

**IN A WORLD OF INCREASING CHRONIC
DISEASE, AGEING POPULATIONS AND
EVER MORE SOPHISTICATED MEDICINES,**

DISCOVER 22 CAREERS IN PHARMACY TO HELP CHANGE THE WORLD.

**Seeking a pharmacy career path?
Here are nearly two dozen of them.**

Any place there are medicines, there are pharmacists. This means that the pool of opportunities for pharmacy graduates is large and diverse. Monash pharmacy graduates are found all over the world working to increase access and improve use of medicines.

01 Community Pharmacy

Community Pharmacy is one of the most common and most visible options for new Pharmacy graduates, with retail pharmacies all across the country. It's a great option for anyone who enjoys providing advice one-on-one to people in their community.

Community pharmacy gives you many options for specialisation and upskilling, in areas such as vaccination services, mental health first aid, or health care tailored specifically for people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.

It can also lead to business ownership. Monash alumna Jane Mitchell started out in a community pharmacy and became a part owner soon after.

"It was a really steep learning curve for me," Jane says, "becoming a pharmacist and business owner at just 24!"

Jane took time out to travel overseas and investigate other pharmacy career paths, but returned to owning her own in community pharmacy in 2007.

02 Hospital Pharmacy

Hospital pharmacy is a very team-focused option, as you find yourself working closely with a team of other healthcare professionals, including doctors and nurses, to provide the best care for patients.

According to the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA), "...it offers variety, both in the roles you can have, such as clinical [ie direct patient care] or management, and in the types of hospitals you can work in – city or country, small or large, general or specialist."

Hospital pharmacy requires no additional qualifications and teaches valuable skills that are highly sought after in other pharmacy settings. Many pharmacists will spend some part of their career in a hospital environment.

Others make it their career focus, like Monash alumna and PhD candidate Erica Tong. She has held a number of positions with Victoria's Alfred Health hospital group over the last 15 years, including Deputy Director of Pharmacy.

03 Consultant Pharmacy

Accredited consultant pharmacists can conduct home medicines reviews and residential medication management reviews.

For some people it is part-time role, which they combine with other roles such as working at a community health centre, working with chronic disease management groups, or providing nurse education.

Others are able to make a full-time occupation out of being a consultant pharmacist, focusing on areas they enjoy. In Monash alumnus Neil Petrie's case, that includes education, counselling and helping to solve drug-related problems. Neil enjoys the flexibility his career brings and, after 18 years running his own consulting business, the sense of self determination it offers.

"It gives me the flexibility to choose when I work and to spend as much time as I like on a particular project," he says,

04 Primary care pharmacist

A relatively new career path is that of the practice pharmacist.

A practice pharmacist doesn't dispense medicines. Instead, they work within a general medical practice to deliver direct support to doctors and their patients. They can often give more time and attention to individual cases than a busy community pharmacist can, providing quality care and specialised services such as smoking cessation.

This career option provides a great option for pharmacists who want the opportunity to work closely with doctors and provide more in-depth care to their patients, in a non-hospital setting.

05 Researcher / Academic

Many students find their passion for research while studying and go on to make a career of exploring and developing ideas in pharmacy. Through research and evaluation, pharmacists can make a huge practical difference to health policy and services.

Monash graduate Edwin Tan has chosen the path of research and academia. He enjoys the opportunities it gives him to collaborate with researchers from around the world, working together for a common cause. He also enjoys the problem solving involved in research and the fact that he learns something new every day.

Edwin finds working with students rewarding too, whether that be in supervising their research or coaching their skills development.

Common research areas for pharmacy graduates include pharmacy practice, pharmacotherapy, drug discovery, toxicology, clinical sciences, public health and much more.

06 Pharmaceutical Industry / Clinical Trials

Pharmacists in this area support the management and delivery of clinical trials of new medicines.

The role involves coordinating studies from a medicinal perspective, ensuring that drugs used in the trials are imported, stored, accounted for, compounded, dispensed and used in accordance to strict protocols.

It may involve liaising with hospital staff, counselling participants and carers, and educating medical and nursing staff.

For some pharmacists, like Monash grad Grammy Ngai, it can lead to upskilling in other areas. Working for a Melbourne-based pharmaceutical company, Grammy has extended her skills into strategic planning, business development and corporate marketing.

07 Locum Pharmacist

Locum pharmacy is an interesting career option for those who enjoy flexibility and travel. A locum pharmacist works for short periods of time in a range of pharmacy settings when they are busy, other pharmacists are on leave, or some other circumstances have temporarily increased the workload.

Working as a locum can provide real variety and, for a young pharmacist, it can be a great way to see more of Australia and build your life skills and experience of the world.

