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Pharmacy Technicians in Clinical Support Services: Evaluating Their Impact on Medication Accuracy and Patient Care Outcomes

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Abstract

Pharmacy technicians play an increasingly critical role in modern healthcare systems as clinical demands on pharmacists intensify. This systematic review evaluates the impact of pharmacy technicians on medication accuracy, safety, workflow efficiency, and patient care outcomes across hospital, ambulatory, and community pharmacy settings. Recent evidence demonstrates that well-trained pharmacy technicians contribute significantly to reducing dispensing errors, enhancing medication preparation accuracy, and supporting verification processes, thereby improving overall medication safety. Their integration into advanced clinical support tasks—such as tech-check-tech verification, sterile compounding, medication history collection, and digital medication management—has enabled pharmacists to focus more on direct patient care activities. The review also highlights the influence of technician roles on patient wait times, adherence, and overall satisfaction with pharmacy services. Despite promising outcomes, challenges remain regarding variability in training, regulatory inconsistencies, and differences in scope of practice across countries. The study concludes that expanding the role of pharmacy technicians within a structured regulatory and competency framework can substantially enhance medication accuracy and patient outcomes, especially as healthcare systems continue transitioning toward team-based, technology-enabled models of pharmaceutical care.

Keywords: Pharmacy Technicians, Medication Accuracy, Patient Outcomes, Clinical Support Services, Tech-Check-Tech, Medication Safety, Pharmaceutical Care.

1. Background and Significance

Pharmacy practice has undergone substantial transformation over the past decade, driven by increasing patient complexity, medication volume, and healthcare system pressures. Pharmacists are expected to provide more clinical services—such as medication therapy management (MTM), chronic disease support, antimicrobial stewardship, and transitions-of-care management—yet operational demands often limit their capacity to deliver high-impact clinical care (Scahill et al., 2017). This shift has prompted a global re-evaluation of how pharmacy technicians can support clinical pharmacy services by taking on expanded technical and accuracy-based tasks.

Pharmacy technicians were historically responsible mainly for basic technical duties, including dispensing, inventory management, and medication preparation. However, current evidence shows that technicians can play a vital role in improving medication safety and workflow

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efficiency when provided with the appropriate training, standardization, and oversight (Desselle et al., 2018). Many healthcare systems, including those in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and parts of Europe, have implemented competency-based frameworks that allow technicians to participate in tasks previously reserved for pharmacists, such as accuracy checking, sterile compounding, medication history collection, and automated dispensing management (Hilton et al., 2022).

The concept of **clinical support services** has emerged as a critical domain within pharmacy operations. These services include all technical and semi-clinical tasks that directly contribute to medication accuracy, therapeutic continuity, and patient safety. Technicians help ensure the accuracy of medication preparation, reduce prescription and dispensing errors, organize workflow, and handle digital systems such as automated dispensing cabinets and barcode verification technologies (Le et al., 2021). When technicians effectively support clinical services, pharmacists have more available time to deliver patient-centered care, resulting in improved therapeutic outcomes, reduced readmissions, and enhanced patient satisfaction.

As healthcare systems continue to emphasize quality, safety, and efficiency—aligned with global priorities such as the WHO patient safety agenda and Saudi Vision 2030 health transformation—the need to deploy pharmacy technicians in optimized roles becomes increasingly urgent. This background underscores the necessity of systematically reviewing and synthesizing current evidence regarding their contributions to medication accuracy and patient outcomes.

2. Conceptual Framework: Technician Contribution Model

This conceptual framework illustrates how pharmacy technicians impact medication accuracy and patient outcomes through structured clinical support functions. The model is built on three interconnected domains:

1. **Technical Accuracy Domain:** Technicians perform critical tasks such as medication preparation, dispensing, unit-dose packaging, sterile compounding, and data entry. These tasks form the foundation of the medication-use process and directly influence the likelihood of an error reaching the patient.
2. **Clinical Workflow Domain:** Through tech-check-tech models, dispensing support, digital health tasks, medication reconciliation assistance, and automated system management, technicians enhance workflow efficiency and reduce bottlenecks. This allows pharmacists to dedicate more time to clinical interventions.
3. **Patient Outcome Domain:** Improved accuracy and efficiency reduce medication errors, minimize delays, improve adherence, and support continuity of care. Pharmacists are enabled to provide higher-quality clinical services, which directly improves therapeutic outcomes.

