



Pharmacy Workplace and Well-being Reporting  
[www.pharmacist.com/pwvr](http://www.pharmacist.com/pwvr)

MONTHLY SNAPSHOT REPORT  
September 2023

**Please Note:** PWWR is a safe space that gives voice to pharmacy personnel workplace positive and negative experiences and suggested solutions. Reported stories, events, and concerns can serve to provide insight for the profession in advocacy efforts, contributions to best practices, education, and discussions between management and pharmacy teams. **The information provided in this report is an aggregate snapshot from those who have submitted reports and is not generalized across the profession.** PWWR Reports are voluntary reports submitted to the Alliance for Patient Medication Safety (APMS), a federally listed Patient Safety Organization (PSO) for learning purposes. Quality-related event data and information reported to a listed PSO is protected from discovery, at both the state and federal level and protected by federal law (the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005, 42 U.S.C. 299b-21 et. seq., and 42 C.F.R. Part 3, §§3.10 et. seq. (PSQIA)) as Patient Safety Work Product.



**Pharmacy Workplace and Well-being Reporting**  
**SNAPSHOT REPORT – September 2023**  
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**Time Period** September 1 through September 30, 2023  
**Reports Submitted This Period** 124  
**Total Reports in PWWR (Since 10/2021)** 1814

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

**Primary role**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Pharmacist	65	52.42%
Pharmacist Manager/Supervisor/PIC	32	25.81%
Pharmacy Owner	1	0.81%
Pharmacy Resident	0	0.00%
Student Pharmacist/Intern	3	2.42%
Certified Pharmacy Technician	16	12.90%
Pharmacy Technician	6	4.84%
Pharmacy Clerk	0	0.00%
Other (Reported as retired pharmacist)	1	0.81%
No Response	0	0.00%

**Practice setting**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Chain Pharmacy (4+ units)	99	75.00%
Supermarket Pharmacy	10	8.06%
Mass-merchant Pharmacy	2	1.61%
Independent Pharmacy	1	0.81%
Hospital/Institutional Pharmacy (Inpatient)	7	5.65%
Clinic Pharmacy (Outpatient)	2	1.61%
Ambulatory Care Clinic	0	0.00%
Mail-service Pharmacy	1	0.81%
Nuclear Pharmacy	0	0.00%
Long-term Care Pharmacy	2	1.61%
Specialty Pharmacy	2	1.61%
Federal/Military/Dept of Defense Pharmacy	0	0.00%
Other (Reported as managed care, infusion pharmacy, MTM)	4	3.23%

**Years in practice**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0-4 Years	28	22.58%
5-14 Years	43	34.68%
15-24 Years	27	21.77%
25 Years or Greater	24	19.35%
Student Pharmacists	2	1.61%

**Gender**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Male	26	20.97%
Female	95	76.61%
Other	0	0.00%
Prefer not to answer	3	2.42%

**Are you a member of**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
State Pharmacy Association/Society	25	20.16%
National Pharmacy Association/Society/Academy	31	25.00%
Neither	78	62.90%

**Length of time worked at the organization for the experience described in the report.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0-6 Months	14	11.29%
7-12 Months	22	17.74%
13 Months – 4 Years	34	27.42%
5 or More Years	54	43.55%

**State where the individual was practicing when the reported experience occurred:**

States included (number of report): AZ (1), AR (1), CA (12), CO (7), CT (2), FL (6), GA (4), ID (1), IL (11), IN (1), IA (2), KS (3), KY (1), LA (1), ME (1), MD (3), MA (4), MI (7), MN (1), MS (1), MO (1), NH (2), NJ (2), NY (6), NC (5), ND (1), OH (1), OK (1), OR (1), PA (3), SC (3), TN (10), TX (4), VT (1), VA (4), WA (4), WV (1), WI (2), and Other (1).

**Number of positive and negative experiences reported.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Positive Experience	3	2.42%
Negative Experience	121	97.58%

**POSITIVE EXPERIENCE REPORTS**

**Which category best describes the positive experience of your report? Select the one that best fits your positive experience.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Preventing Errors and Improving Quality	1	33.33%
Communication, Feedback, Psychological Safety	1	33.33%
Safety and Quality by Design	1	33.33%
Other	0	0.00%

**Based on your answer to the question above, please select one that best fits your positive experience. There are three groups of options to choose from. Not every group will have a response selected.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
My co-worker, supervisory and I worked collaboratively as a team to resolve a difficult workflow problem that created an unsafe condition.	0	0.00%
My supervisor created a learning opportunity for me to grow professionally and/or as a person.	0	0.00%
My supervisor asked for my input before implementing a new workflow, policy, or other change in the pharmacy.	1	100.00%
My supervisor asked for my input in evaluating a recently implemented workflow, policy, technology, or other change in the pharmacy	0	0.00%
Other	0	0.00%

