Managing with Impact: Strategies for a Successful Community Pharmacy

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CONFERENCE #7

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“The Colegio de Farmacéuticos de Puerto Rico is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education as a provider of continuing pharmacy education.”

Provider Number: 0151

Objectives for Pharmasist

- Describe the role of the pharmacist manager in the community pharmacy.
- Identify rules and regulations applicable to pharmacy management and identify challenges in the safety of dispensing medications.
- Analyze strategies for efficient tasks distribution within the pharmacy team, ensuring smooth operations and promoting leadership skills to optimize performance.
- Describe strategies of effective communication for patient education and promotion of rational use of medications.
- Explain how to strengthen the emotional intelligence of the pharmacist manager to address stress situations, solve conflicts and improve relations between clients and employees.
- Discuss resources, strategies and tools that facilitate the management of medication therapy and therapeutic adherence.
- Describe tools for digitalization and automation that can be implemented in the pharmacy to optimize management.
- Recognize the value of the pharmacist manager and the use of updated tools that can facilitate the administrative responsibilities for the new generation of pharmacist manager.

What Do Pharmacists Really Think About Being a Pharmacy Manager on Community Pharmacy?

- *“Too much responsibility with little support.”*
- *“I’m afraid of legal consequences if someone else makes a mistake.”*
- *“I don’t fully understand everything the law expects from a PIC.”*
- *“I’m not sure how to lead a team — we were never trained for that.”*

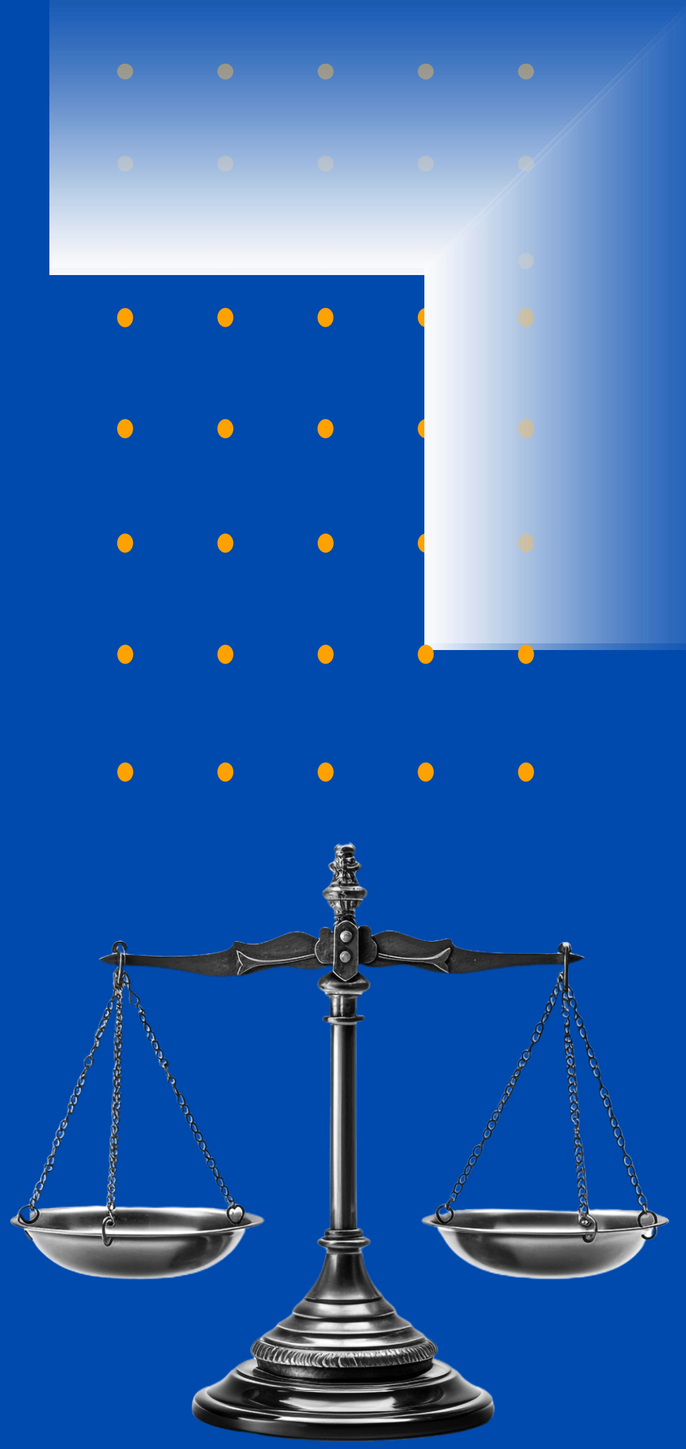
SLIDE IN PROGRESS, WAITING RESULTS OF A SURVEY IMPLEMENTED TO PHARMACISTS

The Pharmacist Manager in the Community Pharmacy

Who is the Pharmacist Manager (Pharmacist-in-Charge)?