Technician Contribution Model to Medication Accuracy and Patient Outcomes

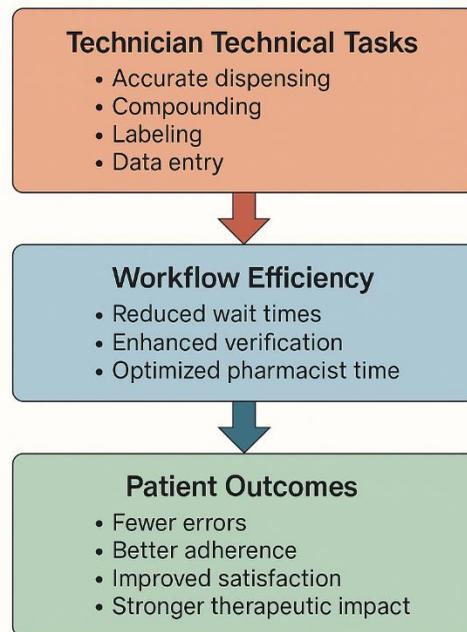


Figure 1. Technician Contribution Model to Medication Accuracy and Patient Outcomes

These domains interact dynamically: higher technical accuracy improves workflow reliability, which elevates patient outcomes. This cycle forms the **Technician Contribution Model**, guiding pharmacy workforce planning and policy development.

3. Scope of Practice and Competency Standards (≈700 words)

The scope of practice of pharmacy technicians has expanded considerably across global healthcare systems, reflecting broader shifts in pharmacy operations, clinical service delivery, and patient-safety standards. Traditionally, pharmacy technicians were responsible only for basic technical duties—such as medication dispensing, counting tablets, labeling prescriptions, and inventory management. However, the growing complexity of medication-use processes, rising prescription volumes, and the increasing clinical responsibilities of pharmacists have driven major regulatory bodies to elevate technician roles through structured competency frameworks and standardized certification systems (ASHP, 2022; GPhC, 2020).

In many countries, pharmacy technicians now function as integral members of multidisciplinary healthcare teams. Their scope of practice includes activities directly linked to medication accuracy, workflow reliability, and patient safety. Competency standards typically emphasize technical proficiency, regulatory compliance, communication, documentation, and emerging digital competencies required for advanced automated systems. This shift has allowed pharmacists to focus more heavily on clinical roles such as medication therapy management (MTM), antimicrobial stewardship, chronic disease management, and transitions-of-care interventions. Consequently, the expanded role of technicians is understood as a key strategy to

improve pharmaceutical service efficiency and patient outcomes.

In the United States, scope of practice is determined at the state level, resulting in significant variability. Most states require technicians to perform essential technical tasks such as medication preparation, inventory control, prescription processing, and patient communication. Growing numbers of states now permit advanced responsibilities, including *tech-check-tech (TCT)*, immunization support (under pharmacist supervision), sterile and non-sterile compounding under USP standards, and participation in medication reconciliation processes (Hilton et al., 2022). The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) and Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) have expanded certification pathways that include medication history, controlled substances management, and billing/reimbursement roles.

In the United Kingdom, pharmacy technicians are fully regulated healthcare professionals registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). Their training includes nationally standardized qualifications such as NVQ Level 3 Diplomas, and their scope of practice is more advanced compared to many other regions. UK technicians regularly perform accuracy checking, clinical screening support for prescriptions, medicines management on wards, medicines reconciliation, and controlled drug handling—responsibilities traditionally associated with pharmacists (GPhC, 2020). This model demonstrates the potential for optimizing pharmacy workforce structures through formal regulatory recognition and competency-based expansion.

In Canada, pharmacy technicians are also regulated professionals capable of performing the final technical check for prescriptions, participating in sterile and hazardous compounding, and verifying medication preparations. The National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) outlines detailed competencies, enabling technicians to independently manage technical aspects of the medication-use process while pharmacists concentrate on clinical decision-making. This model closely aligns with the UK approach, emphasizing high levels of autonomy supported by robust training.

