

The Power of Psychiatric Pharmacists

Psychiatric pharmacists are evidence-based practitioners who work as members of interprofessional health care teams in a variety of practice settings. They collaborate with other health care professionals to treat patients living with depression, schizophrenia spectrum disorders, bipolar spectrum disorders, substance use disorders, anxiety disorders, PTSD, dementia and other cognitive disorders, seizures, traumatic brain injury, pain, and intellectual disabilities.

Psychiatric Pharmacists are Underutilized Experts in Psychopharmacology



Who They Are

Psychiatric pharmacists are advanced practice, clinical pharmacists who specialize in optimizing medications for people living with psychiatric disorders (including substance use disorders).



What Makes Them Unique

Psychiatric pharmacists have extensive knowledge of medications plus skill in treating the whole patient



Where They Practice

Psychiatric pharmacists practice in varied settings including public, private, outpatient, and inpatient settings.



How They Have Impact

Psychiatric pharmacists contribute to the health care team by working in collaboration with the patient and other health care providers to provide evidence-based, patient-centered assessment, medication management of complex regimens, and comprehensive care plan development. Psychiatric pharmacists impact patient outcomes and team wellbeing.



Reasons To Include Psychiatric Pharmacists

Psychiatric pharmacists increase the capacity of the health care team, including psychiatrists, other physicians, therapists, social workers, and nurses, to care for patients with psychiatric disorders (including substance use disorders) and improve patient outcomes to reduce overall health care costs.

Psychiatric Pharmacists Have Far Reaching Impact



Clinical Practice and Patient Care

- Provide comprehensive medication management services for patients¹
- Prescribe medications independently and in collaborative practices (varies by state)
- Provide consultations to physicians and patients about drug/dose selection
- Manage and monitor complex treatments including long-acting injectables, clozapine, lithium, and substance use disorder medications
- Assist in transitions of care between inpatient to outpatient settings



Education and Training

- Precept pharmacy and medical residents and fellows
- Provide continuing education presentations
- Provide core psychopharmacology training to students and trainees
- Partner with advocacy and consumer organizations to provide medication resources and expertise, and bring visibility to the needs of the underserved



Research

- Author peer-reviewed publications and presentations
- Conduct clinical trials, pharmacogenomic studies, and original clinical research, including psychotropic research
- Serve on select government panels such as the FDA Network of Experts



Medication Use

- Serve as formulary decision makers on P & T Committees in hospitals, state, and VA facilities
- Serve as decision makers for drug use and policy in state medicaid programs
- Develop and implement medication use policies and guidelines
- Conduct drug utilization reviews



Serve Special Population Groups

- Geriatric
- Veterans
- Unhoused
- Incarcerated
- Pregnant and lactating women
- Gender nonconforming
- Forensics

The Impact of Psychiatric Pharmacists



Credentialed as Board Certified Psychiatric Pharmacists



Residency or Fellowship Trained



Treat Only Psychiatric Conditions



Have Prescriptive Authority



Make Formulary Decisions



Actively Participate in Inpatient Treatment Rounds



Typical Number of Patients Assigned Per Day in Inpatient Setting



Typical Number of Patient Encounters Per Day in Outpatient Setting



Average Formal Consultations Provided Per Week



Average Informal Consultations Provided Per Week

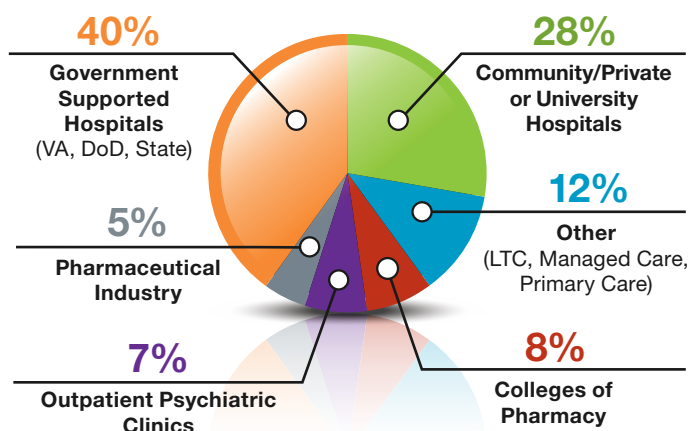


Programs and Institutions Utilizing Pharmacists to Teach Pharmacy Students, Medical Residents, and Nurses