According to **Puerto Rico Law 247 of 2004** (known as the *Pharmacy Law of Puerto Rico*):

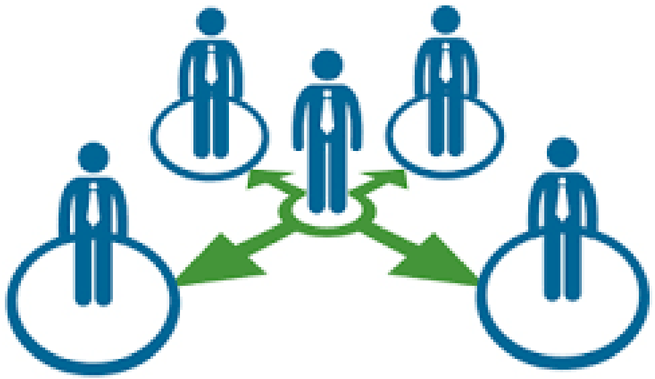
- The **licensed pharmacist is authorized by the Board of Pharmacy** to assume the **main professional and legal responsibility** of a pharmacy, healthcare facility, or institution where medications are dispensed, stored, or distributed.
- The **Pharmacist-in-Charge (PIC)** has the following main responsibilities:
  - General supervision of the pharmacy
  - Inventory Control
  - Recordkeeping
  - Staff supervision
  - Legal and regulatory compliance
  - Professional services
  - Presence at the pharmacy
  - Notification to the Board of Pharmacy



Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

1. General supervision of the pharmacy

   - Ensure the pharmacy operates according to the law, regulations, and professional ethics.
   - Oversee both technical and administrative functions within the pharmacy.



Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

2. Inventory Control

- Responsible for managing medication inventory, including controlled substances.
- Keep accurate records of medication receipt and dispensing, especially for regulated drugs.

Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

3. Recordkeeping

- Ensure that all legally required records are maintained, including:
  - Prescriptions
  - Inventory reports
  - Reports of errors or adverse events
  - Purchase orders
  - Dispensing logs
  - Returns

Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

4. Staff supervision

- Supervise pharmacy technicians and other staff involved in drug handling.
- Ensure that the staff complies with legal and ethical responsibilities.

Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

5. Legal and regulatory compliance

- Ensure compliance with all local and federal pharmacy laws (including FDA and DEA regulations)
- Oversee proper handling of prescriptions, patient confidentiality (e.g., HIPAA), and controlled substances.

Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

6. Professional services

- Provide counseling and guidance to patients about the appropriate use of medications.
- Verify potential interactions, duplications, or contraindications in drug therapies.

Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

7. Presence at the pharmacy

- The law requires the pharmacist-in-charge to be **physically present or have documented supervision** during pharmacy operations.

- If absent, a substitute pharmacist must be formally designated.

Pharmacy Manager Responsibilities

8. Notification to the Board of Pharmacy

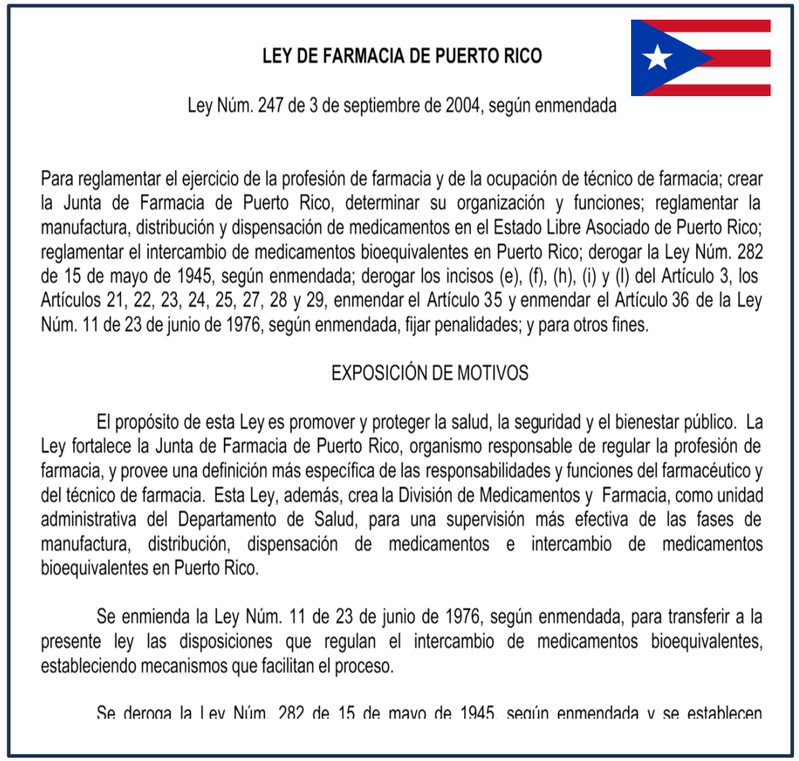
- Must notify the Puerto Rico Board of Pharmacy of:
  - Any changes in the pharmacist-in-charge
  - Termination of duties
  - Significant irregularities

