

Pharmacy Technician Certification Review and Practice Exam. 2nd edition

Fred LY, editor. American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Bethesda, Maryland, 2005. ISBN 1-58528-091-7. Softcover, 108 pages. US\$53.00 for nonmembers, US\$32.00 for members.

The *Pharmacy Technician Certification Review and Practice Exam* manual is a helpful, easy-to-read review of most aspects of pharmacy technician practice. It is intended to assist technicians in preparing for the US pharmacy technician certification examination and other similar examinations. The editor, who is director of Inpatient Pharmacy Services at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana, Illinois, recommends that this publication be used in conjunction with the third edition of the *Manual for Pharmacy Technicians*, as well as on-the-job experience.

The *Pharmacy Technician Certification Review and Practice Exam* covers many areas of hospital pharmacy practice that are relevant to technicians in either an inpatient or outpatient setting. Each of the manual's 7 chapters begins with a list of learning objectives and ends with self-assessment questions and answers. Most chapters also have suggestions for further reading. The second edition has been fully updated to reflect current US practice standards and the current examination of the US Pharmacy Technician Certification Board. This edition also includes an interactive CD that provides a timed review exam (for review of the material in the book) and a timed practice exam (in preparation for the certification exam). I would recommend upgrading to the second edition for these reasons, particularly if the text is being used as a technician certification tool. The manual can be purchased through the ASHP Web site for the prices listed above, but I also found it on the Web site of the University of Toronto Bookstore, where it sells for Can\$39.95.

Chapter 1, "Assisting the Pharmacist", is probably the best chapter in the book. It describes the many daily tasks of a technician working in a hospital pharmacy. Specifics such as processing medication orders in both the inpatient and outpatient settings are covered, and there are 18 examples of questions a technician might have to answer under 7 different categories such as cost, storage, and pharmacy law. The chapter gives a detailed overview of aseptic preparation of parenteral products, including definitions of aseptic technique and sterile compounding area and a description of how to work in vertical and horizontal laminar airflow hoods. The manual emphasizes proper training for any sterile products program. I could see this chapter being used in conjunction with hands-on training for a hospital pharmacy IV room. The manual provides good detail about personal attire, hand-washing, equipment, and supplies in an IV room. There is also a good section on syringes and needles with a few helpful diagrams.

Chapter 2 covers medication distribution and inventory control systems, with sections on formulary drugs, ordering and receiving pharmaceuticals, maintaining and managing

inventory, and techniques for proper disposal of pharmaceuticals. There is a good section on automation and how it can help with "just in time" inventory management. Chapter 3 covers pharmacy operations in terms of policies and procedures and US pharmacy law. This chapter gives a good overview of the topic, but Canadian readers need to keep in mind that the "legal acts" described in this American publication are different from what pertains in Canada. Chapter 4 covers pharmacy calculations. Chapter 5, "Commonly Prescribed Medications", lists 32 commonly prescribed groups of drugs, with both generic names and US brand names. Chapter 6 describes how to take a test, and chapter 7 is a practice exam, the same one that is on the CD. The 75 questions on the practice exam cover the entire manual, although 16 of the questions relate specifically to US law and some of the "US acts" mentioned in the manual. The manual also includes a comprehensive index that appears to be complete (based on verification of a dozen or so terms).

I would recommend this manual to technicians who wish to become certified through the American Pharmacy Technician Certification Board or through the Alberta or Ontario certification boards. The contents seem to closely match the exam categories for technician certification in Alberta, so if used in conjunction with the Alberta study modules should only enhance the technician's knowledge. The Ontario College of Pharmacists lists this publication as one of many readings for technician certification in that province. I would also recommend this manual to hospital pharmacies that hire technicians from a retail environment. It could be used as a hospital pharmacy refresher, particularly for technicians who have been out of school for a number of years.

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Pharmacist Disease Management: Diabetes. 3rd edition

American Pharmacists Association, Washington, DC, 2005. ISBN 1-58212-082-X. Softcover, 155 pages. US\$99.95 for nonmembers.

This book provides a practical, thorough review of the basics of diabetes for pharmacists. The book is divided into 3 modules, each of which is preceded by learning objectives and followed by learning reinforcement exercises ("fill-in-the-blank" questions, with answers displayed upside-down after each question) and a 20-question self-study exam (for a total of 60 questions). Completion of all 3 exams qualifies the reader for 15 contact hours or 1.5 continuing education units from the American Pharmacists Association (APhA). Much of the

