



Pharmacy Workplace and Well-being Reporting

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MONTHLY SNAPSHOT REPORT

July-August 2023

Please Note: PWWR is a safe space that gives voice to pharmacy personnel workplace positive and negative experiences and suggested solutions. Reported stories, events, and concerns can serve to provide insight for the profession in advocacy efforts, contributions to best practices, education, and discussions between management and pharmacy teams. **The information provided in this report is an aggregate snapshot from those who have submitted reports and is not generalized across the profession.** PWWR Reports are voluntary reports submitted to the Alliance for Patient Medication Safety (APMS), a federally listed Patient Safety Organization (PSO) for learning purposes. Quality-related event data and information reported to a listed PSO is protected from discovery, at both the state and federal level and protected by federal law (the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005, 42 U.S.C. 299b-21 et. seq., and 42 C.F.R. Part 3, §§3.10 et. seq. (PSQIA)) as Patient Safety Work Product.

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SNAPSHOT REPORT – July-August 2023
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Time Period	July 1 through August 31, 2023
Reports Submitted This Period	254
Total Reports in PWWR (Since 10/2021)	1690

DEMOGRAPHICS

Primary role

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Pharmacist	141	55.51%
Pharmacist Manager/Supervisor/PIC	53	20.87%
Pharmacy Owner	1	0.38%
Pharmacy Resident	1	0.39%
Student Pharmacist/Intern	3	1.18%
Certified Pharmacy Technician	34	13.39%
Pharmacy Technician	17	6.69%
Pharmacy Clerk	0	0.00%
Other (Reported as Former CPhT, Inspector, Director, Operating Manager)	4	1.57%
No Response	0	0.00%

Practice setting

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Chain Pharmacy (4+ units)	155	61.02%
Supermarket Pharmacy	21	8.27%
Mass-merchant Pharmacy	4	1.57%
Independent Pharmacy	22	8.66%
Hospital/Institutional Pharmacy (Inpatient)	30	11.81%
Clinic Pharmacy (Outpatient)	7	2.76%
Ambulatory Care Clinic	3	1.18%
Mail-service Pharmacy	1	0.39%
Nuclear Pharmacy	0	0.00%
Long-term Care Pharmacy	1	0.39%
Specialty Pharmacy	3	1.18%
Federal/Military/Dept of Defense Pharmacy	2	0.79%
Other (Reported as Temp service for LTC, mental health, consultant, start-up owner, state corrections pharmacy, state inspections for all types of pharmacies, clinic)	5	1.97%

Years in practice

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0-4 Years	38	14.95%
5-14 Years	80	31.50%
15-24 Years	61	24.02%
25 Years or Greater	73	28.74%
Student Pharmacists	2	0.79%

Gender

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Male	82	32.28%
Female	165	64.96%
Other	0	0.00%
Prefer not to answer	7	2.78%

Are you a member of

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
State Pharmacy Association/Society	79	31.10%
National Pharmacy Association/Society/Academy	82	32.28%
Neither	140	55.12%

Length of time worked at the organization for the experience described in the report.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0-6 Months	13	5.12%
7-12 Months	23	9.06%
13 Months – 4 Years	67	26.38%
5 or More Years	151	59.45%

State where the individual was practicing when the reported experience occurred:

States included (number of report): AL (2), AZ (4), AR (1), CA (26), CO (6), CT (5), DE (2), FL (18), GA (3), HI (1), IL (14), IN (5), IA (2), KS (2), KY (3), LA (1), MD (4), MA (5), MI (11), MO (4), MT (1), NE (4), NH (3), NJ (7), NM (1), NY (14), NC (8), OH (6), OK (1), OR (3), PA (12), PR (2), RI (1), SC (7), TN (10), TX (1), UT (1), VT (1), VA (9), WA (5), WV (3), WI (4), and Other (2).

Number of positive and negative experiences reported.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Positive Experience	6	2.36%
Negative Experience	248	97.64%

POSITIVE EXPERIENCE REPORTS

Which category best describes the positive experience of your report? Select the one that best fits your positive experience.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Preventing Errors and Improving Quality	3	50.00%
Communication, Feedback, Psychological Safety	1	16.67%
Safety and Quality by Design	0	0.00%
Other	2	33.33%

Based on your answer to the question above, please select one that best fits your positive experience. There are three groups of options to choose from. Not every group will have a response selected.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
My co-worker, supervisory and I worked collaboratively as a team to resolve a difficult workflow problem that created an unsafe condition.	0	0.00%
My supervisor created a learning opportunity for me to grow professionally and/or as a person.	0	0.00%
My supervisor asked for my input before implementing a new workflow, policy, or other change in the pharmacy.	0	0.00%
My supervisor asked for my input in evaluating a recently implemented workflow, policy, technology, or other change in the pharmacy	0	0.00%
Other	0	0.00%