DEPARTAMENTO DE SALUD

Legal Framework & What to Expect

The Legal Landscape of Pharmacy Practice in Puerto Rico

- **Law 247:** Defines the role and accountability of the pharmacist-in-charge (PIC).
- **Regulation 8503:** Governs pharmacy operations and delegation of tasks.
- Additional applicable laws:
  - Puerto Rico Controlled Substances Act
  - Federal: DEA, FDA, HIPAA
- Role of the Puerto Rico Board of Pharmacy



LEY DE FARMACIA DE PUERTO RICO

Ley Núm. 247 de 3 de septiembre de 2004, según enmendada

Para reglamentar el ejercicio de la profesión de farmacia y de la ocupación de técnico de farmacia; crear la Junta de Farmacia de Puerto Rico, determinar su organización y funciones; reglamentar la manufactura, distribución y dispensación de medicamentos en el Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico; reglamentar el intercambio de medicamentos bioequivalentes en Puerto Rico; derogar la Ley Núm. 282 de 15 de mayo de 1945, según enmendada; derogar los incisos (e), (f), (h), (i) y (l) del Artículo 3, los Artículos 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28 y 29, enmendar el Artículo 35 y enmendar el Artículo 36 de la Ley Núm. 11 de 23 de junio de 1976, según enmendada, fijar penalidades; y para otros fines.

EXPOSICIÓN DE MOTIVOS

El propósito de esta Ley es promover y proteger la salud, la seguridad y el bienestar público. La Ley fortalece la Junta de Farmacia de Puerto Rico, organismo responsable de regular la profesión de farmacia, y provee una definición más específica de las responsabilidades y funciones del farmacéutico y del técnico de farmacia. Esta Ley, además, crea la División de Medicamentos y Farmacia, como unidad administrativa del Departamento de Salud, para una supervisión más efectiva de las fases de manufactura, distribución, dispensación de medicamentos e intercambio de medicamentos bioequivalentes en Puerto Rico.

Se enmienda la Ley Núm. 11 de 23 de junio de 1976, según enmendada, para transferir a la presente ley las disposiciones que regulan el intercambio de medicamentos bioequivalentes, estableciendo mecanismos que facilitan el proceso.

Se deroga la Ley Núm. 282 de 15 de mayo de 1945, según enmendada y se establecen

Regulation 8503: Daily Practice and Oversight

- Sets operational standards for pharmacies.
- Defines pharmacist vs. technician responsibilities.
- Establishes documentation and recordkeeping expectations.
- Mandates physical or documented supervision by the PIC.

ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE
PUERTO RICO
Departamento de Salud

Número: 8503
Fecha: 23 de julio de 2014
Aprobado: Hon. David E. Bernier Rivera
Secretario de Estado

Por: Francisco J. Rodríguez Bernier
Secretario Auxiliar de Servicios

REGLAMENTO DE
LA JUNTA DE FARMACIA
DE PUERTO RICO

Federal Responsibilities of the PIC

- **DEA -** Controlled substance ordering, storage, recordkeeping.
- **FDA -** Drug labeling, recalls, expired medication handling.
- **HIPAA -** Protecting patient privacy and data security.
- **CMS** (if applicable) -Billing compliance in MTM and immunizations.

FDA

U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

CMS
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

What’s the Difference Between a Pharmacist Manager and a Staff Pharmacist?