08 Aged Care

Older people often have complex needs when it comes to medications. They are frequently taking a number of different medications and can be more susceptible to side effects. They may also need adjustments to their medications to accommodate difficulties with vision, hearing, memory or cognitive function.

This makes aged care a stimulating and rewarding career option for graduates who enjoy the challenge of dealing with complex medicines regimes and carefully preparing and dispensing medicines.

You can deliver aged care pharmacy as part of a healthcare team, or as an independent accredited pharmacist. It is also a growing area for clinical researchers like Monash University's Rohan Elliot.

"With an ageing population and increasing complexity of drug therapy, the risk of medication errors and adverse events is increasing. Pharmacists have much to contribute to the safe and effective management of medicines in older people," says Rohan, who is also a Clinical Senior Lecturer in the Monash Centre for Medicine Use and Safety.

09 Government and nongovernmental organisations

Pharmacists have knowledge, skills and experience that can feed into advisory roles, both for the government as well as non-government institutions, such as health funds and private hospitals.

The range of possible roles in this area is extensive, including medicines access, public health, developing eHealth services and more.

Monash alumna Erin Nunan has used her pharmacy training to improve health in various lower resource countries. She says she never planned to work in these settings, “but the opportunity came up and it was a wonderful chance to do something different”.

In the Solomon Islands Erin worked with the World Health Organisation on the country’s National Medicines Policy. Her work with resource-poor and remote communities has had a valuable impact on the advancement of global health practices.

10 Complex Care Coordinator

Another relatively new career path, complex care coordination involves working with a hospital healthcare team and is often combined with consultant pharmacy work.

The job involves providing early post-discharge medication review and follow-up plans for patients identified as being ‘high risk’ by hospital clinicians. Often, these are patients who do not have ready access to usual medication management services in the community.

11 Drug Safety Officer

Pharmacovigilance is an impressive sounding area that involves monitoring drug safety. A pharmacist working as a drug safety officer liaises regularly with government and industry bodies, consumers and other healthcare professionals.

Their responsibilities include receiving and processing reports of adverse drug events and conducting regular conciliation with health authorities. They use their skills and qualifications to ensure the public has access to safe and reliable medications.

12 Entrepreneur

Pharmacy students with a drive to innovate and create can build a career out of turning their ideas into successful businesses. This might mean creating a new product or service to meet a public or industry need.

For Monash alumnus Paul Naismith, that entrepreneurial drive gave birth to the FRED IT Group, Australia’s largest supplier of technology solutions and services to the pharmacy industry.

As CEO and co-founder, Paul credits his success to his enthusiasm and curiosity.

“When I left university,” Paul says, “I didn’t have it all figured out. But I was armed with enthusiasm, lots of ideas and I was keen to continue learning. My advice is to take as many opportunities to broaden your horizons as possible, take risks while you are young but, most importantly, build strong relationships with people who share your values and your vision.”

13 Regulatory Affairs Associate

Working in regulation involves ensuring the appropriate licensing of and legal compliance by pharmaceutical and medical products. Following this career path, you are involved in ensuring that a company’s products comply with regulations and legislation.

Monash alumnus Mounir Mina now works for pharmaceutical company Novartis, but previously spent a number of years working for the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

He found the role brought together the clinical, legal and regulatory aspects of his pharmacy studies.

“The TGA is responsible for regulating therapeutic goods, including medicines, medical devices, blood and blood products,” says Mounir. “My role involved preparing reports that examined the chemistry, quality control, bioequivalence and clinical data supplied by pharmaceutical companies.”

Mounir enjoyed how the constantly changing nature of regulations added to the excitement of the job, requiring him to stay up-to-date with global changes in science, research and regulation.

14 Management and Mentorship

This comprises a variety of roles. You can become a pharmacist in charge, managing pharmacist, or a representative at a pharmacy organisation. Some roles can also merge pharmacy with another area, such as business or technology.

One common area where pharmacists find themselves in a management role is public health. For example, Nick Jones is a graduate of Monash University and the Director of Pharmacy at Peninsula Health, the public healthcare provider for the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria.

Peninsula Health provides 900 hospital beds and operates a teaching hospital, so Nick’s role carries a great deal of responsibility across a range of areas, from patient care to medical education.

15 Politics

Some pharmacists decide to move into politics before, during or after working in pharmacy. Perhaps the same drive that leads students to cater to the wellbeing of community through pharmacy can translate later in life into a desire to take on a larger role in society.

In fact one Monash pharmacy graduate, Oscar Ling, is now a Member of Parliament in Malaysia, representing his home electorate of Sibul since 2013. Oscar describes himself as a low-profile MP, wanting no publicity for his work. Instead, he says, it is important to stay grounded and be humble as the people’s representative.