In the Gulf region, including Saudi Arabia, competency standards for pharmacy technicians are evolving rapidly due to large-scale healthcare transformation programs such as Vision 2030. Technicians typically engage in medication preparation, dispensing, inventory oversight, and automated dispensing systems. Growing emphasis is being placed on developing technicians' abilities in sterile compounding, medication safety support, digital pharmacy functions, and workflow optimization. As health institutions in the region transition toward clinical pharmacy models, technician competency frameworks are expected to expand accordingly.

Across all jurisdictions, competency standards for pharmacy technicians generally fall within the following domains:

1. Technical dispensing and medication preparation:

Accurate filling of prescriptions, unit-dose packaging, labeling, and compounding under regulatory standards (e.g., USP <797>/<800>).

2. Automation and digital systems management:

Operation and maintenance of automated dispensing cabinets (ADCs), pharmacy robotics, barcode systems, and electronic health record (EHR) data entry.

3. Inventory, supply chain, and regulatory compliance:

Controlled substances management, temperature monitoring, stock rotation, and adherence to regulatory requirements.

4. Communication, teamwork, and safety culture:

Patient interaction, interprofessional collaboration, safety reporting, and support for quality-improvement activities.

5. Advanced roles under structured oversight (varies by country):

Tech-check-tech, medication history collection, ward-based medicines management, and compounding certification.

Global evidence suggests that when competency standards are clear and consistently implemented, pharmacy technicians can achieve high levels of performance, significantly reducing errors in medication preparation and supporting safer clinical workflows. As pharmacy practice continues to evolve, the expansion of technician competencies is increasingly recognized as a strategic priority for ensuring high-quality, efficient, patient-centered pharmaceutical care.

Table 1. International Comparison of Pharmacy Technician Competency Standards

Country	Regulatory Model	Core Competencies	Advanced Roles
United States	State-level regulation (varies widely)	Dispensing, data entry, inventory, compounding	Tech-check-tech; immunization support; medication history; automated system management
United Kingdom	Fully regulated healthcare professional under GPhC	Accuracy checking; medicines management; clinical screening support	Ward-based medicines reconciliation; controlled drug oversight
Canada	National regulatory framework (NAPRA)	Dispensing, sterile/hazardous compounding, accuracy verification	Independent final-check authority; expanded quality assurance roles
Saudi Arabia	Evolving regulation aligned with Vision 2030	Dispensing, automation, inventory, compounding	Sterile compounding certification; workflow optimization; digital pharmacy tasks
Australia	Role-based training; not fully regulated nationally	Dispensing, inventory, medication preparation	Expanded compounding; specialized support in hospital services

4. Medication Accuracy and Safety Outcomes

Medication accuracy is one of the most critical determinants of patient safety within the medication-use process, and evidence increasingly demonstrates that pharmacy technicians play a vital role in reducing preventable medication errors across inpatient, outpatient, and community settings. As prescription volumes rise and healthcare systems transition toward more complex therapeutic regimens, the technical accuracy and consistency of medication preparation and dispensing become fundamental to minimizing adverse drug events (ADEs). Technicians—when appropriately trained, supervised, and integrated into structured workflows—contribute directly to error reduction, accuracy improvement, and safer medication practices (Brassington et al., 2019; Cooper et al., 2020).

Several studies have evaluated the accuracy rates of pharmacy technicians in dispensing functions, often comparing their performance to pharmacists. Well-structured training programs and standardized operating procedures have led to high accuracy rates, frequently above 98% in hospital and ambulatory care settings. Hilton et al. (2022) found that technicians demonstrate similar, and in some cases superior, accuracy in prescription filling tasks due to their constant engagement in technical operations. Technician involvement in tasks such as counting, labeling, packaging, and organizing medications establishes a consistent workflow that supports accurate medication preparation.

A key contributor to improved accuracy is the reduction of *transcription and data-entry errors*. Technicians trained in electronic prescribing (e-prescribing) systems demonstrate lower rates of

input inaccuracies, particularly when supported with barcode verification and clinical decision-support tools. Their role in ensuring accurate patient identifiers, dosing units, frequencies, and formulation strengths significantly reduces downstream prescribing and dispensing errors. Studies in outpatient pharmacies show that technician-managed prescription entry, with pharmacist verification, can result in a 20–30% reduction in workflow interruptions that normally lead to accuracy lapses (Le et al., 2021).