Pharmacist-in-Charge (PIC)

- Legally accountable for pharmacy operations
- Oversees compliance, licensing, inventory, personnel
- Often involved in strategic and administrative decisions

Staff Pharmacist

- Assists with daily dispensing and patient care
- Follows protocols and supports workflow
- Focused on clinical and technical duties

What other differences have you noticed in practice?

Have you transitioned from staff pharmacist to PIC? What changed?

Challenges in Community Pharmacy

Top Safety Threats in Community Pharmacy Dispensing

- Look-alike/sound-alike medications (e.g., Celebrex vs. Celexa)
- High-alert medications (e.g., insulin, opioids).
- Inadequate patient counseling or lack of time.
- Workflow interruptions and staff shortages.
- Misuse of technician delegation.

Why Errors Happen: Realities of Community Practice

- Excessive multitasking.
- Time pressure and prescription volume.
- System failures (e-prescription errors, label mismatches).
- Communication gaps (between prescriber, pharmacy, patient).
- Burnout and emotional fatigue.

The Pharmacist Manager's Role in Risk Reduction

- Establish double-check systems (tech → pharmacist verification).
- Use of high-alert medication alerts and auxiliary labels.
- Standardize workflows and shift huddles.
- Keep staff trained on laws and error reporting protocols.
- Engage in continuous quality improvement (CQI).

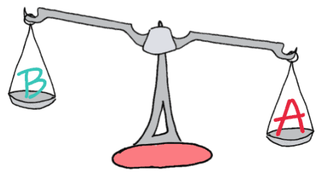
Case Scenario: Dispensing the Wrong Warfarin Dose

- ❑ A technician dispensed 5 mg instead of 2 mg of warfarin.
- ❑ Patient was hospitalized for bleeding.
  - ➢ **Discussion Questions:**
    - What laws and regulations apply here?
    - What went wrong?
    - How can a PIC uniquely contribute to prevent this type of situation?

Case Review: What Went Wrong and What Could Be Done

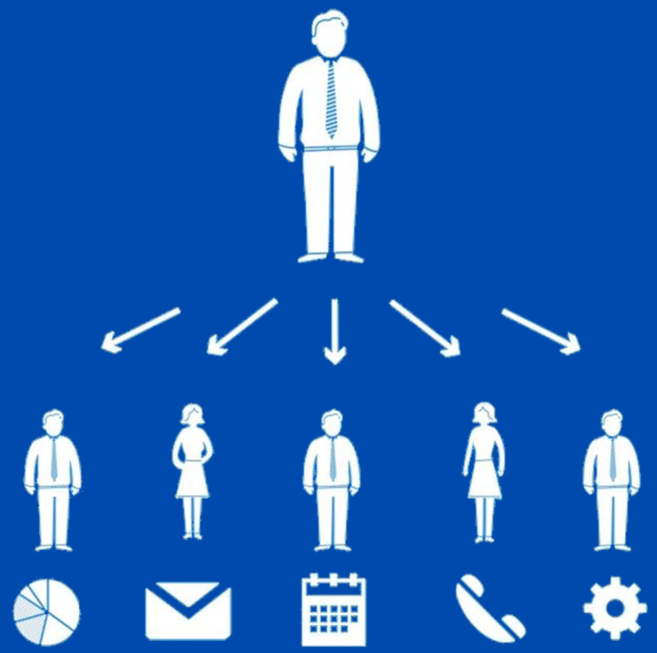
- ❑ **Applicable Laws/Regulations:** Law 247, Regulation 8503 (supervision, technician task limits), DEA (if controlled), patient safety protocols.
- ❑ **What Went Wrong:** Technician error not caught before dispensing; lack of double-check system; possible workflow fatigue or unclear workflow procedures.

- ➢ **Pharmacist-in-Charge Responsibilities:**
  - Implement and enforce a double-check policy for high-risk medications.
  - Ensure technician training and competency assessments.
  - Create a culture of safety and encourage error reporting.
  - Monitor and improve workflow and staffing adequacy.



