



Arkansas Pharmacy Facts

- **Pharmacists are medication experts.** Extensive training and education makes the pharmacist the most knowledgeable health care professional when it comes to medications and their effective use. Historically, educational requirements for pharmacists included the choice of two entry-level degrees: a five-year Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy (B.S. Pharmacy) or a six-year Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.). Today, colleges of pharmacy offer only the Pharm.D. degree, a four-year program which usually follows getting an undergraduate degree. There are two colleges of pharmacy in Arkansas: one at the [University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences](#) (UAMS) in Little Rock and one at [Harding University](#) in Searcy.

Following graduation, pharmacists are required to pass a national licensing exam to obtain their license. Once licensed, pharmacists are required by the state to obtain 30 hours of continuing education (CE) credits every two years.

- **Pharmacy focuses on patient-oriented services.** In the last few decades, pharmacy has expanded its role within the health care delivery system from a profession solely focused on preparation and dispensing of medications to patients to one in which pharmacists provide a range of patient-oriented services to maximize medication effectiveness.
- **Pharmacists are among the most accessible healthcare professionals in Arkansas.** There are at least two pharmacists in every one of Arkansas's 75 counties and there are pharmacies in every county except one.
- **Pharmacists are important healthcare practitioners in all segments of the healthcare marketplace.** Arkansas pharmacists practice in a wide range of settings:
 - Independent stores
 - Chain stores (e.g. Walgreens, Wal-Mart, Kroger)
 - Hospitals
 - Long-term care facilities
 - The pharmaceutical industry
 - Managed care
 - Academia
 - State and Federal government (Arkansas Department of Health, Arkansas Department of Human Services, Department of Veterans Affairs, Indian Health Service)
- **Pharmacists are patient advocates.** Pharmacists who know their patients and have their medication profiles on file will be aware of possible harmful drug interactions or allergies to certain drugs. The pharmacist also will be able to discuss possible side effects; what foods, drinks, or activities that should be avoided while on a medication; what to do if a patient misses a dose; and a wide range of other helpful information including how to manage chronic diseases such as diabetes and hyperlipidemia.

- **Key health care professionals ranked 2nd in Gallup Survey.** The pharmacist is a key health care professional who helps people achieve the best results from their medications. Americans should choose a pharmacist they trust and build a partnership for good health. The annual Gallup Honesty and Ethics Survey ranks pharmacists second (75% rate high to very high in honesty and ethical standards), following nurses.
- **State Board of Pharmacy licenses and regulates pharmacy in Arkansas.** According to [the Arkansas State Board of Pharmacy](#), there are currently almost 5,000 pharmacists licensed in the state, although not all of them practice in Arkansas. The purpose of the State Board is to promote, preserve, and protect the public health, safety, and welfare through the effective regulation of the many aspects of the drug delivery system. The agency licenses and regulates not only pharmacists and pharmacies, but also the distribution system where there is sale, delivery, or distribution of prescription drugs, medical gases, durable medical equipment, and legend devices.

The Arkansas State Board of Pharmacy provides many services to the public, other state agencies, and pharmacists. It provides information to the public; resolves complaints, examines new pharmacists, transfers licenses from other states, and disciplines pharmacists and other licensees. It licenses and regulates:

- 5,217 Pharmacists
- 709 Interns
- 7,590 Pharmacy Technicians
- 761 Retail Pharmacies
- 494 Out-of-State Pharmacies
- 26 Institutions
- 185 Hospitals
- 1,430 Wholesale Distributors of Legend and Controlled Substances
- 717 Wholesale Distributors of Home Medical Equipment, Legend Devices, and Medical Gases
- 39 Wholesale Distributors of List I Chemicals
- 128 State Supported/Charity Clinics.
- 6 Specialty Pharmacies

- **Pharmacists are successful small business owners in Arkansas.** Arkansas independent community pharmacy sales were \$1.5 billion in 2009. According to the National Community Pharmacists Association, total Arkansas independent community pharmacy sales in fiscal year 2009 were \$1.5 billion; the number of full-time employees was 4,548; number of full-time pharmacists was 1,046; number of prescriptions filled in the state was 27.4 million; and number of prescriptions filled by independents for Medicaid and Medicare was 10 million.

The Arkansas Pharmacists Association, founded in 1882, is the statewide professional association representing approximately 2,400 pharmacists in Arkansas. APA strives to further the professional advancement of pharmacists, advocate the value of pharmacy, and safeguard the health and well-being of every Arkansan. Its mission is to advance a professional and business environment for Arkansas pharmacists to be successful and fulfilled in serving patients.

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