

Filling the Gap: Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeships

Ryan Birk, PharmD, MS, BCPS

Russell Jason Orr, PharmD, MBA

Thomas Carey, PharmD



Conflict of Interest

- None to disclose



Illinois Law Update

January 1, 2024, it shall also be the joint responsibility of a pharmacy and its pharmacist in charge to ensure that all new pharmacy technicians are educated and trained using a standard nationally accredited education and training program, such as those accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)/the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP),

or

equivalent work experience of 500 hours as a pharmacy technician covering the practice areas set forth in items (1) through (6) of this subsection...



Objectives

- Identify the different types of training and apprenticeship models available through the U.S. Department of Labor.
- Describe how different funding sources can assist in filling the open pharmacy technician positions.
- Explain the requirements needed for employers and apprentices to achieve the U.S. Department of Labor certificate of completion.



Apprenticeship Models Key Objectives

1. Earn wages during training
2. Provide on-the-job learning and job-related education
3. Learning in the work setting under the direction of a mentor(s)
4. Certification
5. Wage increase and title change with certification





Sources of Funding

- Open Funding - U.S. Department of Labor
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) Act and Funding
 - Training, instruction and supportive services
- Grants
 - Local county grants
- State Tax Credits and Tuition Support
 - IL tax credit - \$3,500 to \$5,000
- Military (GI Bill) education benefits
- Apprentice might pay their related instruction costs
- Employer



When poll is active respond at PollEv.com/ichp Send **ichp** to **22333**



1. Which of the following is a key objective of apprenticeship models?



0%



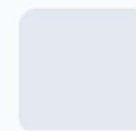
Offering a fixed wage throughout training

0%



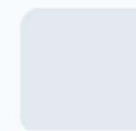
Incorporating on-the-job learning and job-related education

0%



Exclusively focusing on didactic classroom instruction

0%



No mentoring support



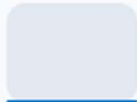
When poll is active respond at PollEv.com/ichp Send **ichp** to **22333**



2. What are examples of funding sources to assist in developing pharmacy technician apprenticeships?

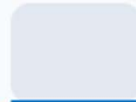


0%



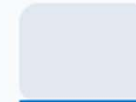
Employer benefits (tuition support, etc.)

0%



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) Act Resources and Funding

0%



State Tax Credits

0%



All of the above

Core Requirements for Apprenticeship Certification from U.S. Department of Labor

Industry Led

Paid Job

Structured On-the-
Job
Learning/Mentorship

Supplemental
Education

Diversity

Quality & Safety

Credential



Checklist for Registered Apprenticeship Program Development

- Employer selection of skills and competencies
 - Design technical and behavioral competencies **OR**
 - Align with a current Registered Apprenticeship Standard

- Determine a progressive wage increase pathway

- Schedule for on-the-job training and education component
 - Potentially partner for education element



Checklist for Registered Apprenticeship Program Development

- Determine funding sources
- Identify key mentors for training
 - Current department leaders or trainers
- Selection process for candidates
- Begin apprenticeship
 - Monitored and evaluated regularly
 - National technician exam or portal credential (PTCB, NHA, etc.)

Apprenticeship Program Creation Support

- Federal Interactive Tool to Express Interest:
 - <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/employers/express-interest-instructions>
 - Provides a guided evaluation to match gaps to resources
 - Apprenticeship consultant will reach out to you
- IL Specific Resource:
 - <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/ApprenticeshipIL>
 - Apprenticeship navigators located across the state
 - Talent First PBC holds the local Registered Apprenticeships Standards for Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeships



When poll is active respond at PollEv.com/ichp Send **ichp** to **22333**



3. Most of the apprenticeship model key objectives align with technician training, competencies, and optimal new employee support structure.

