

# The Role of Clinical Pharmacy Technicians in the Ambulatory Primary Care Setting

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## BACKGROUND

- The primary care setting is an example of where the duties of pharmacy personnel has been changing in recent years. In the primary care setting pharmacists work directly with patients providing comprehensive medication management.<sup>1</sup>
- As the duties of pharmacists increase in this setting and other integrative health systems, Clinical Pharmacy Technicians (CPTs) are needed to aid in administrative and clinical tasks that do not require the professional judgement of a pharmacist.<sup>2,3</sup> This need for assistance was recognized within Kaweah Delta Healthcare District (KDHD), thus leading to the transition of CPTs from the community setting into the clinic.
- In 2019, with the aid of the outpatient pharmacy ambulatory care pharmacy team (OPACT) at KDHD, a tracking tool was developed which defined service lines and general tasks performed by CPTs.
- In order to standardize and systematize the duties performed by the technicians, the OPACT has sought to create a dictionary of duties performed by CPTs.
- This dictionary is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every duty performed by CPTs but rather a means of codifying and tracking the work technicians complete throughout the day.
- It may be a first step that will provide insight into CPT duties in the ambulatory primary care setting.

## OBJECTIVE

To define and codify the standard tasks of clinical pharmacy technicians in the ambulatory care setting and to determine the time spent on each task.

## METHODS

### OVERVIEW

#### Part 1: Standardization of CPT Role

A systematic literature review was performed utilizing the databases PubMed and Embase. The Kaweah Patient Care Tech Tracking Guide (KPCTTG) was created in 2019 combined the aggregate knowledge of team members around tasks performed by the CPTs. The Delphi Method<sup>4,5</sup> utilized for this research project consisted of four rounds of questioning through a series of individual phone interviews and surveys of the OPACT. Responses from the CPTs and CPs were compiled and analyzed to determine commonality by the Dictionary Review Committee (DRC). The DRC was responsible for reviewing, analyzing, and codifying tasks for the dictionary.

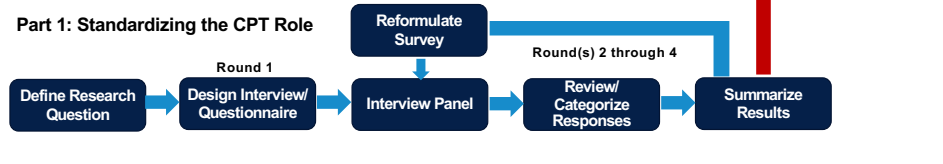
#### Part 2: Retrospective Data Analysis

Duties from the dictionary created in Part 1 will be implemented into the KPCTTG. CPTs will self-report data into the KPCTTG where the collected results reviewed each CPTs' time (in minutes) spent on each individual task listed in the tracker. Results will be combined to report average time spent per day and/or month on each service line and/or task performed.

### Interview/Survey Round Protocol

ROUND 1	Phone interview conducted individually with each of the four CPTs within the OPACT.
ROUND 2	Survey created and emailed to CPTs for them to review and provide feedback. The DRC adjusted the dictionary based on their feedback.
ROUND 3	Email sent to CPs to review the dictionary of work duties created during rounds 2 and 3 to provide feedback.
ROUND 4	Final Review by CPTs to provide feedback and dictionary adjusted accordingly.

### Part 1: Standardizing the CPT Role



**STUDY DESIGN:** Single center retrospective analysis

**STUDY PERIOD:** October 1, 2020- January 2021

**STUDY POPULATION:** Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians actively employed at KDHD

## RESULTS

Results Pending

## DISCUSSION

**Status:** IRB approved, research ongoing

**Challenges:** For qualitative, consensus-finding research it can be difficult to aggregate, analyze and find commonality amongst responses between participants. Results can often contain bias by those conducting the research. Utilization of the Delphi method<sup>4,5</sup> aims to eliminate this bias. The DRC, consisting of multiple members, was responsible for determining if there was consensus amongst responses, thereby leading to subsequent reformulation of surveys.

Another limitation for this project is that it is a single-center retrospective study with a small sample size (N=4). If we do not receive responses from all individuals then that will impact our results for both parts of the study. Additionally, due to the short time-frame, it may not adequately reflect trends in duties performed by CPTs. Further studies are needed to assess this.

**Benefits:** This study has the potential to define formal roles of CPTs in the ambulatory primary care setting. Improvement and clarifications of these tasks will help streamline and improve currently reported data being tracked in KPCTTG. In the future, if the dictionary is published organizations could benefit from it and utilize it as a template to attract/recruit potentially well-qualified CPTs. In the long-term, the dictionary provides a starting point of where CPTs can better describe their roles to the pharmacy profession and organizational leadership.

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