



## Pharmacists—The Medication-Use Experts

- Pharmacists continue to play a critical role in enhancing patient safety. Pharmacists are medication-use experts and are more important in a patient's overall health care than ever before, as the number and variety of available medications grows each year.
- Pharmacists are among the most trusted professionals in healthcare, and patients value access to these well trained healthcare professionals who help them manage their medications and prevent medication-related problems.
- Pharmacists must complete a minimum of 6 years of college in a rigorous curriculum. They are also required to pass national and state-based examinations to receive their license to practice. Continuing education is also required throughout their careers.
- By informing patients and prescribers of possible adverse effects or drug interactions, pharmacists keep their patients healthy and safe – as well as avoid unnecessary costs from complications or hospitalizations.
- All pharmacists strive to prevent problems with prescription medicines by performing a series of checks and providing precise instructions to patients.

## Pharmacists Enhance Patient Safety

In July 2006, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) issued its report, Preventing Medication Errors, highlighting ways in which pharmacists' expertise and participation on the healthcare team can help prevent errors, including:

- Utilizing pharmacists as integral members of the patient care team as experts in medication-use safety and quality
- Encouraging patients to keep an up-to-date list of all their medications

*Advancing patient health through communication, education and innovation*

8515 Douglas Ave, Suite 16 • Des Moines, IA 50322 • 515.270.0713 • FAX 515.270.2979

[www.iarx.org](http://www.iarx.org) email: [ipa@iarx.org](mailto:ipa@iarx.org)