16 Military Pharmacist

It might not seem like an obvious path, but the Australian Defence Force (ADF) employs registered pharmacists to work in the army, navy and air force. For a pharmacist, this adventurous role can involve being posted with other allied health personnel to work on board navy ships, or be deployed with their unit into remote areas of Australia and overseas.

“As pharmacists in the Australian Army we face challenges which are quite unique to the military setting and can involve the practice of pharmacy in some unusual settings – somewhere hot and dusty in the Middle East, on the snowy slopes of the Himalayas, on board an enormous ship, from a field hospital in an exercise area or just at home here in Australia in one of the many pharmacies located on military bases,” says Monash alumna Major Wendy Lang,

“On a day-to-day basis military pharmacists are involved with the management of pharmaceuticals, pathology agents, medical gases, medical consumables and equipment and are expected to have a thorough understanding of medical logistics as we can be faced with long lines of communication, and manage the transportation of thermolabile health materiel into unknown areas, be involved with rapid or long deployments whilst also performing the duties of a military officer.”

“It’s tough”, says Major Lang, “but it helps equip you for life. I love the fact my work is so varied and challenging.”

17 Mental Health Pharmacist

Mental health pharmacists in hospitals are responsible for providing clinical pharmacy services to the adult mental health in-patient wards, and psychiatric assessment and planning units.

It is a highly specialised career path that requires strong teamwork skills and current drug knowledge in psychotropic drug therapy.

The focus of this work includes managing the supply of antipsychotic medications to mental health patients in government units, outpatient clinics, community centres and specialist hospitals.

18 Women's and Newborns' Pharmacist

At the other end of the spectrum to aged care is the field of women's and newborns' pharmacy, providing clinical pharmacy services to maternity and neonatal patients. Most pharmacists come to this career path with a grounding in hospital pharmacy.

Providing safe and effective dosing and administration of medications during pregnancy and for infants is the focus of the role. One of the biggest challenges can be assisting in the care of babies born prematurely. But it is also a highly rewarding area to work in; a skilled pharmacist can play a crucial role in giving a baby a better chance at a healthy life.

19 Drug Information Specialist

As a Drug Information or Medicines Information specialist, you play a really important role in sharing accurate and useful information around different kinds of medicines, including prescription and non-prescription drugs, vitamins, supplements and more.

A great example of someone working to share their knowledge is Monash grad Jane Booth. Jane has worked as a Senior Medicines Information Pharmacist and is now Formulary and Business Development Pharmacist at Monash Health. She has a strong interest in the role of social media in healthcare and together with Dan Guidone, she co-hosts and co-produces the Purple Pen Podcast, a fortnightly discussion about clinical pharmacy in Australia.

Anyone interested in Medicines Information as a career path should consider working in a hospital setting to gain experience, alongside people with strong experience. The key to success? Being crystal clear on what the question you are being asked is, so you can provide the most accurate and detailed answer.

20 Emergency and Acute Medicine Pharmacist

One of the most intense but rewarding career options a pharmacist can pursue is to work in Emergency or Acute Medicine – often literally a life and death situation for your patients.

It's a field that Monash grad Sheridan Roth found herself drawn to early in her career.

"During my university studies," says Sheridan, "I worked in a community pharmacy, but I completed my internship in a hospital and enjoyed it so much I stayed."

"It's my responsibility to record a medication history of emergency department patients. I advise patients on the best use of medicines and counsel them about new or changed medicines, working as part of a team that includes medical, nursing and allied health staff."

The part of the role she finds most challenging? Looking after paediatric patients, as children and new babies require different treatment to adults.

21 Antimicrobial Stewardship

Antimicrobial stewardship is a vital role in any hospital and health facility, with responsibilities that include promoting the appropriate use of antimicrobials (including antibiotics), reducing microbial resistance, and decreasing the spread of drug resistant infections.

As a role, it's a great fit for pharmacists, like Monash grad Dhineli Perera. A Clinical Pharmacist at Austin Health in Victoria, Dhineli's role includes ensuring adherence to national accreditation standards; research and quality improvement activities relating to antimicrobials; and the education of clinicians about antimicrobial prescribing and appropriate use.

22 Pain Educator, Program Director or Consultant

Chronic and acute pain are fascinating areas to work in. Pain management is a constantly evolving field that encompasses many areas of treatment, not just pharmacy and pain medications. Pharmacists work with pain sufferers to manage their medications and coordinate other forms of treatment.

That makes it an interesting choice for a pharmacist looking to develop their knowledge across a range of disciplines but in a very specific direction. A great example of this is Monash graduate Kyrillos Guirguis. His years of experience include being a pain specialist pharmacist, and he has become an in demand speaker, author and mentor in the field of pain management.