

# Emergency Department Pharmacist Activities

The following activities are performed by the Emergency Department Clinical Pharmacist. They are presented in order of importance, with the most important activity presented first.

- Continuously seek out interventions by making rounds in the medical, trauma, and observation units. Clinical pharmacist offers suggestions and assists in preventing medication errors from occurring.
- Suggest appropriate medication and/or dose recommendations where necessary.
- Assist in drip calculations and medication dosing and drip compatibility, particularly in code/trauma situations.
- Perform pharmacokinetic dose checks and make recommendations on dose adjustments for anti-epileptic medications, phenytoin, theophylline, digoxin, and aminoglycoside orders, and TDM of other meds as necessary.
- Serve on medical and trauma code response teams. Attend all incoming transport patients until deemed stable or transferred to another area.
- Aid in the management of the poisoning/toxicology patient, including review of toxin and its appropriate treatment. Aid with recommendation and utilization of appropriate antidotes to common poisons.
- Inform on adverse medication events/reactions, document occurrence. In conjunction with other members of the ERC team, design and implement plans for elimination or minimization of errors.
- Inform on medication side effects, interactions, and incompatibilities.
- Answer drug information questions from ERC staff and patients.
- Enter physician orders after review. Facilitate rapid turnaround time from pharmacy.
- Inform on drug-drug or drug-disease interactions.
- Fill emergency department outpatient prescriptions for difficult-to-find after-hours emergent prescriptions.
- Document clinical and cost-saving activities/interventions as well as routine provision of information.
- Educate medical staff on costs of comparable medications (e.g. outpatient formulary concerns), and assist prescribing habits (review of individual patient's insurance formulary to provide best possible discharge care). May include assistance in acquisition of medications from drug companies for indigent patients.
- Responsible for all pharmacy distribution issues in the ERC. Serve as liaison between pharmacy and ERC to improve medication delivery and turnaround time.
- Facilitate transfer of patient to floor/ICU by notifying floor/ICU pharmacist of situation and immediate medication needs after arrival.
- Recommend alternate drug entities during drug shortages as needed.
- Perform formal/informal consultations as needed to ERC staff as requested.
- Identify unknown medications (by name or medication itself).
- Provide and attend physician, nursing, and pharmacy inservices on emergency medicine-related topics.
- Recruit, maintain, and educate ERC pharmacy staff.
- Recommend alternate routes of administration when appropriate.
- Inservice physician and nursing staff as requested.

*Note:* TDM — Therapeutic drug monitoring  
ERC — Emergency Referral Center  
ICU — Intensive care unit

*Source:* University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas.