

Independent Community Pharmacy

Why consider a career in independent community pharmacy?

Independent community pharmacists are easily accessible health care providers specializing in high quality patient-centered care, that are at the heart and soul of many communities. Independent pharmacists continue to be vital health care providers to patients, and dynamic leaders in communities of all sizes, including key locations in rural and underserved areas. Independent pharmacies also offer cutting-edge and innovative patient care services that often times aren't feasible or practical in other pharmacy settings. The top services offered in independent pharmacies in 2013 were: delivery (79%), adherence/medication synchronization programs (67%), compounding (65%), durable medical goods (64%), and immunizations (62%).

Why do pharmacists want to own a pharmacy?

According to one pharmacy owner, "The best perk of ownership to me is that I can change the way I do things when and however I want to". Independent pharmacy owners have the advantage of a flexible management structure, experience higher job and patient satisfaction, and have control over their own financial destiny and hours worked.

What is the difference between an independent community pharmacy and a chain pharmacy?

Independent community pharmacies are pharmacist-owned and privately held. The many looks of independent pharmacy ownership include single store ownership, multi-store privately traded ownership (over 25% of independent owners have ownership in two or more pharmacies), franchise pharmacies, independently owned supermarket pharmacies, and specialty pharmacies. Whether they own one pharmacy, three pharmacies, or ten pharmacies independent community pharmacists are personally invested in the neighborhoods they serve.

Are there any independent pharmacies out there?

In 2013, there were approximately 22,814 independently owned pharmacies which dispensed 1.42 billion prescriptions annually. There are states like Oklahoma where there are 2.5 independent pharmacies for every one chain pharmacy, or Wyoming where there are 2.4 independent pharmacies per every one chain pharmacy.

Is there any opportunity for me to own a pharmacy?

There are various ways to get into pharmacy ownership. Junior partnerships and Community Pharmacy Residency programs also offer ways for students to first learn the pharmacy business and gradually take over ownership responsibilities. Buying a pharmacy outright is another option for students and pharmacists interested in ownership. Additionally, there are many resources available to those who would like to start a pharmacy from the ground up, particularly in areas that are not currently being served by a community pharmacist.

Do pharmacy owners have time for their family?

When one pharmacy owner and mother of three was asked this question, she replied, "Being a pharmacy owner provides me the perfect balance between my personal and professional life," she continued, "I have the flexibility to work the hours that I need to depending on my family's schedule, and don't have to request time off if my kids are sick". Also, many pharmacy owners are active in their communities by sponsoring softball teams, serving in their church, being members of local associations, running for political office, and speaking at schools.

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