The precision required in sterile compounding makes technician competency essential for preventing contamination, dosing errors, and preparation inconsistencies. Compliance with USP <797> and <800> standards demands rigorous training, technique validation, and documentation. Research conducted by Cooper et al. (2020) demonstrated that technicians who underwent structured sterile compounding competency assessments achieved high levels of accuracy in aseptic technique and hazardous drug handling.

Medication admixture errors—such as incorrect solute volumes, diluent selection, or incomplete dissolution—pose significant risks to patient safety. Technician-led sterile compounding programs, combined with gravimetric verification systems and barcoded ingredient verification, significantly reduce these risks. Hospitals adopting these technologies report fewer compounding-related ADEs and improved compliance with national safety benchmarks (ISMP standards).

Tech-check-tech (TCT) models represent one of the most impactful innovations in improving medication accuracy. In TCT workflows, certified technicians perform the final accuracy check of routine prescriptions, allowing pharmacists to focus on clinical review and patient-facing services. Evidence shows that:

- Technician accuracy checks are **comparable to pharmacists** in detecting labeling, quantity, and packaging errors.
- TCT reduces pharmacist workload by **up to 40%**, thereby decreasing error-prone multitasking.
- Pharmacists, freed from repetitive checking tasks, identify more clinical-level drug-therapy problems (Hilton et al., 2022).

These combined effects lead to fewer dispensing errors, better resource utilization, and a more robust safety culture.

Technicians are central to the maintenance, loading, and operation of automated medication systems such as automated dispensing cabinets (ADCs), carousel systems, and pharmacy robotics. These technologies inherently improve accuracy, but their effectiveness depends heavily on technician competency. Errors often occur when machines are loaded incorrectly or items are mislabeled—tasks typically overseen by technicians.

Barcode medication administration (BCMA) and barcoded dispensing systems further enhance accuracy by matching medication identifiers to electronic health record (EHR) data. Technicians responsible for label creation, barcode verification, and quality auditing directly impact the reliability of these systems. Research shows that robust technician involvement in automation results in:

- Higher machine-based accuracy (99.5%+ dispensing accuracy)
- Fewer look-alike/sound-alike (LASA) medication errors

- Reduced wrong-dose and wrong-drug events (Pellegrino et al., 2021)

High-risk medications (e.g., anticoagulants, insulin, opioids, chemotherapeutics) require meticulous accuracy to avoid severe harm. Technicians trained in high-risk medication workflows—such as double checks, storage controls, and standardized preparation—play a major role in preventing potentially catastrophic errors. Medication safety programs incorporating technician double-verification for high-risk categories report significant declines in dosing and labeling errors.

For example:

- Insulin preparation accuracy improves when technicians use standardized concentration protocols.
- Opioid inventory accuracy improves when technicians manage reconciliation and automated dispensing logs.
- Chemotherapy preparation safety increases when technicians use gravimetric systems and barcode identifiers.

These outcomes reinforce the notion that technicians provide stability and precision in the most vulnerable steps of medication preparation.

