Pharmaceutical Industry: Multiple Career Opportunities for Pharmacists

On behalf of the ACCP Pharmaceutical Industry PRN:

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Background

- Previous surveys of pharmacists working in private industry showed most working in sales, research and development and manufacturing
- Expanding medical affairs and monitoring departments have increased opportunities for clinical pharmacists in industry
Methods

- Literature survey
- Interviews with clinical pharmacists working in industry
Results

- 30 positions identified with pharmacists incumbent
- 14 pharmacists were interviewed
Pharmacy Scientist

- Responsibilities: designing, conducting experiments leading to characterization of clinical and commercial dosage forms, including stability protocols, establishment of specifications, manufacturing directions
- Qualifications: PharmD with industrial experience
Clinical Scientist

- Responsibilities: manage implementation of clinical protocols under supervision of medical monitor - including writing protocols, finding investigators and insuring compliance with regulatory guidances
- Qualifications: PharmD; residency is helpful
Clinical Research Monitor

- Responsibilities: monitor collection of data by investigators at local clinical sites; work with headquarter’s clinical staff and investigators to maintain progress of clinical trials

- Qualifications: PharmD; residency is helpful; excellent verbal and written communication skills
Technical Writer

- Responsibilities: writing, revision clinical study reports, departmental SOPs, technical reports, validation protocols, master batch records with guidance from subject matter experts; technical help in regulatory submissions

- Qualifications: PharmD, plus experience in technical writing
Regulatory Affairs

- Responsibilities: provide or obtain regulatory input and direction regarding changes to a package insert, container labels for registered products; prepare and submit supplements to regulatory authorities

- Qualifications: Bachelor’s degree in life sciences with excellent communication skills
Research Auditor

- Responsibilities: conduct detailed quality assurance audits of clinical research trials to assure compliance with regulatory regulations and company policies
- Qualifications: Bachelor’s degree in life sciences with industry experience in marketing, communication, medical education
Safety and Surveillance

- Responsibilities: monitor occurrence of adverse reactions to company’s products; comply with regulations related to adverse event reporting; understand safety profile of company’s products in all stages of development
- Qualifications: PharmD
Health Outcomes

- Responsibilities: collection information that will result in appropriate reimbursement for the company’s products as a result of improvement in quality of life outcomes.
- Qualifications: PharmD with specialized training and/or experience in pharmacoeconomic/health outcomes research.
Medical Affairs

- Responsibilities: similar to Clinical Scientist
  - Clinical Research = phase I - III
  - Medical Affairs = phase IV +
  - variable definitions within different firms
  - work to add value to existing approvals

- Qualifications: PharmD
Medical Science Liaison

- Responsibilities: provide targeted medical/scientific product data to support appropriate product utilization, support ongoing Phase IV clinical program, gather information to relay back to Clinical Research
- Qualifications: PharmD with clinical or industry experience
Professional Affairs

- Responsibilities: work to develop relationships with leadership of national and international medical and allied health associations; identify opportunities to advance business, professional and public policy goals

- Qualifications: Bachelor’s degree with experience in health care, marketing and public policy
Labeling

- Responsibilities: work with other departments to insure that product labeling is complete, accurate, updated and consistent around the world

- Qualifications: Bachelor’s degree in life sciences with experience in pharmaceutical industry
Barriers

- Pharmacists may not choose a career in industry because:
  - inadequate knowledge of opportunity
  - inadequate training
  - perceived bias on part of educators
  - inadequate knowledge of employers
  - inadequate recruiting by employers
  - starting salary
Conclusions

- There are many opportunities for employment of pharmacists within Industry
- Industry positions are challenging and professionally rewarding
- Pharmacists should consider Industry when thinking about their career options