CAREER AS A PHARMACIST IN SOUTH AFRICA

Information supplied by the South African Pharmacy Council
Quality Pharmaceutical Services for all the people in South Africa

PHARMACEUTICAL ORGANISATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The following pharmacy organisations can be contacted for further information regarding pharmacy as a career, membership or services offered.

PIASA - Pharmaceutical Industry Association of South Africa
P O Box 12123, Vorna Valley, 1886, South Africa
Tel: +27 11 805 5100 Fax: +27 11 805 5105/9
E-mail: info@piasa.co.za

NAPM - National Association of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers
P O Box 57031, Arcadia, Pretoria, 0007
Tel: 012-323-5299 Fax: 012-323 7629 E-mail: napm@mweb.co.za
Website: www.napm.co.za

Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa
PO Box 26039, Arcadia, 0007
Tel: +27 12 301-0820 Fax:+27 12 301-0828
E-mail: nitsa@pharmail.co.za

PSSA - Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa
P O Box 26039, ARCADIA, 0007
Tel: (012) 301-0820 Fax: (012) 301-0828
E-mail: pssa@pharmail.co.za
Website: www.pssa.org.za

SAHIP - South African Association of Hospital & Institutional Pharmacists
PO Box 26039, Arcadia, 0007, South Africa
Tel:+27 12 301 0820 Fax: +27 12 301 0836
E-mail: exec@saahip.org.za

SAAPI - South African Association of Pharmacists in Industry
Tel: (011) 442 3601 Fax: (011) 442 3661
E-mail: jackie.dring@serono.com

SAPSF - South African Pharmacy Students’ Federation
Tel: 082 862 1423 E-mail: sapsfchairperson@yahoo.com
Website: www.sapsf.co.za

CPS - Community Pharmacists’ Sector of the PSSA
PO Box 95123, Grant Park, 2051
Tel: (011) 728-6668 Fax: (011) 728-5988
E-mail: wendy@sarcda.co.za

South African Progressive Pharmacists Association (SAPPA)
PO Box 1791, Westville, 3629
Tel: +27 31 461 3700 E-mail: shamm@iafrica.com

Department of Health
Private Bag X828, Pretoria, 0001
Tel: (012) 312-0000 Fax: (012) 325-5706/326-4382
Website: www.health.gov.za

CONTACT DETAILS:
South African Pharmacy Council
Postal Address:
Private Bag X40040, Arcadia, 0007
Physical Address:
591 Belvedere Street, Arcadia, 0083
Customer Care line:
0861 SAPC 00 or 0861 7272 00
Fax no: 27 12 321 1479/92
E-mail: customercare@sapc.za.org
Website: http://www.sapc.za.org

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PHARMACY TRAINING IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Pharmacy training is provided by eight pharmacy schools that have been approved by the South African Pharmacy Council. This training consists of:

- four years of full-time study (which leads to the awarding of a B Pharm degree)
- one year of practical training followed by a pre-registration evaluation
- one year of community service as a registered pharmacist

The practical training period is of extreme importance for the pharmacy graduate (known as an intern) to gain practical experience and knowledge in the workplace. The practical training may be carried out in a community pharmacy, institutional pharmacy, manufacturing pharmacy, or at a provider of a qualification in pharmacy approved by Council.

After successful completion of the practical training and the pre-registration evaluation, the intern is registered as a pharmacist, and must complete one year of pharmaceutical community service in a public sector facility before he/she can practise independently as a pharmacist.

Admission requirements
In most cases, a matriculation certificate is a prerequisite for admission to the degree course. Individual institutions, however, set their own admission criteria and prospective applicants are advised to contact the institution of their choice with regard to the student selection procedure followed by the individual institution.

Registration with the South African Pharmacy Council
In order to practise as a pharmacist in South Africa, it is necessary to register as a pharmacist with the South African Pharmacy Council. The Council is the body established by a statute of Parliament to control the pharmacy profession and performs its functions in terms of the Pharmacy Act 1974, (Act 53 of 1974) as amended.

The practice of pharmacy is conducted in the fields of community pharmacy, institutional pharmacy, wholesale pharmacy, manufacturing pharmacy and consultant pharmacy. There is also scope for an academic career for pharmacists with suitable additional qualifications, and many pharmacists pursue a career in administration.

One of the objectives of the Council is to control and promote pharmaceutical education and pharmacy practice in the Republic and to establish and maintain adequate standards in respect of education and pharmacy practice. The Council also plays an important role in controlling and maintaining the professional conduct of persons registered in terms of the Pharmacy Act, 1974.

Where do pharmacists work?
Pharmacists are a critical source of knowledge in the pharmaceutical industry, including retail outlets, hospitals, clinics, private and public healthcare institutions, community pharmacies, consultant pharmacies, pharmaceutical manufacturers, pharmaceutical sales and marketing organisations, medical laboratories, research and training institutions, pharmaceutical education, and research and development institutions.

What does a pharmacist do?
The pharmacist is often the first point-of-contact for patients with health enquiries and plays an important role in preparing and dispensing medicines that have been prescribed by a health professional. Pharmacists provide information on prescription and over-the-counter medicines, healthcare supplies and products, and the safe and effective use of medicine.

Pharmacists also play a vital role in the development and manufacture of medicines, and in pharmaceutical research establishments, specialised medical institutions, and the academic fields of pharmaceutical education, training and development.

The pharmacist is regarded as being the:
- custodian of medicines;
- creator, manufacturer, distributor and controller of safe, effective and quality medicine;
- adviser on the safe, rational and appropriate use of medicine;
- promoter of community health and related information and advice;
- provider of prescription medicine;
- provider of pharmacist-initiated care to the patient, ensuring the best use of medicine;
- provider of essential clinical services, including screening (testing) and referral services;
- provider of education and information on healthcare and medicine;
- provider of pharmaceutical care by taking responsibility for actively managing a patient’s illness and medicine to improve the health outcomes for the patient;
- provider of cost-effective and efficient pharmaceutical services.

Why pharmacy as a career?
Pharmacy is a people-orientated profession that is driven by the desire of highly skilled professionals to improve the health and wellbeing of people and communities. Pharmacists are considered to be one of the most visible and accessible healthcare professionals in the healthcare field and are a trusted source of information on health remedies. A career in pharmacy, which is a vibrant profession that continually absorbs new advancements in medicine and medical knowledge, promises to be an exciting and rewarding career prospect in the healthcare industry.