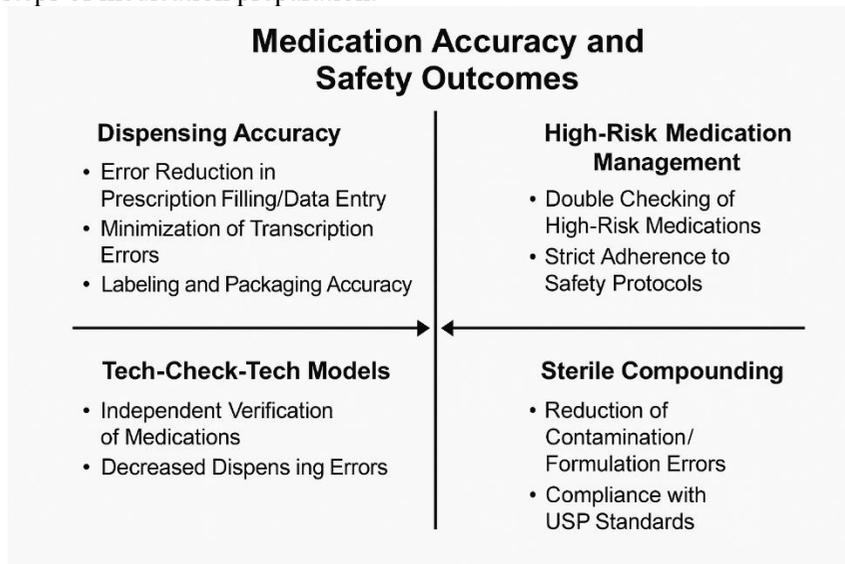


Figure 2. Medication Accuracy Pathway Improved by Technicians

Improvements in accuracy logically translate into enhanced patient safety indicators. Reduced medication errors decrease the incidence of ADEs, which are associated with prolonged hospitalization, emergency department visits, and increased treatment costs. Hospitals with technician-supported verification and compounding programs demonstrate:

- Lower ADE rates, particularly those caused by dispensing errors
- Improved Joint Commission and ISMP safety scores
- Increased patient confidence in pharmacy processes

- Higher pharmacist availability for clinical rounds and interventions

Ultimately, patient safety outcomes improve not only because of fewer technical errors, but also because technicians allow pharmacists to focus on evaluating therapeutic appropriateness, resolving drug-therapy problems, and engaging directly with patients.

5. Patient Care Outcomes and Clinical Workflow Efficiency

The integration of pharmacy technicians into advanced clinical support functions has demonstrated substantial benefits not only for medication accuracy but also for overall patient care quality, workflow efficiency, and the accessibility of pharmaceutical services. Modern healthcare systems increasingly rely on technicians to perform high-volume, time-intensive technical tasks, allowing pharmacists to focus on clinical decision-making and patient-centered interactions. This redistribution of responsibilities has shown measurable improvements across several domains: patient wait times, continuity of care, medication adherence, therapeutic outcomes, and overall satisfaction with pharmacy services.

One of the most consistently documented patient-care benefits linked to technician involvement is the reduction of wait times in outpatient and ambulatory care pharmacies. As technicians assume responsibility for data entry, insurance processing, dispensing, and automated system management, pharmacists can allocate more time to clinical verification and counseling. Studies in US and Canadian outpatient clinics show that technician-driven workflow optimization reduces patient wait times by 15–30%, depending on the volume and service model (Pellegrino et al., 2021). Efficient technician-supported workflow also decreases congestion during peak hours and enhances the overall patient experience, particularly in high-volume hospital discharge pharmacies.

In community pharmacies, technician-led triaging—where technicians manage preliminary patient interactions, prescription intake, refill requests, and insurance rejections—significantly improves processing efficiency. These improvements contribute to shorter queues and higher patient satisfaction, as demonstrated in multiple observational studies in both retail and hospital settings.

Medication reconciliation is a critical step in preventing medication discrepancies and potential adverse outcomes during transitions of care. Pharmacy technicians trained in medication history collection have demonstrated high accuracy and thoroughness, especially in inpatient settings. In several hospitals, technicians now routinely collect medication histories in emergency departments, medical wards, and preoperative clinics. Evaluations show that technician-collected histories are often as accurate as those collected by pharmacists and significantly more complete than those obtained by nursing staff (Hilton et al., 2022).

Enhanced accuracy in medication reconciliation leads to fewer discrepancies at admission and discharge, reducing risks associated with omitted medications, duplications, incorrect dosages, or therapeutic substitutions. This improvement directly contributes to safer transitions of care and lowers the likelihood of readmissions attributable to medication-related problems.

Pharmacy technicians increasingly contribute to patient adherence programs, particularly in community and ambulatory care settings. Their responsibilities frequently include refill synchronization, pill-pack preparation, follow-up reminders, communication with prescribers regarding refill authorizations, and assisting with medication access issues such as insurance prior authorizations or cost-related barriers. This involvement not only streamlines pharmacy operations but also strengthens patient engagement with their medication regimens.

Evidence suggests that technician involvement in adherence programs improves refill adherence rates, reduces gaps in therapy, and increases patient satisfaction. Furthermore, technicians supporting pharmacists in chronic disease management initiatives (e.g., diabetes, hypertension, COPD) help ensure that patients receive timely refills and maintain continuity of therapy.