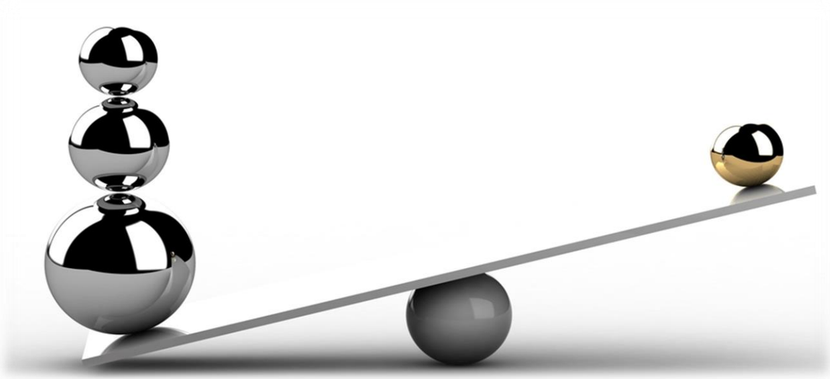
Choosing a Solution

Task Delegation & Leadership in Community Pharmacy



Pharmacist vs Technician Roles (Law & Regulation)

- Under Regulation 8503:
  - Technicians may assist in preparation, labeling, and data entry.
  - May not interpret prescriptions, make clinical judgments, or counsel.
- Only the pharmacist may verify, counsel, and authorize dispensing.



Effective Delegation in Community Pharmacy

A literature review of the Pubmed database by the New Brunswick College of Pharmacists published on 2024 shared that…

Pharmacy technicians are willing to partake in activities **beyond their traditional duties** and have an **overall positive attitude for performing such activities**, (…) willingness to engage in these activities was associated with **resiliency and was enabled by transformative leadership by pharmacist supervisors.**

New Brunswick College of Pharmacists
Ordre des pharmaciens du Nouveau-Brunswick

Evaluation of community pharmacy workplace wellness: Literature review, environmental scan, and task force recommendations

Dana Borowitz [a,*], Shanna Trenaman [b], Anastasia Shiamptanis [a]

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PMCID: PMC10973680 PMID: 38550398

Abstract

Pharmacy professionals report experiencing burnout and stress in the workplace. Concerns exist that burnout and stress in the pharmacy profession are having an impact on patient care and may be affecting the sustainability of the pharmacy profession. In response, pharmacy regulatory authorities worldwide are exploring how to address workplace wellness. Jurisdictions have varied in terms of the approaches taken, which range from surveys of pharmacy professionals, formation of committees or working groups, and legislative changes. The approach taken by the New Brunswick College of Pharmacists (NBCP) consisted of a literature review of the current state of pharmacy workplace wellness,

Effective Delegation in Community Pharmacy

- From effective delegation, pharmacists noted benefits such as:
  - Improved patient safety
  - Additional time to provide patient counselling
  - Ability to focus their attention on the clinical aspect of checking prescriptions
  - Error reduction, efficiency improvement, and **team member empowerment**

❖ *Delegation is a **key leadership function** of the pharmacist-in-charge (PIC).*

❖ *Is not just assigning tasks — it's about matching tasks to roles responsibly.*

When Delegation Fails: What to Avoid

- Overloading one staff member
- Delegating without follow-up or verification
- Assigning tasks outside technician's scope
- Not providing written protocols or training

Delegation That Works: Strategies for Smooth Operations

- Use defined workflows and checklists
- Assign based on skill and experience
  - Making use of all the skill sets of employees (ie, skill mix) was suggested as important for improving the quantity and quality of professional services in community pharmacies (New Brunswick College of Pharmacists)
- Rotate tasks to prevent fatigue
- Schedule tech-pharmacist huddles to align responsibilities
- "Escalate when in doubt" rule

The Pharmacist-in-Charge as a Leader

- Leadership isn’t about being “in charge” — it’s about influence and trust.
- Traits of strong PIC leaders:
  - Clear communication
  - Accountability
  - Emotional awareness
  - Feedback culture

Delegation Scenario:
Overdelegation Near Miss

A pharmacy technician is asked to handle data entry, inventory stocking, and label printing alone during a busy hour. A prescription label is placed on the wrong bottle. The pharmacist discovers the mistake before dispensing.

Discussion Questions:

- What went wrong in this scenario?
- How should tasks have been distributed differently?
- What systems could the PIC have in place to prevent this?

Tools to Support Delegation & Workflow

- Daily task boards / dry-erase planner
- Technician workflow checklists
- Brief start-of-shift meetings
- Task rotation schedules
- Digital tools: pharmacy task manager apps

Communication for Patient Education & Rational Use of Medications

Why Communication Matters in Community Pharmacy

- Communication affects patient understanding, adherence, and safety.
- Poor communication can lead to misuse or misunderstanding of medications.
- Pharmacists are the final point of contact before the patient uses the medication.

Elements of Effective Patient Communication

- Use plain language, avoid medical jargon.
- Practice active listening.
- Confirm understanding using teach-back method.
- Show empathy and cultural sensitivity.
- Use visual aids or translated materials when needed.