Based on your answer to the question above, please select one that best fits your positive experience. There are three groups of options to choose from. Not every group will have a response selected.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Our technology prevented a potential medication error from reaching the patient	0	0.00%
Targeted safety practices prevented a potential error involving high alert medications.	0	0.00%
I used my clinical skills, training, and expertise to prevent a potential medication error from reaching the patient.	3	100.00%

Based on your answer to the question above, please select one that best fits your positive experience. There are three groups of options to choose from. Not every group will have a response selected.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
I had a positive patient interaction that improved the patient's understanding of the medication error and/or its use.	1	100.00%
I effectively used my communication skills in discussing a medication concern with a prescriber.	0	0.00%
I received positive feedback from a patient about an action took related to their medication and/or its use.	0	0.00%
I received positive feedback from my supervisor about an action I took to keep patients safe or improve quality of medication use.	0	0.00%
I received positive feedback from a co-worker about an action I took to keep patients or improve quality of medication use.	0	0.00%
My supervisor supported my emotional well-being following a medication error or potential error that could have resulted in serious harm.	0	0.00%

Describe Your Positive Experience

Experiences included: Patient was given life-saving medication in correct dosing intervals by discussing with prescriber and presented on rounds. Pharmacy director's communication and coordination. Using my training, clinical expertise and judgement in a face-paced and dangerous emergency department. Due to heat wave many people were out of town and the workload dropped to a reasonable level.

How has this positive experience affected or may affect your personal well-being? Select only one.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
No expected effect on my overall well-being.	1	16.67%
A temporary positive effect on my overall well-being	4	66.67%
A lasting positive effect on my overall well-being.	1	16.67%
I am unsure how this may affect my overall well-being	0	0.00%

Because of this positive experience the individual reported that they were more likely to: (check all that apply):

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Take actions that help my co-workers have a similar positive experience.	4	66.67%
Be more vigilant for opportunities to improve quality and safety in our pharmacy.	5	83.33%
Invest more emotional energy in improving the patient experience.	4	66.67%
Increase my engagement with and awareness of the pharmacy's safety goals.	4	66.67%
Increase my reporting of "good-catch events" and potential unsafe conditions.	2	33.33%
Take no new action	1	16.67%
Other	1	16.67%

How did your schedule (the day or the days leading up to) or staffing in the pharmacy affect the situation/experience you are reporting?

Responses ranged from the days leading up to this one positive one involved a lot of hard work, to not a problem in this pharmacy but was a huge problem at my former, to schedule and staffing remained the same but customers dropped significantly, to work 7 on 7 off with 10-hour shift but I have conditioned myself to stay vigilant, to being given the space and time to attend rounds with the hospitalist.

Did you communicate this positive experience to your staff and supervisors? Why or why not?

Six indicated yes – indicating routinely, always, sometimes, no because the metrics will speak for themselves, and no we don't celebrate wins like we emphasize the errors and near-misses.

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE REPORTS

Which category(ies) best describes the nature of the negative experience being reported?

Select all that apply.

	Number of Respondent	Percentage of Respondents
Medication Error – near miss with no patient harm	48	19.35%
Medication Error – patient harm	12	4.84%
Working Conditions (e.g., breaks, ergonomics, lighting, too few computer terminals, too many phone lines for phone available).	162	65.50%
Staffing/Scheduling (i.e., pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, clerks)	180	72.58%
Volume/workload expectations to available staffing and shift hours	182	73.39%
Pharmacy Metrics (i.e., prescription volume, vaccinations administered, patient surveys completed, number of clinical interactions, required daily reports, promise times, auto-refills)	155	62.50%
Professional judgement restricted or supported when caring for a patient (i.e., must follow employer policy regardless of situation, manager lacks understanding about patient care delivery or laws/regulations)	48	19.35%
Personal safety concerns (e.g., personal safety, lack of personal protective equipment)	39	15.73%
Technology/Automation (i.e., medication verification, EMR, SIG code translation, access to online resources, fill automation, electronic prescription receipt, etc)	26	10.48%
Insurance billing issues	28	11.29%
Training or Education (e.g., inadequate training on new service, new technology, new responsibilities)	56	22.58%
Verbal or Emotional harassment/bullying	71	28.63%
Sexual harassment	4	1.61%
Physical harm	13	5.24%

Exploring the last categories from above:

Verbal or Emotional harassment/bullying was experienced from:

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	26	36.62%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	13	18.31%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	6	8.45%
Manager – Pharmacy (director of pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	19	26.76%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	7	9.86%

Sexual Harassment was experienced from:

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	0	0.00%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	3	75.00%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	0	0.00%
Manager – Pharmacy (director of pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	1	25.00%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	0	0.00%

Physical Harm – Threatened or Actual – was experienced from:

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	12	92.31%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	0	0.00%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	0	0.00%
Manager – Pharmacy (director or pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	0	0.00%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	1	7.69%

Discrimination or microaggression based on race, ethnicity, gender was experienced from:

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	4	16.67%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	3	12.50%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	3	12.50%
Manager – Pharmacy (director or pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	10	41.67%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	3	12.50%
Other	1	4.12%