One of the most impactful benefits of technician involvement is the increased availability of pharmacists for high-value clinical activities. By relieving pharmacists of repetitive technical tasks—such as counting, labeling, processing prescriptions, and managing automated dispensing systems—technicians create opportunities for pharmacists to engage directly in patient-care activities. These include:

- Comprehensive medication reviews
- Chronic disease management consultations
- Anticoagulation clinic follow-ups
- Immunizations
- Medication therapy management (MTM) services
- Participation in multidisciplinary rounds

Hilton et al. (2022) demonstrated that hospitals employing advanced technician roles observed a 25–40% increase in pharmacist-led clinical interventions, leading to measurable improvements in therapeutic outcomes. Enhanced pharmacist availability strengthens the clinical role of pharmacy, aligns with health system transformation goals, and improves patient trust in pharmacy services.

Patients routinely evaluate pharmacy services based on efficiency, communication, accuracy, and overall experience. Technician involvement positively influences all these domains. Studies indicate that patient satisfaction scores improve significantly when pharmacies operate with well-trained technician teams who support smooth workflow, faster dispensing times, and improved communication (Le et al., 2021). Additionally, when pharmacists have more time for personalized counseling, patient-perceived quality of care increases.

Patients also report higher confidence in medication safety when they observe a coordinated team approach involving both technicians and pharmacists. In hospital settings, technician participation in medication distribution and reconciliation contributes to perceptions of professionalism, coordination, and reliability.

Improvements in workflow efficiency and adherence support ultimately contribute to broader clinical outcomes. Institutions with advanced pharmacy technician models report:

- Reduced therapeutic gaps
- Lower emergency visits associated with missed doses
- Improved chronic disease markers (e.g., HbA1c, blood pressure) when pharmacists have increased time for disease management
- Reduced inpatient length of stay attributable to efficient medication distribution

These outcomes demonstrate that technician involvement enhances both operational and clinical performance across pharmacy settings.

Table 2. Summary of Studies Evaluating Technician Impact on Patient-Care Indicators

Study	Setting	Technician Role	Patient-Care Outcome
Hilton et al. (2022)	Hospital	Tech-check-tech, medication history	40% ↑ pharmacist clinical interventions; improved reconciliation accuracy
Le et al. (2021)	Outpatient pharmacy	Automation & workflow support	22% ↓ patient wait times; higher satisfaction
Brassington et al. (2019)	Hospital pharmacy	Compounding & dispensing	Higher medication preparation accuracy; fewer ADEs
Pellegrino et al. (2021)	Community pharmacy	Adherence & synchronization support	Improved refill adherence; fewer therapy gaps

6. Digital Health, Automation, and Technician Integration

The rapid digital transformation of healthcare has significantly influenced pharmacy practice, advancing automation and data-driven technologies that reshape the medication-use process. Pharmacy technicians now serve as essential operators and coordinators of digital health systems—ensuring that automation, robotics, and electronic workflows function effectively to support clinical safety. Their involvement in digital processes is closely linked to improvements in medication accuracy, operational efficiency, and patient outcomes.

Modern hospital and community pharmacies rely heavily on automated systems, including automated dispensing cabinets (ADCs), carousels, packaging robots, and unit-dose preparation machines. These systems reduce manual workload and improve accuracy, but their effectiveness is inherently dependent on proper loading, calibration, and maintenance—tasks primarily managed by pharmacy technicians.

Technicians ensure the correct placement of medications in ADC pockets, verify barcodes, reconcile stock levels, and troubleshoot errors. When technicians manage routine automation tasks, pharmacists are freed to validate clinical appropriateness rather than performing basic technical work. Studies have shown that pharmacies utilizing technician-led automation management achieve higher accuracy in ADC inventory, fewer loading errors, and a significant reduction in dispensing discrepancies.

Barcode medication administration (BCMA) is a cornerstone of digital medication safety. Pharmacy technicians play a critical role in label generation, barcode quality assurance, and resolving scanning failures. Digital safety depends on the reliability of barcoded information; thus, technician involvement ensures that data embedded in labels—including lot numbers, drug codes, and expiration dates—is correct and machine-readable.

Technicians also support *end-to-end digital workflows*, integrating data between electronic health records (EHRs), pharmacy management systems, and dispensing robots. Their accuracy in data entry prevents cascading errors that might otherwise propagate through digital systems and potentially reach the patient.

