

Adding pharmacist to team can improve patient outcomes

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(HealthDay)—Integration of pharmacists into team-based care practice

models can improve patient outcome, especially in chronic diseases, such as diabetes, according to a report published in the American Medical Association's *AMA Wire*.

Pharmacists have been part of the team for more than 20 years at Providence Medical Group in Oregon. Providence increased the number of pharmacists from one to 21; many clinics have a full-time pharmacist, while other clinics share.

Pharmacists help to target conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, heart failure, and asthma. Pharmacists' roles vary, depending on the clinic's specific needs and patient panel, but can include helping with [insulin treatment](#), virtual consults, and diabetes management. In addition, pharmacists offer follow-up visits for hypertension and depression, new medication starts, medication tapering, and review of polypharmacy in senior patients. Physicians can also refer to pharmacists to answer patient calls or emails relating to medications, freeing up time for physicians who may need to look up the answers. The largest population seen by pharmacists at this medical group is patients with diabetes; pharmacists work closely with patients, helping them get their hemoglobin A1c levels under control.

"I feel very strongly that [pharmacists] are an integral part of the team," Lori Gluck, M.D., family physician and medical director of the group's clinic in Bethany, Ore. "Once you practice with a clinical [pharmacist](#) at your fingertips, I can't imagine not having that service."

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