Encouraging Rational Use of Medications

- Explain indication, proper use, and duration clearly.
- Clarify potential side effects and what to do if they occur.
- Stress adherence importance and avoid self-adjustment.
- Identify and address misconceptions about medications.

Common Communication Barriers

- Language differences
- Noise and interruptions in workflow
- Time constraints during busy hours
- Patient cognitive or emotional state

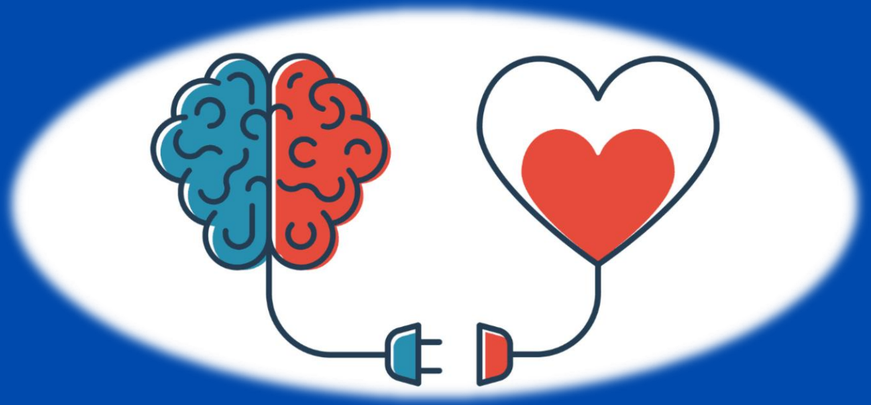
Case Scenario: A Missed Counseling Opportunity

A patient picks up metronidazole and is not counseled due to a rush. The patient consumes alcohol and becomes ill.

Discussion Questions:

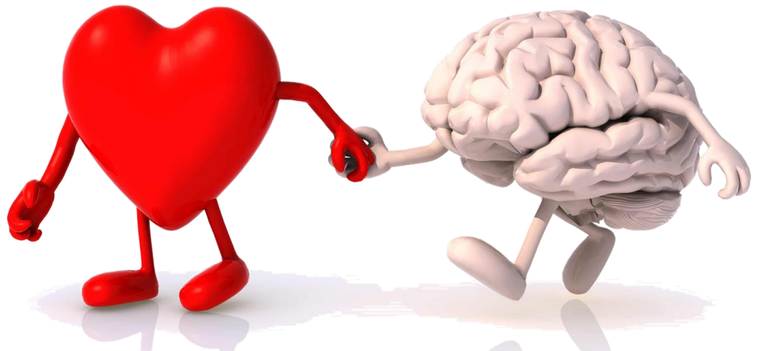
- What went wrong in this scenario?
- What communication opportunity was missed?
- How could the PIC have handled this differently?

Emotional Intelligence & Conflict Resolution in Pharmacy Leadership



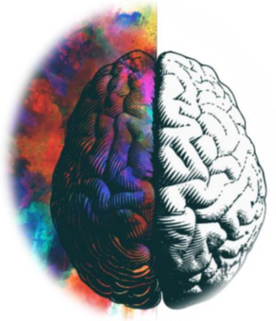
Emotional Intelligence: A Core Competency for the Pharmacist-in-Charge

- EI involves self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills.
- Helps manage stress, connect with patients and staff, and lead effectively.
- Strong EI enhances decision-making and reduces reactive behavior.



Key Components of Emotional Intelligence

- **Self-awareness**: Recognizing one’s own emotions and triggers.
- **Self-regulation**: Managing emotions in high-stress moments.
- **Empathy**: Understanding others’ perspectives and feelings.
- **Motivation**: Staying focused and positive under pressure.
- **Social skills**: Effective communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork.



Recognizing Conflict Scenarios in Pharmacy Practice

- Miscommunication between pharmacist and technician
- Disagreement on prescription validity
- Angry or confused patients
- Role confusion or unmet expectations among staff

Managing Conflict as a Pharmacist Leader

- Stay calm and listen actively
- Acknowledge emotions without judgment
- Clarify the issue without assigning blame
- Use assertive but respectful language
- Find common ground and agree on a solution

Case Scenario: Leadership Under Pressure

A pharmacy is short-staffed. A technician makes a labeling error, a patient is waiting angrily, and a prescriber is on hold.

Discussion Questions:

- Which EI skills are most useful in this situation?
- How should the pharmacist prioritize tasks?
- What can the PIC say or do to support the team?