Telepharmacy has expanded rapidly, particularly in rural and underserved regions. Pharmacy technicians increasingly support these models by serving as on-site medication preparation specialists who interact with remotely located pharmacists. Their responsibilities include medication intake, preparation, preliminary checks, and digital communication with remote clinicians.

Technician participation in telepharmacy strengthens medication safety in facilities that might otherwise lack consistent pharmacy coverage. Remote supervision allows pharmacists to focus on final verification and clinical assessment, while technicians complete foundational preparation activities.

Pharmacy technicians now contribute to informatics-supported workflows, including:

- Managing system alerts
- Updating drug information databases
- Troubleshooting electronic dispensing errors
- Supporting analytics for medication utilization and safety trends
- Maintaining automated inventory dashboards

These responsibilities reflect the growing need for technicians with competency in health informatics, cybersecurity awareness, and digital troubleshooting.

As pharmacies adopt more automated processes, technician contributions expand from technical accuracy to *systems reliability*. Their involvement ensures that automated technologies operate at peak performance and support safe medication delivery.

Digital integration amplifies technician impact on medication safety. When technicians manage automated and digital workflows:

- Dispensing accuracy increases above 99% in automated systems
- LASA (look-alike/sound-alike) errors decrease due to barcode verification
- Workflow interruptions decrease, reducing cognitive load on pharmacists
- Medication turnaround time improves for acute care units
- Pharmacists gain additional time for clinical interventions and patient counseling

Overall, digital and automated systems extend technician capacity, creating a synergistic model where technology and technician expertise work together to enhance patient safety.

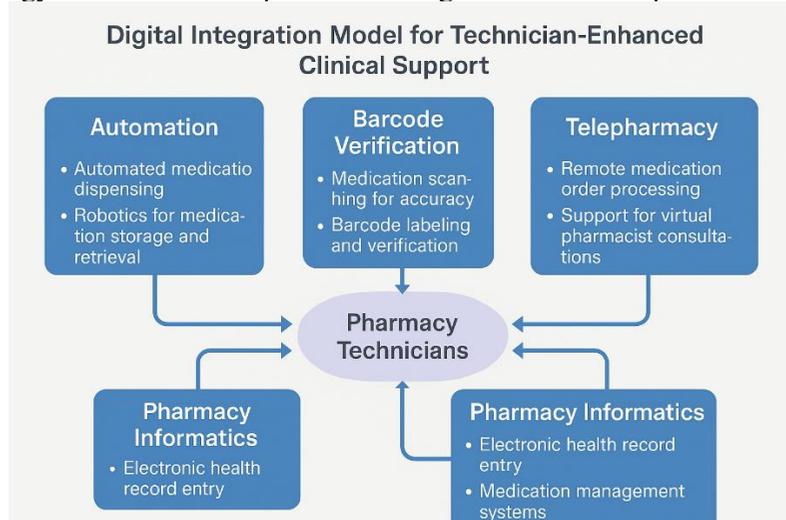


Figure 3. Digital Integration Model for Technician-Enhanced Clinical Support

Healthcare transformation demands a workforce skilled in digital tools, automation, and informatics. Many healthcare systems are now creating “Advanced Pharmacy Technician – Automation Specialist” or “Pharmacy Informatics Technician” positions, demonstrating

recognition of technicians as critical digital stewards.

Future development pathways may include national certifications in automation management, digital pharmacy operations, and telepharmacy coordination—further strengthening the profession’s role in medication safety.

7. Strategic and Policy Recommendations (≈500 words)

The expanding role of pharmacy technicians in clinical support services presents significant opportunities to strengthen medication safety, improve workflow efficiency, and elevate overall patient care outcomes. However, to harness these benefits sustainably, healthcare systems must adopt strategic and policy-oriented approaches that formalize technician roles, standardize training, and align workforce structures with contemporary pharmacy practice models. The following recommendations provide a comprehensive framework for policymakers, healthcare leaders, accreditation bodies, and professional associations.

A major challenge identified across global pharmacy systems is the variability in technician training, certification, and scope of practice. Establishing nationally mandated or regionally harmonized competency frameworks is essential to ensuring consistent performance standards.

These frameworks should include:

- Required education levels
- Certification examinations
- Practical skills assessments (e.g., compounding validation, accuracy checking)
- Continuing professional development pathways

Countries such as the United Kingdom and Canada demonstrate the value of fully regulated technician roles with national competency standards. Emerging systems—including in the Gulf region—should integrate similar models to support practitioner mobility, reduce quality variation, and reinforce patient safety.

