2008

HOT TOPICS!!

FOR PHARMACY TECHNICIANS

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Objectives

- List at least 4 HOT TOPICS or issues affecting pharmacy technicians in 2008.
- List at least 3 major news story headlines regarding technician errors.
- State the need for formal education and national standardization of pharmacy technician education and training.
HOT TOPIC
For Discussion in 2008!
Review of 2007
The Year of Error!

Error! Error! Everywhere!
Oprah had it in 2006!
The news had it in 2006 and 2007!
20/20 had it in 2007!

Technician Error was a hot topic in the last two years!
And unfortunately continues to be a hot topic in 2008!
Historically:

• A study analyzes technician error 1995 to 1999

• Theme topic of 2000 ASHP Convention, Las Vegas: “To Err Is Human”

• 2002 White Paper on Pharmacy Technicians

• Tech error explored by the media in 2006

• Exposed by 20/20 in 2007!
Review of 2007: The Year of The Error!

Technician Error has been HOT TOPIC for the last 15 years!

Continued to be a HOT TOPIC in 2007!

And in 2008...

IT JUST WON’T GO AWAY!!!
377 Possible Tech med errors reported to USP Medication Errors Reporting Program (USP MER) from 1995-1999
Background Information -

According to study by Dr. Cowley:
• 38% of tech med errors were intercepted before reaching pts.

Of those that did reach pts:
• 82% did not result in harm
• 18% did result in harm

Results of harmed pts:
• 57% temporary harm
• 31% temporary harm requiring initial /prolonged hospitalization
• 7% near-death event (e.g., anaphylaxis, cardiac arrest) from which the patient recovered
• 5% patient death
1. Dispensing of an unauthorized drug:
   - tech dispensed medication which was not authorized by a legitimate prescriber.

2. Improper drug dose and or quantity.
Hot!

Single LEADING Cause of Tech Med Errors in 1995-1999:

CONFUSION between similar labeling/ packaging
What Did We Learn from that Warning?

- Not everyone was listening.
- Not everyone heeded the advice.
2000 ASHP Convention:
A BIGGER Splash is Heard

- 2000 ASHP Orlando Florida and Las Vegas Nevada Midyear Clinical Meetings theme:
  “To Err is Human”

- The “Take Home Message”
Additionally, the first announcements heard were:

- Maybe our patients are not as safe with our (then) current IV labs and procedures as we thought.

- Maybe we are not so safe with our (then) current chemo labs and procedures as we thought.
September 2006:
3 out of 6 Babies Die of Heparin OD

- Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis
  - Owned by Clarian Health Systems

- Wrong dose of heparin delivered to PICU by experienced Rx Tech
  - Error: strength 1000 x’s > than needed
  - Adult & child doses stored in very similar containers
  - 3 babies died due to same error
1. Confusing heparin vials no longer carried.

2. Pharmacies must double-check all drugs from stockrooms prior to delivering to the floors.

3. At least two nurses must validate doses before they're given to an infant.

NOTE: Indianapolis Star reports.

“Other hospitals would be wise to learn from Methodist's unfortunate error, to prevent this kind of tragedy in the future.”

-September 19, 2006

1. Walgreens’ RPh Error:
   - Script for a premature 7 mo. girl written for 15 mg tab Phenobarbital. Filled with a similar white tab for diabetes for adults.
   - Drug was given for 7 weeks
   - Caused seizures in baby

2. Walgreens’ Rx Tech Error:
   - Warfarin (10 mg tablets) given to adult Beth Hippley instead of 1 mg tablets.
   - Pt suffered stroke
   - Forced to stop her chemotherapy & subsequently died.
   - Family Awarded $25.8 Million in verdict against Walgreens for Prescription Error
Continued…

3. Exposed that Techs do not tell pts they are waiving an RPH consultation when they sign a Pick Up Log.

4. Exposed Techs do not inform RPh of drug interactions.

5. Exposed that RPh’s overworked too many Rx’s per hour.
100 Rx’s are sent out to see if:

- Counseling & information was offered to 1st time scripts.
  - ONLY 27/100 were offered counseling

25 Rx’s are sent out to see if:

- Warning/consultation was offered to patients who brought ASA to counter at same time as a prescription for warfarin.
  - 8/25 RPh caught the potential problem
  - 17/25 not caught by anyone

Conclusion:

- Overall 22% error rate.
- No incorrect drug was given
Ken Barker and Elizabeth Flynn are pharmacist researchers who helped create the undercover investigation for 20/20.

