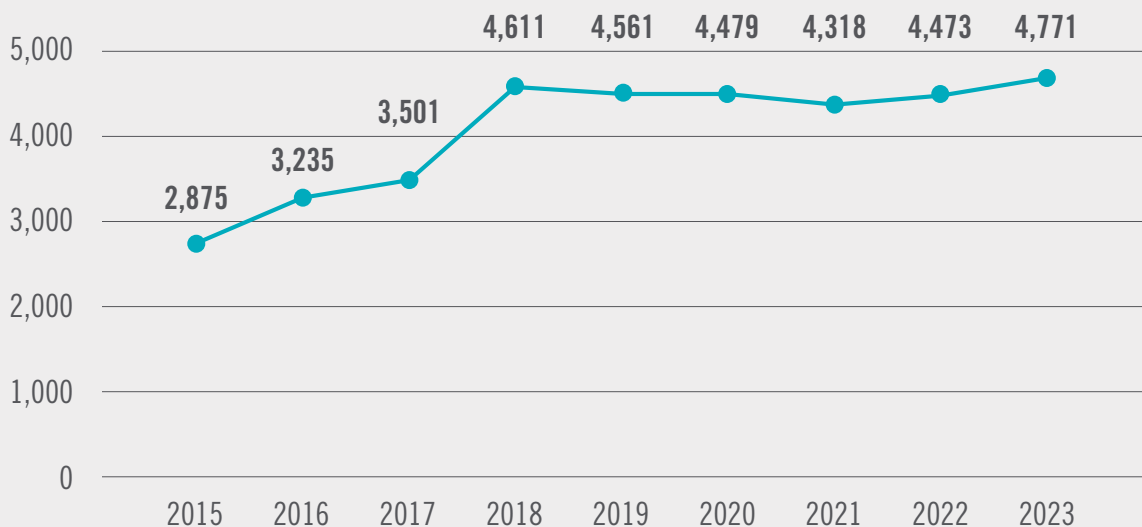
Pharmacy techs work in in-patient, ambulatory and home settings. A pilot in Southern California is expanding their skills to include sterile compounding. This will enhance their ability to work in the in-patient setting.

OUTLOOK

U.S. employment of pharmacy techs is projected to grow 5% by 2031. That tops the projected growth rate for pharmacists.

A small percentage of pharmacy techs will become pharmacists. Their most common path to advance will be in administrative roles, project management or staff management positions.

RISING DEMAND: Kaiser Permanente’s pharmacy technician jobs have grown 66% since 2015



CONTINUES ON THE NEXT PAGE 


EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Pharmacy techs typically need a high school degree and get on-the-job training or need to attend a 9-month to 1-year training from a pharmacy tech training institution. Kaiser Permanente is exploring apprenticeships that may cut the training time to 6 months.

Pharmacy techs register with the state Pharmacy Board. They get advanced training through professional organizations. Their professional organization is the National Pharmacy Technician Association (NPTA). The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists sets education standards. Other pharmacy professional organizations also offer technical support.


TAKE ACTION

Employees: Explore career paths at kpcareerplanning.org/paths. Partnership union members can talk with an education trust career counselor. Learn more at LMPartnership.org/workforce.

Managers: Adapt to emerging trends. Talk with a Workforce of the Future implementation specialist to discuss training and education opportunities (kpcareerplanning.org/prd/contact_us.php).

CURRENT CORE JOB SKILLS

- » Math
- » Customer service
- » Attention to detail
- » Supply management
- » Communication with patients and staff
- » Clinical and hospital medication requisitions
- » Preparing patient medication units for distribution
- » Becoming agile with relevant technology
- » Home infusion
- » Clinical pharmacy service support

EMERGING CORE SKILLS

- » Ability to work in multiple patient settings
- » Understanding of complex medical technology
- » Certification in varied patient conditions

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2024