Evidence strongly supports the safety and efficiency of technician-led accuracy verification under structured TCT models. Policymakers should:

- Develop legislation that permits TCT roles for certified technicians
- Require structured training and validation before independent checking
- Establish audit and quality-monitoring requirements
- Ensure pharmacist oversight remains integrated into clinical decision-making

This approach not only improves technical accuracy but also enhances pharmacist availability for clinical services such as chronic disease management, antimicrobial stewardship, and patient counseling.

As digital transformation accelerates, technicians must be prepared to manage advanced technologies including automated dispensing cabinets, robotics, telepharmacy systems, and barcode verification platforms. Strategic actions include:

- Creating specialized certificates in digital pharmacy operations
- Incorporating informatics, data management, and cybersecurity awareness into technician curricula

- Providing simulation-based training for automated systems
- Defining new career tracks such as “Automation Technician” or “Pharmacy Informatics Technician”

Developing digitally skilled technicians ensures that health technologies function reliably, safely, and efficiently.

Technicians should be formally incorporated into institutional medication-safety committees, continuous quality improvement (CQI) initiatives, and risk-management programs. Their consistent engagement in technical tasks positions them to identify system vulnerabilities early. Policies should encourage technicians to participate in:

- Error reporting and root-cause analysis
- Workflow redesign initiatives
- Safety audits and inventory compliance checks
- Development of standard operating procedures

Inclusion empowers technicians and strengthens the organization’s overall safety culture.

Workforce retention and professionalization depend on meaningful career development opportunities. Policymakers and employers should establish:

- Tiered technician roles (e.g., entry-level, senior technician, lead technician, specialist roles)
- Salary structures linked to skill acquisition and certification
- Leadership opportunities within pharmacy teams
- Pathways that encourage technicians to develop advanced competencies

Such measures enhance job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and promote a highly skilled technician workforce capable of supporting complex pharmacy operations.

In countries pursuing large-scale health reforms—such as Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia, NHS modernization in the UK, and digital transformation initiatives globally—pharmacy technician expansion should be integrated into national workforce strategies. Policymakers should recognize technician optimization as a cost-effective mechanism for achieving:

- Improved access to pharmaceutical care
- Enhanced patient safety
- Efficient use of pharmacists’ clinical expertise
- Scalable models for digital and automated pharmacy services

Strategic alignment ensures sustainable workforce development and better patient-centered outcomes.

Conclusion

This systematic review demonstrates that pharmacy technicians play an indispensable and

increasingly sophisticated role in ensuring medication accuracy, supporting clinical workflows, and enhancing patient care outcomes across diverse healthcare settings. As medication-use processes grow more complex and pharmacists assume greater responsibility for clinical services, the integration of skilled pharmacy technicians has become essential to maintaining efficiency, reducing errors, and strengthening the overall safety of pharmaceutical care.

The evidence consistently shows that technicians, when supported by structured competency standards, deliver high levels of accuracy in dispensing, compounding, automation oversight, and barcode verification. Their contributions significantly reduce transcription errors, medication preparation discrepancies, and workflow interruptions—factors strongly associated with adverse drug events. Furthermore, technician participation in medication history collection, adherence programs, and telepharmacy models supports continuity of care and improves both patient satisfaction and therapeutic outcomes.

Digital transformation amplifies the critical role of technicians. As healthcare systems increasingly rely on automated dispensing technologies, robotics, barcode systems, and electronic health records, technicians serve as the operational backbone ensuring these systems function reliably and safely. Their expanding involvement in informatics and automation also allows pharmacists to focus on high-value clinical services, ultimately enhancing patient-centered care.

However, fully realizing these benefits requires strategic policy direction, including national standardization of training and certification, expansion of tech-check-tech programs, advanced digital skills development, and meaningful career pathways. Strengthening regulatory frameworks and integrating technicians into quality and safety programs will further optimize their impact.

In conclusion, pharmacy technicians are no longer ancillary support staff but vital contributors to medication safety and modern pharmacy practice. Their optimized integration into clinical support services represents a transformative opportunity to elevate healthcare quality, efficiency, and patient outcomes globally.

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