



Promoting accountability and safety in patient care

Requiring all pharmacy technicians to register with the Department of Safety and Professional Services gives the Pharmacy Examining Board the ability to deny or conditionally grant registration, revoke, suspend, or limit the registration of a person registered as a pharmacy technician who has been found guilty of an offense, the circumstances of which substantially relate to the technician's work, or who has engaged in unprofessional conduct.

Pharmacy technicians have access to and regularly interact with medications in the pharmacy, including controlled substances. Under current law, if a pharmacist violates the pharmacy practice act the Pharmacy Examining Board (PEB) can revoke, suspend, or limit their license. If a pharmacy technician violates this act, the PEB has no authority to penalize a technician. There is no mechanism that prohibits a pharmacy technician from practicing after a violation. If an employer chooses to terminate a technician after a violation, the technician can simply apply for and be hired elsewhere as a pharmacy technician.

A map of the United States where states are colored based on the percentage of the population aged 65 and older. The states of Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware are colored dark red, indicating a high percentage (15% or more) of the population is aged 65 and older. Hawaii is also colored dark red. All other states are colored light blue, indicating a lower percentage (less than 15%) of the population is aged 65 and older.

■ Required ■ Not required

Under the supervision of a pharmacist, pharmacy technicians:

Compound or reconstitute medications

Retrieve medication from stock, count or measure the medication, and place the medication in its final container

Accept oral, written, and electronic prescription orders from prescribers

With the opioid epidemic ravaging communities across Wisconsin, many pharmacies have seen employees, both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, divert medications for illicit purposes. Currently, if a pharmacist is found to have diverted medications the PEB can revoke or suspend the pharmacist's license. If a technician is found to have diverted medications, the PEB does not have these options.

- Pharmacy technicians are a healthcare professional with access to narcotics, yet they are not licensed or registered in Wisconsin.
- If a technician is fired for diversion, they can work in another pharmacy and gain easy access to narcotics. This bill creates an accountability mechanism for misconduct which presently does not exist, outside a background check.

A recent study found that pharmacy technicians diverted medications in 71.4% of medication diversion cases brought before state boards of pharmacy.¹

1. *Description and comparison of medication diversion in pharmacies by pharmacists, interns, and pharmacy technicians.* Draime, Juanita A. et al. *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association* . Volume 58 . Issue 3 . 275 – 280.