They say that this exposé should serve as a wake-up call to:

1. Develop technician training and certification standards.
2. Require techs to offer RPh counseling to all patients when picking up prescriptions.
3. Change reimbursement systems to acknowledge and compensate time pharmacists spend during clinical review of prescriptions and patient counseling.
4. Improve error reporting and disclosure of mistakes.
5. Reduce expected production quotas by some pharmacies.
Avoidance of Rx Tech med errors & Root Cause Analysis

Technician Liability

Mandating and Standardizing Pharmacy Technician qualifications of Education and Training, certification, registration and licensing nationwide.

-ACPE, ASHP, APhA, PTEC, PTCB and ICPT

USP 797 2008 Updates

-Sterile Product Certification Requirements for PharmTechs

Ethical issues for Technicians
3 More Hot Topics for Rx Techs in 2008

- BTC: A new class of drugs
- Professional Growth for the Pharmacy Technician
- Recognition of Pharmacy Technician Achievements
Emily Law Proposed

- Two year old female, Emily Jerry, died in March 2005
- Ohio hospital pharmacy technician used 23.4% sodium chloride as a vehicle for her chemotherapy instead of 0.9% NS.
  - 0.9% NaCl is isotonic to blood
- Ohio Senator Tim Grendell, introduced S203As⁴ in July 2007 and in December 2007.

Liability Insurance for Technicians

- Should **techs** be held liable if:
  - They are not required to have formal education?
  - They are not licensed, and in many states not registered or certified?
  - They have no judgmental duties?
  - Employer already has malpractice and liability insurance?
  - They handle, count, mix, compound, package/label drugs for patients?

*Questions on this topic continue among Technicians and pharmacists, and the courts!*
Public may develop a negative view of technicians.

This will occur especially
A. If there are more exposes on tech med errors.
B. Because there are NO MANDATES for tech education training or certification.

- Public awareness > mandatory education
- Public awareness > need to mandate standardized education and training

You ask: Why must we wait? Good Question!
Recent 2007-2008 updates/changes must be implemented. Will continue to be a hot topic especially in sterile compounding settings.

- Currently posted changes expected to become official in June of 2008.

How do or will these changes affect you?

*Please comment on this by chat or via email:*

rxjm2002@yahoo.com

USP 797 and tech error **FUELS** the **FIRE** for **MORE** state Sterile Certification requirements.

http://www.germfree.com/PCI.htm
Sterile Product Certification

- State Requirements:
  - Does your state require it?
  - Are you IV Certified?
  - If not, how are you able to obtain your certification?

- What are your state requirements?
  - Email Jeanetta at rxjm2002@yahoo.com
Changes in ACPE CE Guidelines

LOOK for CE with a Letter “T”

- Appropriate CE for pharmacist & technician.

- NEW designation letters behind the CE code to assign approval for a particular CE to Pharmacists & Technicians. (ACPE only)
  - 11 States require CE’s for techs

- **P** = Pharmacists
- **T** = Technicians
  - If the numbers are the same, but the last letter is different, then the particular CE is for both pharmacists and techs.
Courts allow the:

- Generic term “certified pharmacy technician” to be used.

- Use of letters “CPhT” whether tech has taken PTCE or ExCPT or any other certifying exam.
  - Tech certification is state regulated
  - Currently while NABP, ASHP and APhA promote the use of PTCB only
  - A few states have accepted ExCPT: Oregon, Montana and now Utah.

Most techs will not get involved, then wonder why they did not know what happened and when.

- The cogs in the wheels are ALREADY turning.
- All is set in motion.
- WHEN is the only question that remains !!!!

Technician Education and knowledge of the Federal and State Pharmacy Laws are the driving forces for the next few HOT TOPICS!
Background:

- ASHP has had a long time standing policy to support:
  - Nationally recognized standards/guidelines for accredited pharmacy technician education & training programs.
  - Certification by PTCB
  - Registration, Certification and Licensure of Techs

- ASHP is currently the accrediting body for pharmacy technician programs nationwide.
2015 Initiative: Call for Comments

- **Goal 4:**
  Increase the extent to which pharmacy departments in health systems have a significant role in improving the safety of medication use.
- **No Proposed Changes**

- **Objective 4.5**

- **Current Objective:**
  85% of pharmacy technicians in health systems will be certified by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board.
- **No Proposed Changes**
Objective 4.6

-New Objective:

50% of pharmacy technicians in health systems will have completed an ASHP-accredited pharmacy technician training program.

Note: Reason for Change:

Technician training goals are consistent with ASHP Long-Range Vision for the Pharmacy Workforce in Hospitals and Health Systems.
ASHP Initiative 2015: Call for Comments were due by Thursday, January 31, 2008.


