

# PHARMACY

Your number ONE  
professional career choice

**B.PHARM.**

School of Pharmacy



Innovation through diversity



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
**POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS**

## What is pharmacy?

The use of medicine to cure illnesses is as old as humanity itself – and there is still an ever increasing demand for new medicines, its manufacture and distribution. Because modern medicines are extremely potent and complex, careful control and advice about its use, precautions and side effects is of increasing importance in health care.

The pharmacy profession, together with doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, radiologists etc. is part of the Health Care Team with the prime responsibility for medicines in all its facets.

As far as medicines are concerned, the pharmacist is the central figure in the Health Care Team, whether it concerns new drug design, manufacturing, distribution of medicine to the public or the control of and advice about the rational use of medicine.

### Why pharmacy?

Pharmacy is...

- A dynamic, professional occupation with a wide variety of career choices to suit individual preferences and personalities;
- Mainly person and service orientated;
- An intellectually challenging profession and guaranteed job satisfaction; and
- Due to the shortage of pharmacists, there is assurance of employment and attractive remuneration packages after qualifying as a pharmacist.

### Career opportunities

#### Community pharmacy

Presently, the majority of registered pharmacists are involved in community pharmacy, either in privately owned pharmacies or employed in chain pharmacies. For the general public, the community pharmacist is the most accessible member of the health care team. As such it affords the opportunity for the pharmacist to interact with patients about medi-

cine use and advice concerning general health issues. This is ideal for those who prefer to work with people.

#### Hospital pharmacy

There is a huge shortage of pharmacists in public hospitals. These pharmacists are involved with hospitalised patients as well as outpatients. They are responsible for the acquisition, storage, dispensing and distribution of medicine in the hospital and clinics. Part of their duties involve assisting medical practitioners and nurses in specialised clinics and ward rounds with advice on the correct use of the medicine and dosages. Pharmacists in private hospitals serve both the hospital and the general public and as such practise both community pharmacy and hospital pharmacy.

#### Consulting pharmacy

Modern health strategies, such as managed health care put great emphasis on preventative health care and life style improvement. As an example medical schemes are employing pharmacists as clinical pharmacists and health care managers. Some pharmacists also have independent consulting practices.

## Industrial pharmacy

For those who prefer an industrial or research environment as a career, the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry offers a variety of possibilities. There are a large number of international and local pharmaceutical manufacturing companies active in South Africa. Pharmacists are involved in a variety of capacities, e.g. research in the development of new drugs or new dosage forms, supervision of the manufacturing process of medicines, its quality assurance, marketing and distribution, clinical trials and the registration of medicines by the Medicines Control Council.

## Medicines Control Agency (MCA)

Pharmacists are a critical component of the MCA, as evaluators of new Medicines Applications or inspectors of the manufacturing of medicines, to ensure the availability of quality medicines in South Africa.

## Academia

A post graduate qualification is a requirement for certain positions. Masters and PhD study are available in all major pharmacy subjects. Lecturers and researchers at Pharmacy Schools in South Africa are in short supply. Some pharmacists are also employed as researchers at research councils like the CSIR and the MRC.

## How do I become a pharmacist?

### The training programme

In order to become a pharmacist candidates need to:

- Successfully complete the, four year academic programme for the B.Pharm. degree.
- Successfully complete a one year internship in a community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy or pharmaceutical industry. Alternatively candidates can enrol for a Masters degree study and follow an academic internship (normally two years).
- After qualifying as a pharmacist you will be required to perform one year of community service in the public sector.
- During this time pharmacists are remunerated at competitive salary packages.

## Admission requirements

- Grade 12 with university exemption for a Bachelors degree.
- Maths and Physical Science on level 4 (50-59%).
- An APS-score of at least 26.
- Successful completion of psychometric test.
- Applicants who successfully completed at least one year of tertiary education in the natural sciences, will be considered on merit.

Prospective students must apply before 15 September of each year. Late applications however will be considered on merit.



### The curriculum

A modular outcomes based approach is followed during which subjects like Chemistry, Physics, Medicinal Botany, Animal Parasitology, Microbiology and Biochemistry form a solid foundation. It is complimented by courses in Computer Skills, Communication and Ethics. The pharmaceutical subjects include Pharmacology, Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Pharmaceutics, Pharmacy Practice and Clinical Pharmacy. The full curriculum is available on our web site at: <http://www.nwu.ac.za/pharmacy>. Most subjects include sessions in laboratories or in practice to elucidate the theory. Structured practical training starts in the second year to prepare students for their future role as members of the health team.

### Why study at North-West University?

- NWU has been involved in the training of pharmacists longer than any other university in South Africa (since 1942);
- Almost a third of the country's pharmacists studied at this university;
- The Diamond Arrow Award for the best pharmacy school in the country has been awarded to this university since the inception of the award;
- Quality and relevance of training is the essence;
- The training is supported by established research programmes; and
- The vibrant student life on campus in a tranquil and safe environment is conducive to academic study.

### Enquiries

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