



# HEALTH CAREER OPTIONS GUIDE

for internationally educated health professionals

## Pharmacy Assistant

This profession is also known as:

- pharmacy aide

### What is a pharmacy assistant?

Pharmacy assistants help pharmacists and other pharmacy staff with packaging and labelling of pharmaceutical products and may help in maintaining prescription records and inventories of medications and pharmaceutical products. They have less training than pharmacy technicians and therefore a different level of responsibility.



### What are the main duties of a pharmacy assistant?

Pharmacy assistants help pharmacists and other pharmacy staff to:

- fulfill administrative functions such as typing medical labels, arranging stock on shelves and keeping pharmacies clean
- They have more contact with customers because they also greet customers entering their shops, answer phones, accept payments and help locate over-the-counter medications and merchandise.

### What personality characteristics or desired traits should I have for this work?

You need:

- excellent organizational skills and detail orientation
- strong communication skills
- demonstrated customer service experience
- strong motivation to succeed
- proficient computer/data/entry skills

### Where do Pharmacy Assistants Work?

They work in hospital or medical clinic pharmacies, and in independent community pharmacies.

### What typical work conditions can I expect?

- You should expect a busy workday in both public and private settings.
- Many Pharmacy assistants work in a facility that follows a seven-day workweek with a 2-day rest period. The rest period may not be on a weekend.
- Evening hours are common.

### What qualifications do I need?

Pharmacy aides require completion of secondary school and several months of on-the-job training.

### What communication skills do I need?

You need:

- excellent organizational skills and detail orientation
- strong communication skills
- demonstrated customer service experience
- strong motivation to succeed
- proficient computer/data/entry skills

For a full listing of the essential skills you may need for this work, view:

[http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/es\\_search-eng.do?titleKeyword=pharmacy+assistant&source=2&modify=Go%21&noc=3414](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/es_search-eng.do?titleKeyword=pharmacy+assistant&source=2&modify=Go%21&noc=3414)

### What wage may I be paid for this work?

Wage: Typical Canadian hourly wage **Low** 12.00 **Median** 17.50 **High** 26.06

[http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/LMI\\_report\\_bynoc.do?noc=3414&reportOption=wage](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/LMI_report_bynoc.do?noc=3414&reportOption=wage)

Career outlook

[http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/LMI\\_report\\_bynoc.do?noc=3414&reportOption=outlook](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/LMI_report_bynoc.do?noc=3414&reportOption=outlook)

### Are there opportunities for advancement?

Opportunities for advancement will depend on further training and education.

### Learn more about pharmacy assistants by viewing these sites.

- National Occupation Code 3414  
The government of Canada has given a code to each occupation/profession. Use this code to learn more about pharmacy assistants.  
<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/ProfileQuickSearch.aspx?val1=3414>

### References

- Outline from CSMLS webpage, accessed 3/25/2016  
<http://altcareers.csmls.org/careers/assayer/>
- Government of Canada (NOC 5254)  
<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/Welcome.aspx>