- ASHP is soliciting comments on proposed revisions to several objectives of the ASHP 2015 Initiative.
- Members are invited to review & make comments on proposed changes and provide other comments on the 2015 Initiative. Comments on the changes will be accepted through Thursday, January 31, 2008.
PTEC has always supported technician education.

The 2002 White Paper on Pharmacy Technicians states that PTEC advocates within 5 yrs or the end of 2007 that all technician training programs have a minimum of 600 hours.

- By end of 2012 all programs are a 2 yr associate degree program.

PTEC recognizes the need for, and supports the development and introduction of appropriate credentials for pharmacy technicians, including at the specialty level.
"The counting and pouring now often alleged to be the pharmacist’s chief occupation will in time be done by technicians and eventually by automation. The pharmacist of tomorrow will function by reason of what he knows, increasing the efficiency and safety of drug therapy and working as a specialist in his own right. It is in this direction that pharmaceutical education must evolve without delay."

—Linwood F. Tice, D.Sc., Dean, Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science (1966)
APhA 2008
House of Delegate Report

- Various Committees gave their reports

- The Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Committee Report led to the following 5 recommendations for adoption:

  - To be presented at the:

    APha San Diego 2008
    Annual Meeting and Exposition
    March 14 – 17 2008
APhA reaffirms the 2005/2001/1996 Control of Distribution System Policy states that:
- APhA supports pharmacists’ authority to control the distribution process & personnel involved.
- Responsibility for all completed medication orders, regardless of practice setting.

APhA supports nationally recognized standards and guidelines for the accreditation of pharmacy technician education and training programs.
APhA supports **the continued growth of accredited education and training programs** that develop qualified pharmacy technicians.

- Will support pharmacists in ensuring patient safety & enhancing patient care.

APhA encourages state boards of pharmacy to **adopt** the following minimum requirements for all new pharmacy technicians by the year 2015:

- Successful completion of an accredited education and training program
- Certification by PTCB
APhA supports required licensure for pharmacy technicians by state boards of pharmacy.

- Also encourages state boards of pharmacy to develop a phase-in process for current pharmacy technicians to obtain licensure.

Note: These are not adopted yet, but will go before the House of Delegate… HOT! HOT! HOT!

For a FULL report and summary of discussion go to the following site address. Search keywords: “technician 2007”
http://www.pharmacist.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search1&Templa
Committee discussed oversight of accreditation of pharmacy technician education/training programs
- Believes ACPE should be the organization ultimately responsible for the oversight of the process.
- Meaning instead of ASHP

Recall 2002 White Paper ASHP asked ACPE to take over the accreditation process.
Rapidly Changing State Regulations

- 3 years ago only the state of TN allowed technicians to transfer prescriptions from one pharmacy to another.
  - This has always been the duty of the pharmacist.

- Today, according to the 2007 PTCB Status of the Pharmacy Technicians:
  - 9 states allow techs to transfer prescriptions
  - 32 require registration
  - 28 require training
  - 11 require CE’s
  - 14 require some sort of testing
1/2 of US states require CE’s or Certification in one way or another since NABP joined PTCB to promote the Certification of Pharmacy Techs in 2002.

What about the remaining states?

Inconsistencies between states even if the certification required?

- How confident would you feel traveling in the US if there were major differences among physician, nursing or pharmacist education, licensure and practice or other requirements?
Ethics

- When law and education do not answer the question…..
Translating pharmacy directions into a non-English language to a patient for the pharmacist:

- Law and Ethics combined
- No specific written laws
- RPh Code of Ethics and practice guidelines
BTC – A 4th Class?

- BTC meds- **HOT TOPIC** in 2008!
  - Already small dosages of **codeine** and **pseudoephedrine** in some states…NOW **DXM**?

- Enough space behind that counter?

- LONG LINES at RX during the cold / flu season?

- Insurance coverage for counseling? Should pharmacy owner cover/ absorb the costs or raise BTC prices?

- What if the pt refuses pharmacist recommended counseling?

- Role of pharmacy tech with BTC? MORE LOGS to sign? Shelving?
Development & dissemination of info. about career opportunities, which enhance recruitment & retention of qualified pharmacy techs.

Image of pharmacy technicians as valuable contributors to health care delivery.

