American Pharmacists Month is a golden opportunity to celebrate the pharmacy profession, recognize your pharmacy staff and reach out to your patients.

In the following pages, you’ll find ideas for special activities and events that spotlight pharmacists’ contributions toward improving medication use and advancing patient care in all practice settings including community pharmacies, hospitals, academic settings, ambulatory care and long-term care facilities.

American Pharmacists Month is your time to shine. Every practice setting is different—so use these ideas as a launching pad for creating unique celebrations in your local community. Be creative and receptive to providing a wide range of activities.

The American Pharmacists Month Planning Guide will help you increase community consciousness about the care provided by pharmacists. Use this guide to plan promotions during American Pharmacists Month in October and throughout the year.

We will provide you with some creative ideas on how you might celebrate during the month. We have included many exciting tips and real-life examples of successful activities for every practice setting.
Schedule special health events that encourage patients with the message of “talk to your pharmacist today.” Examples include promoting vaccinations, a flu shot clinic or health screening day (e.g., cholesterol, diabetes, osteoporosis screening).

Hold one or more “Medication Check-Ups.” Invite your patients to bring all their medications—prescription and nonprescription—to the pharmacy during a specified time, so pharmacists can examine them for expiration dates, potential drug interactions, and other medication related problems such as adherence issues.

Conduct “OTC tours” geared to the needs of specific groups—parents of young children, older adults, athletes and others. Help each group understand how to select appropriate products for the conditions most likely to affect them. Emphasize the importance of reading product labels, knowing the active ingredients in certain medications and consulting with the pharmacist when questions arise.

Provide Medicare counseling to the seniors in your community. List information about your Medicare events in the local newspaper, or send the information to the local radio station. You can also provide personalized counseling in your area by contacting your local office on aging. For the telephone number, visit www.eldercare.gov on the Web.
Host a visit for your senator or representative. Provide your legislators with an invaluable view of the contemporary roles of pharmacists. Be sure they see a pharmacist in your facility conducting valued patient care services that warrant compensation. These services may include immunizations, comprehensive medication reviews, blood pressure screening, OTC counseling, and other clinical activities.

Highlight your pharmacy technicians. Get technicians involved by recognizing their contributions to your operation. Post their photos in a place that the public can see them. Give them a “thank you” luncheon complete with a cake and share a few examples with patients on how technicians contribute to pharmacy operations and patient care.

Visit www.pharmacist.com/shop for all your American Pharmacists Month Products.

Share your American Pharmacists Month Celebrations with APhA by sending them to aphm@aphanet.org.

Share your celebrations on social media using the hashtag #APhM2017
The third Tuesday of October has been designated National Pharmacy Technician Day to recognize the invaluable contributions pharmacy technicians make in all practice settings throughout the year. Pharmacists: take a moment this month to acknowledge the work of the pharmacy technicians at your practice site and thank them for all they do for you and your patients. A group outing—for lunch or a fun social event—can be a great morale builder. Pharmacy technicians: use the ideas below to promote American Pharmacists Month with your fellow technicians and pharmacists in your practice setting!

**Help decorate the pharmacy** with banners, posters and balloons announcing American Pharmacists Month.

**Assist with special health events** planned for American Pharmacists Month. Conduct blood pressure screenings and encourage patients to take advantage of other pharmacy-based patient care services.

**Co-host a party for the public!** Pick one or more days during American Pharmacists Month to offer cake or other treats. Hand out patient education brochures and small promotional items, like magnets, tote bags and pens. Volunteer during the event by welcoming patients and demonstrating the prescription-filling process. Show them how your crucial role impacts the services they receive from the pharmacy.

**Encourage the pharmacist to replace your usual bags** with American Pharmacists Month plastic bags, or put American Pharmacists Month stickers on pharmacy bags and purchases.

**Use a special message** promoting American Pharmacists Month when you answer your telephones and on your voicemail: “Hello, this is Main Street Pharmacy, where we’re celebrating American Pharmacists Month. How may I assist you?”

