



Expand Pharmacist to Technician Ratios to Allow for Greater Use of Pharmacy Technicians

In the community pharmacy setting, the extent to which pharmacists are able to engage in direct patient care activities is dependent upon pharmacists' ability to delegate non-judgmental tasks to pharmacy technicians. This growing demand for services such as medication therapy management, immunizations, point of care testing, and patient screenings corresponds with a need to delegate pharmacy administrative tasks to technicians which allows pharmacists to focus on providing these services. For this reason, MPhA supports the ability of pharmacists to increase the number of technicians they can supervise.

The concept of a [strict limit for the technician to pharmacist ratio](#) is an antiquated one that is no longer appropriate in today's pharmacy practice environment; current ratios are an impediment to pharmacies that prevents [pharmacists](#) from maximizing use of pharmacy technicians to provide a broader set of patient care services to the public. Many state boards of pharmacy, recognizing this to be true, have relaxed or eliminated restrictive ratios to allow for optimal use of pharmacy technicians. Other groups, including the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP), share the view that the technician [to pharmacist ratio limit](#) should be eliminated entirely.¹

In today's reformed health care system, health care providers (including pharmacists) face increasing pressure to deliver high quality health care services to a greater number of patients. Innovative workflow models and use of pharmacy technicians to perform administrative and nondiscretionary tasks are integral to maximizing the time pharmacists spend with patients. To this end, it is critical that restrictive technician [to pharmacist](#) ratios be increased to allow practicing pharmacists to evaluate their individual practice settings and determine the appropriate staffing scenarios for their pharmacy to meet the needs of their patients.

Increasing the technician to pharmacist ratio will enable pharmacists to focus more on counseling patients, performing medication therapy management, providing disease management programs, engaging in other important pharmaceutical patient care services, and conferring with other health care professionals, thus permitting a higher level of service to patients. These services offered by community pharmacists help patients better adhere to their medication regimens and ultimately serve to improve patients' health and wellness and reduce our nation's health care costs.

MPhA urges state policymakers to work to increase limits on the number of technicians that pharmacists can oversee, as ratios only hinder pharmacists' ability to best serve their patients.

➤ ¹ The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy Task Force on Pharmacy Manpower Shortage Committee Report for 1999-2000 recommended the elimination of pharmacy technician ratios.