Description of Experiences

Experiences included harassment and discrimination from preceptors and co-residents, technicians bullying pharmacy manager, get spoken down to, overwhelming amount of work and metrics, no technician assistance and in the pharmacy alone for hours, pharmacy hours reduced despite workload leading to pharmacists to work after hours and unpaid, metrics are not realistic to number of staff, it's all about the numbers not the care of the patients, too many additional duties added but not staff to do it all, many distractions in the pharmacy, no time to take a break in a 10-hour shift due to staffing and workload, poor behavior by technician was dealt with by writing up the reporting pharmacist and never addressed, ignoring issues brought to manager by pharmacy staff, pharmacy crime on the rise in the area leading to stressful working conditions, man jumped the pharmacy counter and forced the staff to run out and hid – staff told they could have 30 minutes to get themselves together and then they had to open back up, inexperienced managers that are ill-prepared to manage, work in IV clean room for hours with no breaks, quit due to abusive patients, ageism experienced in 40s, pharmacists are verbally abused for things out of their control (i.e., prior auth, nationwide medication back-order, physician didn't call with the prescription, etc), physical conditions in the pharmacy (broken roll-up gate requiring individuals to shimmy on their stomachs under the gate for multiple days), work through "closed lunch break time" to try to catch up, and payment decreases have led to likely closure of the pharmacy.

Select all contributing factors or root causes that contributed to the negative experience reported.

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Workflow design/policies	132	53.23%
Break policy and practices	76	30.65%
Technology/Automation	40	16.13%
Metrics	144	58.06%
Drive thru window/Hospital staff window	62	25.00%
Medication availability/shortages	66	26.61%
Insurance/Prior authorization payment	60	24.19%
State/Federal law or regulation	24	9.68%
Corporate/Organizational policies or requirements beyond the pharmacy department or local pharmacy control	125	50.40%
Training/Education	68	27.42%
Patient (or patient caregiver) expectations and/or demands	92	37.10%
Unexpected influx of patients/patient surge	64	25.81%
Inadequate staffing	185	74.60%
Floater/Per diem staffing	40	16.13%
Inadequate pharmacist to pharmacy technician staffing	113	45.56%
Other: <i>Inadequate staffing, discount price apps, poor work culture</i>	23	9.27%

Exploring one root cause from list above

a. If staffing or pharmacist-technician ratios were identified as a root cause or contributing factor at the time of the negative experience, the staffing and pharmacist-technician ratios were:

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
At the normally scheduled level	81	41.75%
At the normally schedule level but using float or per diem staff	7	3.61%
Less than the normally scheduled level (e.g., absenteeism)	86	44.33%
Staffing or pharmacist-technician ratios were not a root cause or contributing factor	20	10.31%

b. Was the negative experience you reported:

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
An isolated occurrence	12	4.84%
A recurring occurrence	236	95.16%
Verbatim Comments Included: <i>all the time, daily, 4-5 hours into the shift, night before the morning shift started, midway through 10+hr shift, near end of a 12hr shift, particularly after 6pm and on weekends.</i>		

c. Does pharmacy management plan to take appropriate actions to prevent the experience your reported from happening in the future?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	15	6.05%
No	175	70.56%
Don't know	58	23.39%

Did you offer specific recommendations to your supervisor to prevent this incident or similar incidents from happening again?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
No, I did not discuss with my supervisor, manager, department head, etc	89	35.89%
Yes	159	64.11%
"Why did you not discuss?" Verbatim comments included: <i>not a management issue it was a PBM issue, widespread and known but no action, not my place and they won't do anything anyway, supervisor is part of the issue, they watched the whole thing happen and didn't do anything, fear of backlash, mentally done and didn't want to, supervisor was a new hire and didn't want to overload.</i>		

Was your recommendation considered and applied?

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	17	10.69%
No	142	89.31%
"Why was your recommendation not considered?" Verbatim comments included: <i>Couldn't go over the budget to schedule more help, just the way it is, the organization has a plan, no follow through, no acknowledgement, nothing can be done, it's not really happening – you've imagined it, supervisor is stuck in the middle, just work harder, it's staff's problem not a systems problem. HR did not have policy to address the situation</i>		

Effect on Well-being

On scale of 0-4 where 0 is None and 4 is Significant, to what degree do you believe your reported experience adversely affected your personal well-being:

Increased Stress

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	3	1.21%
1	1	0.40%
2	3	1.21%
3	27	10.89%
4	214	86.29%

Increased Burn-out

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	4	1.61%
1	2	0.81%
2	7	2.82%
3	18	7.26%
4	217	87.50%

Increased Weakened Family/Personal Relationships

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	16	6.45%
1	17	6.85%
2	32	12.90%
3	44	17.74%
4	139	56.05%

Increased Lessened Happiness

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	5	2.02%
1	6	2.42%
2	12	4.84%
3	34	13.71%
4	191	77.02%

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