

Community pharmacist

Community pharmacists work to legal and ethical guidelines to ensure the correct and safe supply of medical products to the general public.

As a community pharmacist you'll be responsible for dispensing and supplying prescription medicines. You'll also be involved in maintaining and improving people's health by providing advice and information. You'll also sell over-the-counter medical products and instruct people on the use of medicines and medical appliances. You will usually be based in high street pharmacies either in large, medium-sized or small chain stores or in independent pharmacies of various sizes. Alternatively, you might work in a doctor's practice or health centre.



Skills:

You'll need to show:

- excellent communication skills - you must listen carefully to what patients say, as well as explain complex and sometimes sensitive information to the public and other healthcare professionals
- the ability to work with others in a multidisciplinary team, as well as to lead others in a team
- concern for the welfare of the general public
- accuracy and meticulous attention to detail
- a methodical approach to work
- an understanding of business principles
- a high level of customer service
- a professional and confident manner
- the ability to inspire the trust of others

Qualifications:

University

To become a pharmacist, you'll need to complete a master's of pharmacy (MPharm) degree, approved by the [General Pharmaceutical Council](#) which takes 4 years. You'll then need to complete the [pharmacist foundation training scheme](#) which takes 1 year. If you do not have the qualifications to get onto a master's of pharmacy degree, you could do a pharmacy foundation degree which takes 2 years. You could then take a job as a [pharmacy assistant](#) or [pharmacy technician](#) and apply to join the master's degree in its second year. Entry requirements you'll usually need: at least 1 A level, or equivalent, for a foundation degree/2 or 3 A levels, or equivalent, including chemistry.

Working hours:

Working hours may include unsocial hours in a shop environment. Many pharmacies are open for extended hours during evenings and weekends. Most employers operate a rota system. There are opportunities for part-time work, job-share and locum work.

Salary:

- Salaries for pre-registration trainees can range from £16,000 to over £20,000.
- Typical starting salaries for qualified community pharmacists are in the region of £30,000 to £35,000.
- With experience, your salary can rise to around £45,000, and at a specialist or management level it can reach £50,000 to £70,000.