NOTE: The following two HOT 2008 TOPICS reflect the above creed.
Professional development of pharmacy technicians

- As more Rx Techs become formally educated
- Evolving Roles!
- Due to “T” Appropriate Continued Education
- As more Rx Techs consider pharmacy school and become the pool of future pharmacists
- As more take CE’s to avoid burn out

Improvement of technician verbal communication skills with patients becomes a MUST as techs take on more of the dispensing role.
What’s your New Year Professional Development Plan?

- **Network** (or encourage one person to network):
  - To stay aware of the issues that affect techs.
  - For professional development.
  - By joining a tech association. Visit convention/seminar.

- **Continue education** beyond 20 CE minimum for PTCB renewal
  - Learn methods to prevent medication errors.
  - Brush up on math.
  - Be aware of new laws/ethical issues for techs.
Along with professional development comes recognition of achievements and awards for accomplishments:

- This will counteract bad press on med errors.
- Shed light on the unusual job titles and duties that techs have.
- Enforce the need for technician education as the role of the technician evolves and expands.
Stay focused during tech duties. Avoid med errors.

Remember:
When in doubt call the pharmacist out!
What about YOU?

You deserve recognition!
So what have YOU done lately?

- Promotion?
- Prevent / avoid med error?
- Create a new job description?
- Create your own job?
- Design a more efficient method/protocol?
- Start a new company?
- Work on a special project for your RPh?

Let PharmCon or Jeanetta know!
Email Jeanetta at  rxjm2002@yahoo.com
Technician medication errors will continue to be a HOT TOPIC in 2008 news!

The media is hot on the trail of ANY tech or RPh errors since:
- September 2006 Clarian Hospital 3 baby heparin related deaths
- 20/20 expose!

Most recently due to the
- Dennis and Kimberly QUAID November 2007 baby heparin overdoses.
Medication Errors Injure: 1.5 Million People per year

Hospital medical cost alone is: $3.5 billion per year

http://www.ismp.org/Newsletters/acuteacare/articles/20071129.asp
Become an Informant!!

Let PharmCon or Jeanetta know which **HOT CE Topics** you want and **NEED** that should be specifically designed for the pharmacy technician.

Email Jeanetta at: rxjm2002@yahoo.com
Reflection

- Look-a-like drug errors are the DRIVING forces of the 2008 HOT TOPIC of Medication Errors in THIS CE!

- Required Technician Education and Training will be a Winning Outcome for Society!
So what will **YOU** do in **2008**?

What’s **your** New Year Professional Development Plan?

ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting Focuses on Pharmacists' Role in Drug Safety Orlando, Florida

USA Third baby dies after error at Indiana hospital

ABC 20/20 March 30, 2007 10:17 PM

Emily's Law' would regulate pharmacy technicians, by Michael Sangiacomo 7-5-07 (Senator Tim Grendell proposes the Emily Law)

Cover Story January 2008: Personal Hygiene and Gowning Procedures How the changes to USP <797> Will Affect Your Practice

Revised definition of Continuing Pharmacy Education (CPE) approved

PTCB Status of Pharmacy Technicians (Sources Menu, Statistics)
https://www.ptcb.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=State_Regulations&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=237


2002 White Paper on Pharmacy Technicians

ASHP 2015 Initiative – Call for comments

APhA 12-7-07 Pharmacy Technician Education and Training Background Prepared for the 2007-2008 (enter “technician 2007” in search window)
http://www.pharmacist.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search1&Template=/Search/SearchDisplay.cfm

PTCB State Regulations doc 2007 Resources Menu
https://www.ptcb.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=State_Regulations&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=2685

BTC Drugs
Other Resources and References

JeanettasPTCBStudyGroup …it is FREE!
American University of Health Sciences
Santa Ana Community College, CA web site
Delgado College, LA web site
Prescribing Errors Put Doctors Under Scrutiny - Brief Article Family Practice News Feb 1, 2001 http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0BJI/is_3_31/ai_71632762
ISMP's Root Cause Analysis http://www.ismp.org/Consult/rootcause.asp
ASHP Las Vegas Midyear Clinical Meeting 2000(Convention) To Err is Human (personal attendance)
ACPE Definition Pharmacy final 1006 2007 http://www.acpe-accredit.org/technicians/default.asp
Barrier Isolator for USP 797 Photos http://www.pharmacyisolators.com/images/pharmacy-isolator-A2-std.jpg
http://www.germfree.com/PCI.htm
PTCB Statistics Status of Pharmacy Technicians (Resources, State Regulations) https://www.ptcb.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=State_Regulations&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=2375
National Association of Boards of Pharmacy www.nabp.net.

Note: If links do not work copy and paste them or retype them in your browser.
QUESTIONS?

Please submit your questions now…