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**Don’t Forget**

**National Pharmacy Technician Day**

For additional information, go to www.ptcb.org.
**Ideas for**

**Pharmacists in Hospital Settings**

**Visit patients in their hospital rooms.** Introduce yourself and answer any questions they may have about pharmacy services or drug therapy. Provide patient education brochures and small American Pharmacists Month-themed giveaways, like magnets, pens, tote bags, etc. Ask if a small flyer, message or tent card could be placed on meal trays.

**Talk to your administrator(s).** Explain the goals and the patient education benefits of American Pharmacists Month to help build a sense of teamwork within the health system. Be sure to invite them to participate in the month’s activities.

**Create a lobby display.** Use it to promote the pharmacy department. Include information about pharmacy services and photos of the pharmacy staff. If your facility is large, consider changing the display weekly to focus on a different pharmacy activity or function.

**Schedule an “open house.”** Invite all hospital employees to visit the pharmacy. Conduct brief tours that showcase daily pharmacy operations, and describe how medications move from the initial physician order to the patient. Demonstrating how a pharmacy really operates could prove to be a real draw!

**Hold a community event.** Be sure to publicize your event like a health fair at least four weeks in advance with notices at libraries and grocery stores and announcements in local papers.

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**Celebrate**

**National Hospital & Health-System Pharmacy Week!**

The week will focus on the important contributions made by pharmacists and technicians to promote the safety and well-being of patients in our nation’s health care institutions.
Ideas for

Pharmacists in Ambulatory Care Settings

Schedule special health events. Use this time to encourage patients with the message of “talk to your pharmacist today.” Examples include a flu shot clinic or health screening day (e.g., cholesterol, diabetes, osteoporosis screening).

Hold one or more “medication check-ups” or “brown bags.” Invite patients to bring all their medications—prescription and nonprescription—to the pharmacy. Pharmacists can examine them for expiration dates, potential drug interactions and other problems.

Purchase children’s activity books for your facility. While parents are waiting, the kids will have something to keep them busy.

Arrange “curbside consultations” for patients and caregivers. Encourage them to talk with pharmacists about medication therapy issues. Hold the sessions in a conference room or other relatively private area, and allot from 5 to 10 minutes per person.

Decorate ambulatory care pharmacies. American Pharmacists Month banners, posters and balloons are great ways to publicize your events. Ask your practice to put posters or other information in patient care rooms and other areas. Place informational brochures in the waiting room. Create a poster or framed photo of pharmacists working in the practice and place in the waiting room. Have cake or other food for practice staff to celebrate the month.

During the month of October, pharmacy staff were encouraged to wear their “Celebrate Pharmacy” T-shirts at Kaiser Permanente.
Invite residents and their guests to a special American Pharmacists Month party. Try holding an afternoon tea or other fun event. Make the atmosphere festive by decorating the designated areas with streamers and American Pharmacists Month balloons, banners and posters. Provide patient education brochures and small themed giveaways, like magnets, pens, etc. Provide information regarding the various services the pharmacy/pharmacists provide to residents.

Visit individual patients in their rooms and give them your full attention. Introduce yourself and answer any questions they may have about pharmacy services or drug therapy.

Schedule informational programs for residents and/or their families. Possible topics include the pharmacist’s role in medication regimen review, the ten most common and/or hazardous drug interactions among older patients and basic medication safety. If possible, use this opportunity to explore launching a long-term monitoring program for residents.

Develop lunch tray tent cards. Explain the goals of the pharmacy and the services that you offer to the residents. If they have questions about their medication, encourage them to ask to speak with a pharmacist.

Don’t be shy! Invite your local newspaper or television reporter to the party. You just might end up with some valuable publicity! Go to www.pharmacist.com/aphm to get news release templates and additional information about using the media to tell your story.

Student pharmacists from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences spread a little APhM cheer at a local long-term care facility.
Ideas for

Pharmacists in Uniform

Pharmacist organizations of each branch of the military (United States Air Force, United States Army, and the United States Navy) can and do celebrate American Pharmacists Month. If you know pharmacists who are stationed overseas, send them a care package with American Pharmacists Month items.

For pharmacists within the United States Public Health Service and the Department of Veterans Affairs, with flu season starting right around October, why not schedule a day to give flu shots to your civilian counterparts? Another idea is to conduct brown bag medication review consults or educational sessions. This will give you an opportunity to demonstrate the valuable role that pharmacists play on the health care team. What a perfect opportunity to celebrate your achievements!