Strengthening Emotional Intelligence in Pharmacy Teams

- Practice mindfulness and reflection
- Engage in regular feedback sessions
- Create a safe space for team discussions
- Model emotionally intelligent behavior
- Encourage conflict debriefs after tough situations

Tools and Strategies for Improving Patient Outcomes

Practical Tools Pharmacists Can Use

- Medication therapy management programs (MTM’s)
- Medication synchronization programs
- Comprehensive medication reviews (CMRs)
- Adherence packaging and refill reminders
- Patient-specific action plans and goals

Medication Therapy Management: What It Is and Why It Matters

- MTM involves reviewing medication regimens to improve outcomes and reduce risks.
- Includes patient assessment, intervention, monitoring, and documentation.
- A core service in value-based pharmacy practice.

Benefits of MTM for Patients and Pharmacies

- Improves therapeutic outcomes and patient satisfaction.
- Identifies drug interactions, duplications, and unnecessary medications.
- Increases patient engagement and education.
- Can generate additional revenue and reduce overall healthcare costs.

Understanding Why Patients Don’t Adhere

- Complex medication regimens or side effects
- Lack of understanding or motivation
- Cost of medications
- Forgetfulness or confusion

Helping Patients Stay on Track

- Simplify medication regimens when possible
- Offer reminders: calls, texts, or app notifications
- Use pillboxes or blister packs
- Provide consistent follow-up and education

Automation and Digitalization in Pharmacy Management

The Role of Technology in Modern Pharmacy Practice

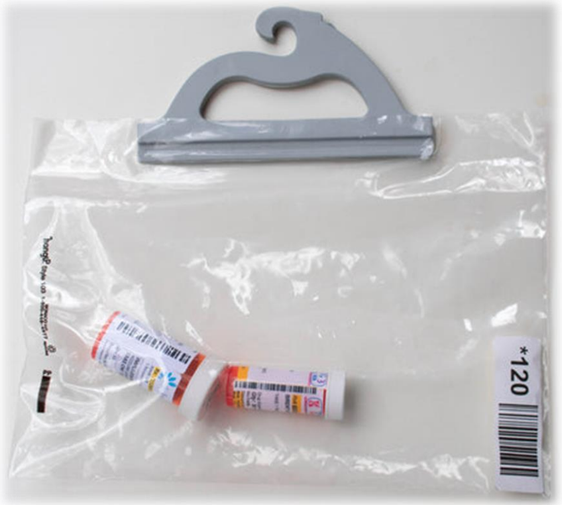
- Digital tools streamline operations and reduce manual errors.
- Technology supports regulatory compliance and better documentation.
- Enhances patient care through improved access to data.