**Based on your answer to the question above, please select one that best fits your positive experience. There are three groups of options to choose from. Not every group will have a response selected.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Our technology prevented a potential medication error from reaching the patient	0	0.00%
Targeted safety practices prevented a potential error involving high alert medications.	0	0.00%
I used my clinical skills, training, and expertise to prevent a potential medication error from reaching the patient.	1	100.00%

**Based on your answer to the question above, please select one that best fits your positive experience. There are three groups of options to choose from. Not every group will have a response selected.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
I had a positive patient interaction that improved the patient's understanding of the medication error and/or its use.	0	0.00%
I effectively used my communication skills in discussing a medication concern with a prescriber.	0	0.00%
I received positive feedback from a patient about an action took related to their medication and/or its use.	1	100.00%
I received positive feedback from my supervisor about an action I took to keep patients safe or improve quality of medication use.	0	0.00%
I received positive feedback from a co-worker about an action I took to keep patients or improve quality of medication use.	0	0.00%
My supervisor supported my emotional well-being following a medication error or potential error that could have resulted in serious harm.	0	0.00%

**Describe Your Positive Experience**

Experiences included: Employer is open to listen to concerns and feedback. They treat us a little more like humans.

**How has this positive experience affected or may affect your personal well-being? Select only one.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
No expected effect on my overall well-being.	0	0.00%
A temporary positive effect on my overall well-being	2	66.67%
A lasting positive effect on my overall well-being.	0	0.00%
I am unsure how this may affect my overall well-being	1	33.33%

**Because of this positive experience the individual reported that they were more likely to: (check all that apply):**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Take actions that help my co-workers have a similar positive experience.	1	33.33%
Be more vigilant for opportunities to improve quality and safety in our pharmacy.	0	0.00%
Invest more emotional energy in improving the patient experience.	2	66.67%
Increase my engagement with and awareness of the pharmacy's safety goals.	0	0.00%
Increase my reporting of "good-catch events" and potential unsafe conditions.	1	33.33%
Take no new action	0	0.00%
Other	0	0.00%

**How did your schedule (the day or the days leading up to) or staffing in the pharmacy affect the situation/experience you are reporting?**

Responses included slowing building a solid team to create a well-oiled team and reduce turnover.

**Did you communicate this positive experience to your staff and supervisors? Why or why not?**

One indicated yes – indicating that they wanted to have a good impact in the pharmacy. One indicated no because they were new and didn't feel it was appropriate along with the fact that the company still measures metrics.

**NEGATIVE EXPERIENCE REPORTS**

**Which category(ies) best describes the nature of the negative experience being reported?**

Select all that apply.

	Number of Respondent	Percentage of Respondents
Medication Error – near miss with no patient harm	26	21.49%
Medication Error – patient harm	3	2.48%
Working Conditions (e.g., breaks, ergonomics, lighting, too few computer terminals, too many phone lines for phone available).	79	65.29%
Staffing/Scheduling (i.e., pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, clerks)	101	83.47%
Volume/workload expectations to available staffing and shift hours	102	84.30%
Pharmacy Metrics (i.e., prescription volume, vaccinations administered, patient surveys completed, number of clinical interactions, required daily reports, promise times, auto-refills)	85	70.25%
Professional judgement restricted or supported when caring for a patient (i.e., must follow employer policy regardless of situation, manager lacks understanding about patient care delivery or laws/regulations)	30	24.79%
Personal safety concerns (e.g., personal safety, lack of personal protective equipment)	29	23.97%
Technology/Automation (i.e., medication verification, EMR, SIG code translation, access to online resources, fill automation, electronic prescription receipt, etc)	22	18.18%
Insurance billing issues	17	14.05%
Training or Education (e.g., inadequate training on new service, new technology, new responsibilities)	31	25.62%
Verbal or Emotional harassment/bullying	38	31.40%
Sexual harassment	6	3.31%
Physical harm	6	4.96%
Discrimination or microaggression based on race, ethnicity, or gender	9	7.44%

**Exploring the last categories from above:**

**Verbal or Emotional harassment/bullying was experienced from:**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	20	52.63%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	5	13.16%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	2	5.26%
Manger – Pharmacy (director of pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	8	21.05%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	3	7.89%

**Sexual Harassment was experienced from:**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	1	25.00%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	1	25.00%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	0	0.00%
Manger – Pharmacy (director or pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	1	25.00%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	1	25.00%

**Physical Harm – Threatened or Actual – was experienced from:**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	5	83.33%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	1	16.67%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	0	0.00%

Manger - Pharmacy (director or pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	0	0.00%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	0	0.00%

