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I did a course at Auckland University of Technology (AUT). I was looking at all the health type courses at AUT, and the pharmacy technician course caught my interest. I had never worked in pharmacy before. I didn't know anything about it. It just sounded interesting to me, so I applied to do the course and off I went.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

Most of the work that I'm doing is clinical trials for oncology and haematology patients, so for cancer and blood services patients. I enjoy working with a variety of health professionals, including doctors, nurses, and the clinical research associates (who work for the sponsor of the trial). You get to meet some of the patients as well, so that's quite rewarding.

Why is your role essential to your workplace and the profession?

As a technician, I receive all the shipments for the clinical trials. I manage all the paperwork and all the stock allocations for the patient's visit. I do the compounding aspect and help with the setup of the trial. It's my job to create the compounding worksheet and the dispensing guide for the study. Basically, I'm responsible for ensuring the paperwork is completed and making sure the medications are checked and accurate before being provided to the patient.

How has your role changed since you first started as a technician?

I started working as a pharmacy technician in the hospital, restocking drug rooms and working in the dispensary. I then moved into the aseptic compounding side of things (intravenous medication) and working in the pharmacy aseptic production unit (compounding all the chemotherapy drugs).

I have gravitated towards oncology clinical trials. Recently, I've been offered a job at a private cancer care unit (Canopy Cancer Care) as their first pharmacy technician ever.

Where do you see the pharmacy profession heading in the future?

There is quite a lot of work that pharmacy technicians are now able to do to free up pharmacists to do more clinical work. For example, there's the PACT role, where technicians are responsible for checking the accuracy of medications before they are dispensed to patients and work on the wards with patients doing medicines reconciliations.



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