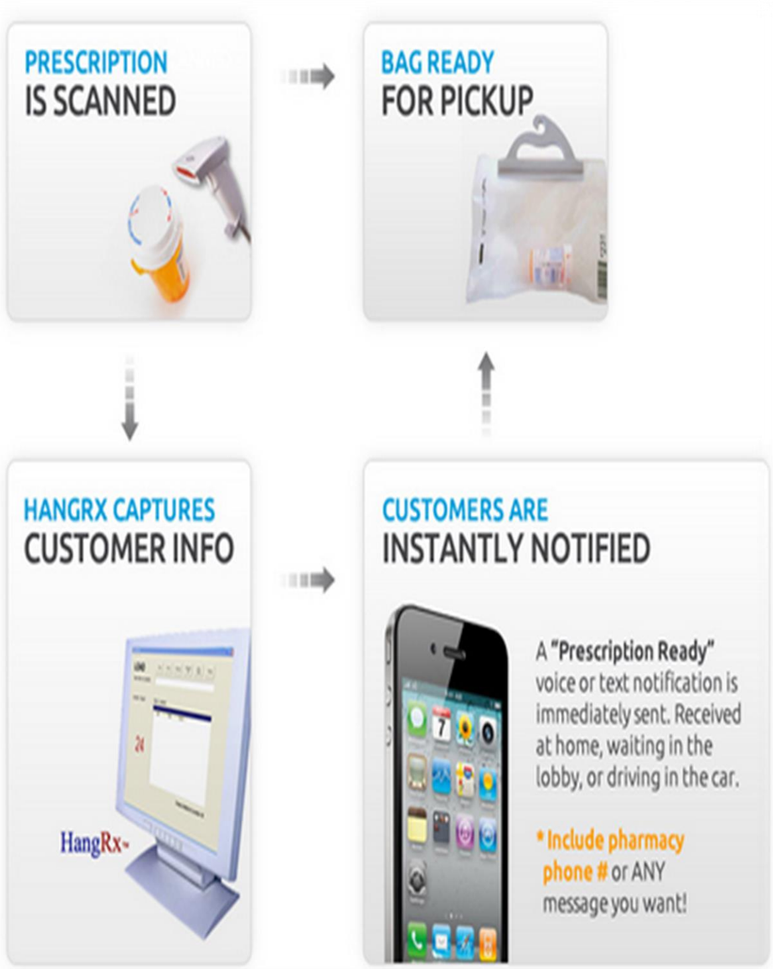
Role of Automation in Pharmacies

- Automated dispensing systems
- Barcode verification and inventory tracking
- Electronic prescribing and refills
- Robotic prescription filling

Role of Automation in Pharmacies

The use of technology has been suggested to refocus workload and to address barriers to providing patient care.





How Automation Helps the Whole Team

- Reduces repetitive tasks and manual labor
- Frees up time for pharmacists to focus on patient care
- Improves accuracy and reduces waste
- Enhances accountability and transparency

What Are the Barriers to Adopting Tech?

- High upfront costs and training time
- Resistance to change among staff
- Integration issues with existing systems
- Data privacy and cybersecurity concerns

Case Discussion: Smart Tech Decisions

A mid-size community pharmacy is considering investing in automation.

They want to improve accuracy and reduce workload, but have a limited budget.

Discussion Questions:

- What type of technologies should they prioritize?
- How can they evaluate the return on investment?
- How can the PIC lead this transition?

Beyond Dispensing:
Digital Tools for Admin Efficiency

- Workflow management systems
- Cloud-based documentation and billing
- Staff scheduling platforms
- Data analytics for performance tracking

Warning for Excessive Performance Tracking…

A literature review of the Pubmed database by the New Brunswick College of Pharmacists published on 2024 shared that…

Pharmacists have stated concerns with **metrics that favor the quantity of prescriptions dispensed over the quality of care being provided**, which can pose an ethical conflict for pharmacists and a risk to patient safety.

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The Future of the Pharmacist Manager (PIC)

Today’s PIC: Beyond Compliance

- Increasingly seen as a clinical and administrative leader
- Expected to manage teams, patient outcomes, and business metrics
- Role is expanding with healthcare system changes and technological evolution

Tools That Empower the New Generation of Pharmacist Managers

- Data dashboards for performance monitoring
- Real-time communication apps for staff coordination
- Automated compliance reporting tools
- Learning management systems for staff development

Core Skills for PIC Success

- Emotional intelligence and conflict resolution
- Decision-making under pressure
- Delegation and coaching
- Strategic planning and adaptability

Balancing Roles: Clinician, Leader, Manager

- Balancing clinical duties with team management and business oversight
- Managing burnout and setting realistic expectations
- Encouraging a culture of collaboration and innovation

Reimagining the Pharmacist-in-Charge

- Pharmacists as healthcare innovators
- Use of AI, telehealth, and automation to extend care
- PICs driving policy and advocacy for pharmacy practice
- Emphasis on continuous professional development

What Kind of PIC Do You Want to Be?

- Reflect on your current strengths and areas for growth
- Commit to at least one leadership behavior to adopt
- Consider how you will implement new tools and skills in your practice

Thank You For Your Attention

“Empowered pharmacists lead empowered teams”

POST TEST

QUESTIONS

1. **What is one key responsibility of a pharmacist manager in a community pharmacy?**
   A. Managing physician referrals
   B. Supervising pharmacy staff and ensuring operational compliance
   C. Conducting medical diagnoses
   D. Handling health insurance billing

2. **Which regulation governs pharmacy management in Puerto Rico?**
   A. HIPAA
   B. Ley Núm. 247 of 2004
   C. Controlled Substances Act
   D. OSHA Guidelines

3. **What is a benefit of task delegation within the pharmacy team?**
   A. Reduced need for pharmacist oversight
   B. Avoiding the use of protocols
   C. Promoting workflow efficiency and leadership development
   D. Increasing dispensing time

4. **Which of the following best describes emotional intelligence in pharmacy leadership?**
   A. Delegating only technical tasks
   B. Avoiding emotional involvement with staff
   C. Managing stress, conflict, and interpersonal relationships effectively
   D. Prioritizing profits over team cohesion

5. **Which digital tool can improve workflow and medication safety in pharmacies?**
   A. Manual logbooks
   B. Email newsletters
   C. Automated dispensing systems
   D. Paper-based prescription pads

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