

A Survey of Pharmacists' Motivation to Participate in Career Advancement Programs

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Background: No structured opportunities for career advancement or professional development exist for pharmacists at Chesapeake Regional Medical Center. Opportunities for professional development are associated with higher career satisfaction, highlighting the need for career advancement programs.

Objective: The primary objective of this study was to identify factors motivating pharmacists to participate in career ladder programs. Secondary objectives included characterization of the demographics of survey respondents and identification of components most frequently reported as important to consider for advancement in a career ladder.

Methods: This was an anonymous, voluntary, 14-question, online survey. Surveys were distributed through digital social media platforms, state-level professional organizations, and person-to-person contact. Respondents who indicated they were a licensed pharmacist in one of the 50 United States or a major territory were included. The survey included collection of demographic information, including duration of licensure, practice setting, practice state/territory, wage, and tenure in current position. Upon survey completion, respondents had the option to provide written comments to the researcher. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze study results.

Preliminary Results: The survey received 259 responses from pharmacists across the United States. Respondents spent an average of 4 minutes and 41 seconds taking the survey. The most frequently reported job title was clinical pharmacy specialist (26%). The majority of respondents reported Virginia as their primary practice location (38%) and a community hospital setting as their primary practice site (47%). Personal enrichment was ranked most important by 39% of respondents, followed by financial benefits (33%) and internal career advancement (16.2%). Respondents indicated excellent/outstanding performance (80%), board specialty certification (69%), and years of experience (65%) should be considered for advancement in career ladder programs.

Conclusion: Pharmacist respondents consider personal enrichment to be a primary motivator for participation in career ladder programs. Board specialty certification, pharmacy student and resident preceptorship, committee leadership and involvement, and research or quality improvement projects should be considered for advancement in career ladder programs. The results of this survey were used to inform the development of a pharmacist career ladder at Chesapeake Regional Healthcare.