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## **NEW SURVEY—REDUCTION OF MEDICATION ERRORS ASSOCIATED WITH PHARMACY TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION**

*81 percent of pharmacists agree that CPhTs play a role in reducing medication errors*

**WASHINGTON, DC**—Results from a recent Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) sponsored survey find that lead pharmacists perceive pharmacy technician certification as an essential component in reducing medication errors, ensuring patient safety, and increasing positive health outcomes. The results, unveiled at the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) Annual Meeting in March 2010 by researcher Shane Desselle, R.Ph, PhD, FAPhA, Associate Dean for Tulsa Programs, Chair, and Professor of the Department of Pharmacy: Clinical and Administrative Sciences at University of Oklahoma College of Pharmacy, were gathered from a random sample of over 3,250 pharmacists serving in a variety of practice settings across the United States.

“The data show that the majority of pharmacists—in fact, over 80 percent of those surveyed—agree that pharmacy technician certification is associated with a reduction in medication errors,” said Melissa Murer Corrigan, R.Ph., Executive Director and CEO of PTCB. “This survey provides the data to support something we have known for years but are now able to quantify; well-trained and PTCB certified pharmacy technicians make a positive impact on patient care.”

The survey, administered by Drs. Shane Desselle and Michael Schmitt of the University of Oklahoma College Of Pharmacy, show that pharmacists recognize the value of Certified Pharmacy Technicians (CPhTs) as part of the pharmacy team, with 83 percent agreeing that working with CPhTs allows pharmacists to spend more time on direct patient care.

“Pharmacists recognize how important it is to be able to rely on well-trained and certified pharmacy technicians as a means to spend more time focusing on patient care and safety,” said Dr. Desselle.

As the population ages and medication regimens become more complex, patient-centered care will play an important role in facilitating safe medication practice. Pharmacy technician positions are expected to increase by 25 percent by 2018 to meet this demand. Pharmacy technicians assist pharmacists in dispensing medications and are accountable to the supervising pharmacist who is legally responsible through state licensure for the care and safety of patients served by the pharmacy.

### **About the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)**

*PTCB was established in January 1995 and is governed by five pharmacy organizations—the American Pharmacists Association (APhA), the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), the Illinois Council of Health-System Pharmacists (IChP), the Michigan Pharmacists Association (MPA) and the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP). The goal of the PTCB national certification program is to enable pharmacy technicians to work more effectively with pharmacists to offer safe and effective patient care and service. PTCB contracts with Pearson VUE, the industry’s technology leader, as its computer-based testing vendor. PTCB draws upon the experience and expertise of its 15-year partner, Professional Examination Service (PES) for test development.*

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