# Determine your pharmacy needs and identify the right type of support

Perform a needs assessment to see what type of pharmacy services could benefit your practice. Think carefully about your needs to ensure that whomever you hire will be performing at the top of their license.

Although the law varies by state, below is a general outline about the level of education for a pharmacy technician, community/retail pharmacist, and clinical pharmacist well as the possible activities or service offerings that each can provide in you practice depending on state law. In addition to the information provided in this resource, we also encourage you consult with a qualified attorney to understand your state’s Pharmacy Practice Act and other practice acts to be fully informed of what educational and training is required and what tasks pharmacists and other pharmacy services providers can legally perform as they differ by state.

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| Pharmacy Technician | Community/Retail Pharmacist | Clinical Pharmacist  (in ambulatory care setting) |
| **Typical level of education and training** | | |
| Technicians typically have a high school degree supplemented by post-secondary education or on-the-job training. Most state regulations require that pharmacy technicians complete a formal training program and licensure to work in this capacity. | Pharmacists have a Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) 4-year professional degree. | In addition to earning a Doctor of Pharmacy, clinical pharmacists often complete one to two-year residency and may have specialist board certification. |
| **Possible activities or services offerings that each can provide** | | |
| Conduct medication history to confirm drug, dose, frequency, and duration | Perform medication reconciliation | Perform medication reconciliation |
| Address refill requests | Provide Medication Therapy Management services (MTM) | Authorize refill requests under a collaborative practice agreement |
| Consolidate medication fill dates to minimize trips to pharmacy | Consolidate medication fill dates to minimize trip to pharmacy | Identify and resolve medication-related problems, such as inappropriate indication, dosing, side effects, drug interactions, or costs  **Note**: Clinical pharmacists in clinics have access to the patient’s medical record since they generally work in direct patient care environment |
| Provide education to patients on available community resources (i.e. patient assistance program for medications) | Provide education to patients on available community resources (i.e. patient assistance program for medications) | Provide education to patients on available community resources (i.e. patient assistance program for medications) |
| Process prior authorization requests for medications | Process prior authorization requests for medications | Provide interprofessional education |
|  | Answer questions about prescription and non-prescription medications | Answer questions about prescription and non-prescription medications |
|  | Identify reasons for medication non-adherence and develop solutions with patients and providers | Identify reasons for medication non-adherence and develop solutions with patients and providers |
|  | Administer immunizations | Recommend or implement therapeutic changes under a collaborative practice agreement |
|  | Review medication orders for potential drug-drug or drug-allergy interactions  **Note**: Retail/Community pharmacists often do not have access to the complete medical record | Provide comprehensive medication review for patients on complex regimen or polypharmacy |
|  |  | Implement disease management services and population health strategies (i.e. target patients with gaps in care) |

Source: AMA. *Practice transformation series: Maximizing the role of a pharmacist in your practice*. 2017.