Find a Partner

American Pharmacists Month is all about celebrating the profession. Looking to make a big splash, but working on a small budget? Why not partner with your local pharmacists association or a school of pharmacy? Your local pharmacists association may have access to more resources and be willing to work with you. Student pharmacists are arguably the American Pharmacists Month’s biggest champions, so why not use the students on rotation or working in your pharmacy to host diabetes or hypertension screenings for your patients? During the month it’s important to focus on the quality of outreach activities, not just the quantity. Make the experience for your pharmacists, technicians and patients a memorable one! Demonstrate your pride in being a pharmacist!

Samford University and CVS Caremark partner on a billboard announcing American Pharmacists Month.
American Pharmacists Month is an excellent opportunity for student pharmacists and APhA Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP) chapters to go out into the community and work directly with the public to promote the profession and the valuable services pharmacists provide. Many of the ideas presented in the previous pages could be adapted for use by student pharmacists and APhA-ASP chapters. Below are some more...

**Individual Student Pharmacist Activities**

**Take Initiative.** If you work part-time in a pharmacy, help your supervisor plan activities and events for American Pharmacists Month. Browse through this guide for ideas specific to your practice site.

**Recognize Pharmacy Technicians.** Make an effort to recognize pharmacy technicians, especially your co-workers, on National Pharmacy Technician Day. Thank them for their support and the invaluable contributions they make to the profession.

**Write an article** for your college newspaper or newsletter to raise awareness about pharmacists’ role in helping patients manage specific health conditions.

**Say thank you.** Thank faculty and preceptors for working with you through messages, APhM goodies or even a party.
Plan a fundraiser to sell American Pharmacists Month T-shirts or other promotional items to student pharmacists and faculty. Visit www.pharmacist.com/shop for all your promotional merchandise needs.

Schedule patient care and community outreach projects in October, and promote American Pharmacists Month during these events. Consider decorating the event area with themed balloons, posters or banners.

Hold a celebratory lunch for all student pharmacists. Invite an honored local practitioner to discuss the importance of leadership and professionalism in pharmacy.

Start a fun competition: send out weekly quizzes to all student pharmacists at your school, with American Pharmacists Month promotional items as prizes for randomly selected winners each week.

Get student pharmacists involved online. Use a hashtag like #APhM2017 to accompany photos from APhM events to be posted on APhA-ASP chapter social media accounts.

Conduct free health screenings that offer “medication check-ups” or other community education events for area businesses, civic organizations and corporations.

Connect with your state pharmacy associations. Look for ways to participate, and make suggestions for additional events.

Promote careers in Pharmacy. Visit a local high school to talk with students about careers in pharmacy.

Get on the news. Reach out to local, regional, or national news outlets to get pharmacists and student pharmacists recognized.
Out of the Pharmacy and Into the Community

Step outside your practice setting to spread the word!

Remember to engage the community at large when planning events to promote and celebrate American Pharmacists Month. It’s a natural time for pharmacists to increase their visibility and the public’s awareness of their contributions to community health. Patients of all ages can benefit from discussions and information about how to use medications safely and effectively.

**Approach the management of a local shopping mall** about sponsoring a health fair or staging an exhibit or booth at which pharmacists and student pharmacists can answer shoppers’ questions about their medications.

**Create a medication information and education display** for your local library, YMCA or other suitable community site.

**Promote health and wellness** in your community by hosting vaccination clinics, medication check-ups and disease screening and management activities.

**Visit elementary, middle and high schools** to talk with students about medication safety, the dangers of prescription abuse, and careers in pharmacy.

**Conduct “medication check-up” reviews or offer medication information seminars** at senior citizen centers and housing complexes.

**Give educational talks and presentations** to civic, neighborhood and church groups. Consider distributing patient education brochures and small American Pharmacists Month-themed giveaways.

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**San Mateo County Pharmacists Association** hosts, “Talk with a Pharmacist Day,” providing an opportunity for patients to ask a pharmacist about their medications and learn how to avoid drug interactions.
Visit www.pharmacist.com/shop for American Pharmacists Month products to complete your celebration plans. Below are just a few of the items available for purchase.