Number of Pharmacy Resident Trainees Supervised per Year

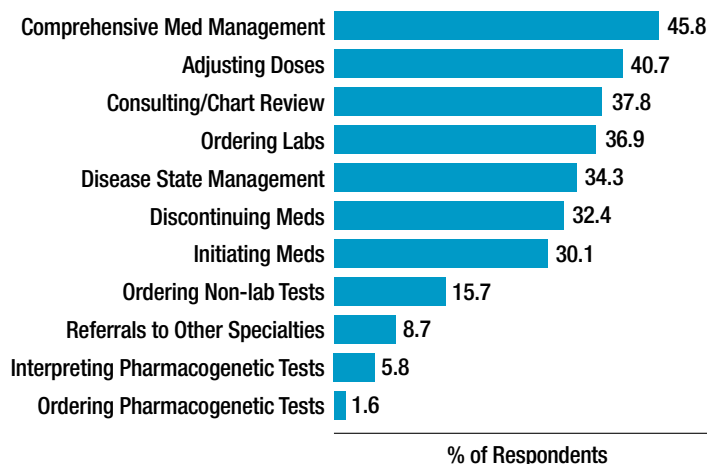
Members' Diverse Practice Settings



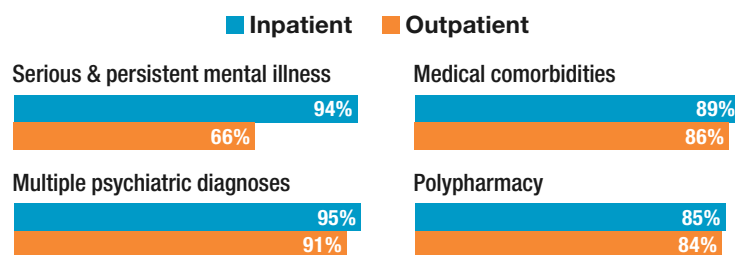
Population for Primary Clinical Practice

Geriatric psychiatry	3%
Child and adolescent psychiatry	6%
Other	6%
Substance use disorder psychiatry	7%
Forensic psychiatry	8%
General adult psychiatry	70%

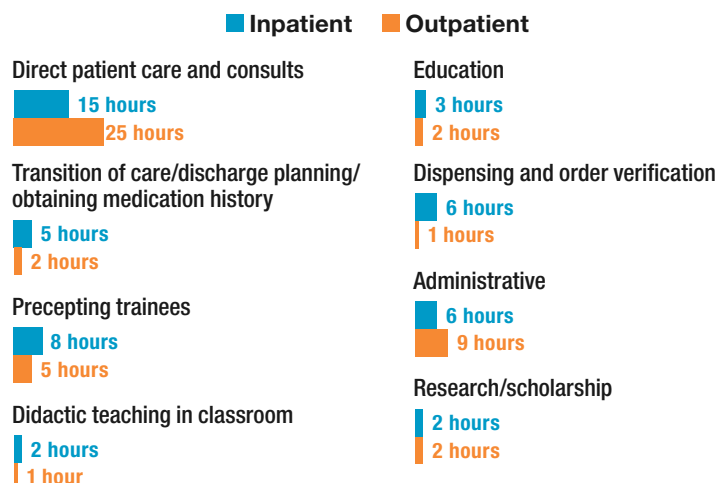
Clinical Activities Performed by Psychiatric Pharmacists in at Least 50% of Patients²



Conditions Treated by Psychiatric Pharmacists (in 30% or More of Patients)³



Number of Hours Dedicated During a Typical Workweek



²Assessment of the current practice of psychiatric pharmacists in the United States. Silvia, Richard et al, Mental Health Clinician (2020) 10 (6): 346–353. <https://doi.org/10.9740/mhc.2020.11.346>

³Evaluation of workload among Board-Certified Psychiatric Pharmacists in the United States. Lee, Kelly et al, Mental Health Clinician (2025) 15 (3): 156–163. <https://doi.org/10.9740/mhc.2025.06.156>