

Simplifi+ helps reduce the impact of pharmacy staff shortages

Annie Lambert, PharmD, BCSCP, Clinical Program Manager



The nationwide pharmacy technician shortage is impacting hospitals, retail, and community pharmacies, with many facing double-digit vacancy rates.¹ This issue may not be new, but it has been exacerbated by COVID and recently validated by a joint survey conducted by ASHP and PTCB.²

In many pharmacies, the staff that are left are doing more work to pick up the load – or in some cases pharmacists, students and residents are filling in the gaps of traditional technician work.³ The effort to maintain USP compliance will only increase once the USP updates are finalized by doubling the competency frequency and increasing the surface sampling requirements to monthly. With the heavy workload and alternate staff covering additional responsibilities, they may not be as proficient in workflows that support compliance creating wider gaps and exposing pharmacies to risks in compliance.



Compliance provides the foundation of all pharmacy activities. Essentia Health has leveraged Simplifi 797 to monitor compliance as well as help their teams focus during these challenging times. “We view our compliance program as the core of what we do, so that no matter where a patient encounters our system, they can be confident in the care they receive,” says David Sperl, PharmD, Senior Director, Acute Pharmacy at Essentia Health. Simplifi 797 has helped the Essentia pharmacy team keep an eye on compliance remotely when leaders were working from home. On the front lines, by standardizing tasks in Simplifi 797, new staff have a clear expectation of what needs to get done each day, week and month. In fact, this actually frees up pharmacy trainers to spend more time on more complex training components and has relieved some training fatigue for their team.

To help address the pharmacy technician staffing challenges, over a third of pharmacy employers implemented an internal technician training program in the last two years.⁴ In a [recent webinar](#), Lilit Smith, PharmD, MBA, Manager of Home Infusion Services at Baptist Health South Florida shared how her health system partnered with a local pharmacy technician program to develop competency compounding technicians. BHSF employees can also enroll in the program to progress their skills and cross over into compounding roles.

At Wolters Kluwer Health, we believe patients deserve the best care everywhere. And we understand that can be a tall order to fill when you don’t have enough staff to provide the same level of services or enough of a critical medication due to yet another drug shortage. By building software that helps guide compliance with USP and

accreditation standards and delivering consistent results, we help pharmacy teams get their most important work done no matter who is filling the role that day.

Simplifi+ on Sole Source provides seamless access for compounding and medication storage documentation activities, tools for standard workflows and an intuitive user interface that makes for smooth onboarding to limit compliance gaps.

Should you need assistance or training to take advantage of enhanced functionality to support your compliance efforts, contact your Customer Success Manager or our Compliance Support Team at **800-341-0450** or CSCSupport@wolterskluwer.com.

Most importantly – keep focused on why compliance is important. At the end of every medication handled,

prepared, or stored in your pharmacy or facility is a patient that could have been one of your own staff, family member or neighbor in the community. The work we do to follow regulatory standards supports the best care and safety for our loved ones and each other.

Lastly – I personally want to acknowledge the efforts of fellow pharmacy leaders who always seem to have too much on their plate. At the same time, it is also never enough –not enough staff, not enough critical drugs, not enough funding to expand the programs or facilities that can make an impact. For pharmacy leaders, managing all these shortages is a necessity that also comes with little thanks and increases the risk for burnout. May you find peace in knowing You Are Enough and the breathing room in your day to notice the abundance of skill, talent and grace that surround you.

¹ASHP News 5/2/2022 Hospitals Scramble as Pharmacy Technician Shortage Persists

²ASHP Press Release 3/15/2022 Hospitals and Health Systems Experiencing Severe Shortage of Pharmacy Technicians

³Beckers Hospital Review 3/16/2022 Hospitals face severe pharmacy technician shortage, surveys show :

⁴RevCycle Intelligence 3/16/2022 Poor compensation spurred pharmacy technician staffing shortages in 2021.