00:20

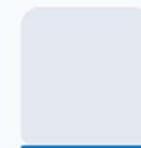
0

0%



True

0%



False



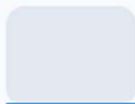
When poll is active respond at PollEv.com/ichp Send **ichp** to **22333**



4. Select the statement that does NOT describe the core requirements for employers to achieve a U.S. Department of Labor registered apprentice program.

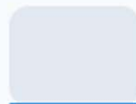


0%



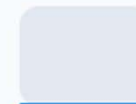
Progressive wages as their skills increase

0%



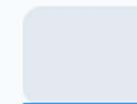
Structured On-the-Job Learning/Mentorship/Supplemental Education

0%



Portable Credential

0%



Only one way to design a program



BJC HealthCare & SWIC Technician Training Program



2023 ICHP
ANNUAL MEETING

BJC HealthCare

- Integrated, academic healthcare system
 - Urban, suburban and rural communities
 - 14 hospitals and multiple community health locations
- 3,275 inpatient beds
- 460,000 emergency visits annually
- \$6.3 billion net revenue





Program Structure

- **Health system and community college collaboration**
- **Program started**
 - January 2022
- **Curriculum**
 - Online learning system
 - In-person simulation and labs
 - 160 hours of rotation / on-the job training
- **Length of program**
 - 18 weeks
- **No FTE dedicated from BJC HealthCare**
 - SWIC supports program coordinator and lecturers
 - Rotation support from BJC HealthCare
- **ASHP Accredited**
- **Registered apprenticeship program**



Outcomes

- Factors for Starting the Program
 - Market response to limited highly trained technician supply
 - New regulatory changes (IL laws, sterile compounding, etc.)
 - Develop a BJC career pathway
- Impact of the Program
 - 19 graduates of the program
 - 90% of technicians completed the program
 - ~70% are with BJC after 12 months



Key Factors

- Lessons learned or keys to success
 - Leverage employee benefits, grant funding, and college credit option
 - Program designed for market needs and ASHP accreditation standards
 - Expand timeline for program approval with community college
 - Strong connection between partners BJC HealthCare + SWIC
 - Seek partners to help with accredited apprenticeship elements



Key Factors

- Future expansion and support
 - New BJC specific cohort for high-performing technicians
 - Investigate additional states for apprenticeship funding support



UChicago Medicine Technician Training Program



2023 ICHP
ANNUAL MEETING

Organizational Background

- System information:
 - Ingalls Community hospital
 - Advent Health connection
 - Infusion sites
 - Coming soon:
 - NW Indiana hospital site
 - Cancer Center Hospital



Center for Care & Discovery (CCD)

- Opened in February 2013
- 436 Adult Acute Care beds
 - 332 Medicine & Surgery beds
 - 104 ICU beds
- 55 Level 1 Trauma Center ER
- Hematology/Oncology Services
- 28 Operating Suites

Bernard A. Mitchell Hospital

- 75 adult acute care beds
- Hospitalist services
- Post-natal mother-baby unit
- Physical therapy services
- Dialysis center
- Imaging and radiology services



Comer Children's Hospital

- 172 acute care beds
 - 30-bed PICU
 - 71-bed Level IV NICU
- ED/Level I Trauma Center
- High acuity services such as ECMO, Hematology/Oncology, OR, Cath lab

Duchossois Center for Advanced Medicine

- Ambulatory clinics in specialties such as transplant, cardiology, hepatology, endocrin, pulm, HSCT, Oncology, and ID
- Chemotherapy infusion Clinic
- Outpatient OR Pharmacy
- Outpatient Pharmacy/Meds2Beds
- Specialty Pharmacy Services



Program Structure

- **Program Dates:**
 - **1st Cohort:** February 2023
 - **2nd Cohort:** August 2023
- **Number of students:** 7-9 per cohort
- **Length of program:** 24 weeks
- **Curriculum**
 - **Didactic:** Online Learning Program with Testing/Exams
 - **Hands-on Training:** A Technician Manager trains learners
- **FTE Support:**
 - 1.0 FTE Technician Manager
 - 9.0 FTE Learners
- **ASHP Accreditation Status:**
In exploratory phases
- **Funding Source:** UCM supported program