**Discrimination or microaggression based on race, ethnicity, gender was experienced from:**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Patient/Customer	4	44.44%
Co-worker - within your pharmacy, hospital, or clinic workplace	0	0.00%
Manager/Assistant manager – non-pharmacy	1	11.11%
Manger – Pharmacy (director or pharmacy, district pharmacy manager, department head)	3	33.33%
Supervisor – Pharmacy (i.e., PIC, shift supervisor)	1	11.11%
Other	0	4.12%

**Description of Experiences**

Experiences included workflow errors that are deemed “correct,” manager bullying staff that led to staff resignations, workload metrics too high for staffing levels, less technician hours than are needed, near misses due to try to meet unattainable metrics, abysmal morale due to rank favoritism, feeling stuck that brings suicide ideation, improving the conditions is not a priority for management, retaliation and harassment by manager due to a recently diagnosed medical conditions, vaccine appointment system allows multiple appoints for a time slot making it impossible to provide each with their vaccination and counseling and told to multitask, verbal abuse from customers continues every day, verbal abuse and demeaning language from supervisor, DM has a checklist and doesn’t see beyond the checklist – doesn’t see the mental anguish of the staff, poor patient safety, diminished ability to use clinical judgement due to corporate policies, and threatened to be blown up if prescription wasn’t transferred.

**Select all contributing factors or root causes that contributed to the negative experience reported.**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Workflow design/policies	81	66.94%
Break policy and practices	36	29.75%
Technology/Automation	31	24.62%
Metrics	74	61.16%
Drive thru window/Hospital staff window	35	28.93%
Medication availability/shortages	39	32.23%
Insurance/Prior authorization payment	19	15.70%
State/Federal law or regulation	21	17.36%
Corporate/Organizational policies or requirements beyond the pharmacy department or local pharmacy control	61	50.41%
Training/Education	39	32.23%
Patient (or patient caregiver) expectations and/or demands	63	52.07%
Unexpected influx of patients/patient surge	59	48.76%
Inadequate staffing	90	74.38%
Floater/Per diem staffing	24	19.83%
Inadequate pharmacist to pharmacy technician staffing	55	45.45%
Other: Lack of risk and safety standard understanding, corporate culture that shows a general disregard for employee mental health, threat to personal health and safety, lack of medical accommodations	8	6.61%

**Exploring one root cause from list above**

**a. If staffing or pharmacist-technician ratios were identified as a root cause or contributing factor at the time of the negative experience, the staffing and pharmacist-technician ratios were:**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
At the normally scheduled level	30	32.16%
At the normally schedule level but using float or per diem staff	0	0.00%
Less than the normally scheduled level (e.g., absenteeism)	53	57.61%
Staffing or pharmacist-technician ratios were not a root cause or contributing factor	9	9.78%

**b. Was the negative experience you reported:**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
An isolated occurrence	5	4.13%
A recurring occurrence	116	95.87%
Verbatim Comments Included: <i>Throughout the shift, every shift for the last year, the bullying never stops while the offender is on shift, about 3 hours into an 8 hour shift, all day every day, towards end of day, right after lunch break closing, chaos is the new normal</i>		

**c. Does pharmacy management plan to take appropriate actions to prevent the experience your reported from happening in the future?**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	6	4.96%
No	75	61.98%
Don't know	40	33.06%

**Did you offer specific recommendations to your supervisor to prevent this incident or similar incidents from happening again?**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
No, I did not discuss with my supervisor, manager, department head, etc	47	38.84%
Yes	74	61.16%
"Why did you not discuss?" Verbatim comments included: <i>Supervisor's hands are tied, wouldn't matter, afraid of repercussions or retaliations, corporate-wide policy, they didn't have time and I subsequently resigned,</i>		

**Was your recommendation considered and applied?**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	7	9.46%
No	67	90.54%
"Why was your recommendation not considered?" Verbatim comments included: <i>District was over budget for staffing, no response, no valid reason given, it's not the "plan", budget cuts, told that getting the prescription to the patient fast is patient care, verbal warnings must be given if metrics are not met</i>		

**Effect on Well-being**

**On scale of 0-4 where 0 is None and 4 is Significant, to what degree do you believe your reported experience adversely affected your personal well-being:**

**Increased Stress**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	2	1.65%
1	0	0.00%
2	4	3.31%
3	11	9.09%
4	104	85.95%

**Increased Burn-out**

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	1	0.83%
1	1	0.83%
2	3	2.48%
3	11	9.09%
4	105	86.78%

***Increased Weakened Family/Personal Relationships***

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	9	7.44%
1	7	5.79%
2	13	10.74%
3	22	18.18%
4	70	57.85%

***Increased Lessened Happiness***

	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
0	2	1.65%
1	3	2.48%
2	7	5.79%
3	10	8.26%
4	99	81.82

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