



October, 2017

Data Brief

## Trends in the Pharmacy Technician Workforce: 2009 - 2015

This report utilizes information provided by pharmacy technicians licensed to practice in South Carolina during their license renewal process in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 to learn how this important allied health workforce might be changing over time. Pharmacy technicians help pharmacists dispense prescription medication to customers or health professionals. They work most often in pharmacies and hospitals, always under the supervision of a pharmacist. The Bureau of Labor Statistics forecast a growing demand for pharmacy technicians of about 1% per year between 2014 and 2024. We examined information about employment setting, hours worked, and geographic location in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 from all pharmacy technicians employed in that role in South Carolina during those years. The text and tables below summarize the findings.

### Number of Pharmacy Technicians in the Workforce in South Carolina by Certified Status

Head Counts	2009		2011		2013		2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Pharmacy Techs (non-certified)	3,490	57.5%	3,241	55.5%	3,265	54.0%	3,572	54.6%
Certified Pharmacy Techs	2,580	42.5%	2,602	44.5%	2,787	46.0%	2,968	45.4%
Total Pharmacy Tech Workforce	6,070	100%	5,843	100%	6,052	100%	6,540	100%

- The number of pharmacy technicians in the workforce grew by 8% between 2009 and 2015.
- The percentage of pharmacy technicians in the workforce who met the requirements for state certification grew by 15% between 2009 and 2015.

### Changes in the Size of the Pharmacy Technician Workforce in South Carolina based on Work Hours

	2009	2011	2013	2015
Average hours worked per week	32.4	34.4	34.7	34.5
Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs)	4,917.8	4,941.8	5,200.4	5,581.2

- The size of the full-time equivalent (FTE) pharmacy technician workforce actively employed in South Carolina grew by 13.5% between 2009 and 2015 based on the total sum of hours worked in a typical week divided by 40.
- The growth in FTEs in the pharmacy technician workforce, which grew faster than the headcount of pharmacy technician workers, is reflected in the increased average number of hours worked each week between 2009 and 2013.
- Average hours worked per week declined slightly between 2013 and 2015, but those losses to the FTE size of the workforce were counterbalanced by the increasing number of pharmacy technicians entering the workforce between 2013 and 2015.

### Number and Percentage of Pharmacy Technicians by Year and Primary Work Settings

Setting Types	2009		2011		2013		2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Large Chain Pharmacy	3,696	60.9%	3,461	59.2%	3,603	59.5%	3,916	59.9%
Independent Community Pharmacy	1,084	17.9%	1,080	18.5%	1,066	17.6%	1,180	18.0%
General Hospital	822	13.5%	848	14.5%	859	14.2%	897	13.7%
Other Setting(s)	251	4.1%	304	5.2%	303	5.0%	324	5.0%
Out-Patient Setting	77	1.3%	80	1.4%	114	1.9%	133	2.0%
Nursing Home / Other Institution	40	0.7%	14	0.2%	16	0.3%	11	0.2%
Small Chain Pharmacy	36	0.6%	4	0.1%	4	0.1%	9	0.1%
Specialty Hospital	31	0.5%	29	0.5%	29	0.5%	26	0.4%
State/County Agency	26	0.4%	21	0.4%	22	0.4%	11	0.2%
Pharmacy Wholesale /Manufacturing	7	0.1%	2	0.0%	6	0.1%	2	0.0%
Pharmacy Mail Order	na		na		30	0.5%	28	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,070</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,843</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,052</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,540</b>	<b>100%</b>

Out-patient settings include clinic pharmacies, free-standing out-patient surgical centers, free-standing clinics, college or university settings, schools, and dialysis facilities. Data is sorted by 2009 distribution across settings.

- The way in which pharmacy technicians are distributed across different work settings has not changed much for the largest job markets. More than half are consistently employed in large chain pharmacies.

### Pharmacy Technician Workforce by Regional Location of their Primary Work Setting

DHEC Region of Primary Setting	2009		2011		2013		2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Upstate	1,998	32.9%	1,928	33.0%	2,019	33.4%	2,086	31.9%
Midlands	1,681	27.7%	1,611	27.6%	1,632	27.0%	1,796	27.5%
Low Country	1,191	19.6%	1,147	19.6%	1,207	19.9%	1,382	21.2%
Pee Dee	1,199	19.8%	1,157	19.8%	1,191	19.7%	1,270	19.4%
Region unknown	1	-	0		3	-	6	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,070</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,843</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,052</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,540</b>	<b>100%</b>

- The geographic distribution of pharmacy technicians has been relatively stable over time. Each region has shared in the recent growth of the pharmacy technician workforce.

#### Suggested Citation:

Trends in the Pharmacy Technician Workforce in South Carolina 2009 – 2015. South Carolina Office for Healthcare Workforce. October, 2017. [www.SCohw.org](http://www.SCohw.org)