

Interview with Dr. Padma Sundareshan



Dr. Padma Sundareshan completed her M.Sc. in Biochemistry from Bangalore University. Later she joined Indian Institute of Science for PhD program after passing preliminary exam she left for USA due to marriage. In USA she joined the PhD program in Anatomy & cell biology studied at University of Minnesota, Minneapolis for a year & moved to university of Arizona, Tucson where she completed her PhD in Anatomy & cell biology. Currently she is doing her PharmD at Arizona University. She came for internship at Accunova, Manipal, India during this ACPI has conducted her brief interview regarding style and status of pharmacy practice in USA

Q. what qualification required to work as pharmacist?

In USA presently PharmD is only program after which one can work as pharmacist. PharmD degree has replaced the Bachelor of Pharmacy degree, which is no longer being awarded. Previous Bachelor of Pharmacy degree holders are converted their qualification to PharmD with one year additional program, which is ran by government for certain period of time.

Q. What are the job opportunities after PharmD?

After PharmD one can join as hospital pharmacist or community pharmacist. Some can also involve in research for pharmaceutical manufacturers, developing new drugs and testing their effects. Others work in marketing or sales, providing clients with expertise on the use,

effectiveness, and possible side effects of drugs. Some pharmacists work for health insurance companies, developing pharmacy benefit packages and carrying out cost-benefit analyses on certain drugs. Other pharmacists work for the government, managed care organizations, public health care services, the armed services, or pharmacy associations.

Q. What about the remuneration & rewards for the pharmacist.

Pharmacist usually works as employee in chain drug store or group of chain pharmacies. The remuneration for pharmacist is twice a month on hourly basis. Most of the pharmacist work around 40 hours per week & few works more than 50 hour. Some Pharmacist also works part time. Average annual pay for community pharmacist is around 100,000 -120,000 US dollar where as for hospital pharmacist is 70,000-80,000 US dollars. Pharmacist can earn double salary working on holidays they also have provision of overtime allowance.

Q. what are the regulatory requirement for register pharmacist?

In US license is require to practice pharmacy. All States, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia require the North American Pharmacist Licensure Exam (NAPLEX), which tests pharmacy skills and knowledge. Forty-four States and the District of Columbia also require the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Exam (MPJE), which tests pharmacy law. Both exams are administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP). Each of the eight States and territories that do not require the MJPE has its own pharmacy law exam. In addition to the NAPLEX and MPJE, some States and territories require additional exams that are unique to their jurisdiction.

Q. How community pharmacist access patient's history?

In USA there are mostly chain pharmacies or group of pharmacies along with this they have good computer database system. When patients come in pharmacy every prescription is scanned before filling. Along with softcopy hard copy of prescription is also saved at pharmacy according to rules for few years. When same patients come for refilling of the prescription computer immediately shows the history of patients. If patient collected his/ her medication from different unit of pharmacy even from different city or state that also recorded and updated so it's easy for any working pharmacist during working hours to provide good care and prevent mischief.

Q what is social status of pharmacist in USA?

Pharmacists are highly trusted and value very high for the services they provide. They are one of the important and respectable professions in USA

Q. What is your opinion on PharmD in India?

Since India started PharmD this year it's difficult to talk now but as per the observation and discussion with PharmD students at Manipal, India is doing well. Syllabus for PharmD is also

structured well. Surely these people will open new doors in clinical practice in Indian health care system.

Q. what advice you want to give to Indian PharmD students?

The PharmD students should develop leadership and communication skills. For this they should participate and take active role in different pharmacy association works. Pharmacists should have scientific aptitude, good interpersonal skills, and a desire to help others. Also student can take part in IPSF student exchange program so that student can get chance to learn at different university along with the culture of country.

- By: Member of ACPI