Outcomes

- **Factors for starting the program:**
 - Technician turnover
 - Training gaps
 - Internal recruitment patterns
 - Community support
 - Illinois state law modifications
 - Budget targets
 - ASHP Center of Excellence
- **Impact of the program:**
 - 3 out of 7 graduated
 - 100% Hired
 - 100% passed tech certification exam

Key Factors

- **Lessons learned or keys to success**
 - Took multiple years to gain program support
 - Test-taking skills assessment
 - Candidate pool management and filtering
- **Future expansion and support**
 - Due to attrition of cohort #1 we expanded cohort #2
 - Likely will need to consider expansion even further for cohort #3 however there are space limitations

Implementation Plan						
Team: X						
Executive Sponsor: X						
Addressing (8.3.a) The pharmacy department provides an ASHP/ACPE-accredited pharmacy technician training program or collaborates with community colleges and other healthcare entities to support ASHP/ACPE-accredited pharmacy technician programs through didactic and experiential learning experiences.						
Action Description	Assigned to (Responsible Party(ies))	Start Date	Due Date	Metric	Completion Status	Comments
Design the initial technician apprenticeship program	Jason Orr and X	2019	2019	Business plan	Denied	Not approved.
Re-pitch the technician apprenticeship program	Jason Orr	2020	2020	Business plan	Denied	Not Approved
Re-pitch the technician apprenticeship program	Jason Orr	2021	2021	Business plan	Interested but paused	Postponed due to other organizational targets prioritized.
Re-pitch the technician apprenticeship program	Jason Orr	2022	2022	Business plan	Completed	Approved.



UW Northern Illinois Technician Training Program



2023 ICHP
ANNUAL MEETING

Organizational Background

- Number of hospitals integrated pharmacy services
 - UWNI – Rockford
 - 388 Licensed Beds
 - 78K ED Encounters per year
 - Primary Mental Health Destination
 - UWNI – Belvidere
 - 54 Licensed Beds
 - Regional Cancer Center
- Other descriptive factors
 - Merged with UW Madison





Program Structure

- First Apprentice: February 2022
- Number of students
 - 2022: 2
 - 2023: 4 (to date)
- Length of program: 24 weeks
- Curriculum
 - Online learning with testing
 - On-the-job Training
 - Level I Competencies
- FTE Support:
 - 0.5 FTE Pharmacy Technician Supervisor
- ASHP Accredited
 - Exploratory phase
- Funding Source
 - UWNI



Outcomes

- Factors for starting Program
 - Vacancy and Turnover
 - Rockford market provides limit opportunities
 - Competition from manufacturing
 - Future competition from Cheap Trick!
 - Significant internal expansion
- Impact of program
 - 3 out of 6 Graduated
 - 100% Hired
 - 2 out of 3 retained



Key Factors

- Lessons learned or keys to success
 - Have “acquired” classroom next to Central Fill Pharmacy to provide homogenous environment for didactic learning and CSP hands on training
 - Recruiting for Technician Supervisor to standardize training, education and scheduling
 - Require hand-on’s experience to assure a “good fit”
- Future expansion and support
 - Partnership with Goodwill and regional rural EMS community
 - Partnership with RPS-205 for students not intending higher education



Quick Summary



2023 ICHP
ANNUAL MEETING



< 073 - Birk, Carey, Orr - Filling the gap: Pharmacy Technician Apprenticeships

Moderate

Visual settings

Edit




When poll is active respond at PollEv.com/ichp Send **ichp** to **22333**



Questions?

0

Nobody has responded yet.
Hang tight! Responses are coming in.



Ryan Birk, PharmD, MS, BCPS
Russell Jason Orr, PharmD, MBA
Thomas Carey, PharmD



2023 ICHP
ANNUAL MEETING