

HOPA IDS SIG Position Statement on the Role of the IDS Pharmacy Technician

In 2021 NCCN published IDS consensus guidelines. One of the focus areas identified was further developing IDS technician roles and training. Since that time there have been publications about advancing the pharmacy technician role but no publication has specifically outlined the areas of IDS technician opportunities and closing the gaps identified by the NCCN workgroup. Members of the Hematology/Oncology Pharmacy Association (HOPA) IDS special interest group (SIG) met and reviewed the current literature around advancing technician roles as well as several IDS specific job descriptions, identifying specific responsibilities and duties that differentiate the IDS technician role from other advanced and specialized technician roles. Pharmacy technicians must function at an advanced level for consideration of transitioning into an IDS technician role making this group of technicians highly experienced at the entry level into the IDS specialist job category.

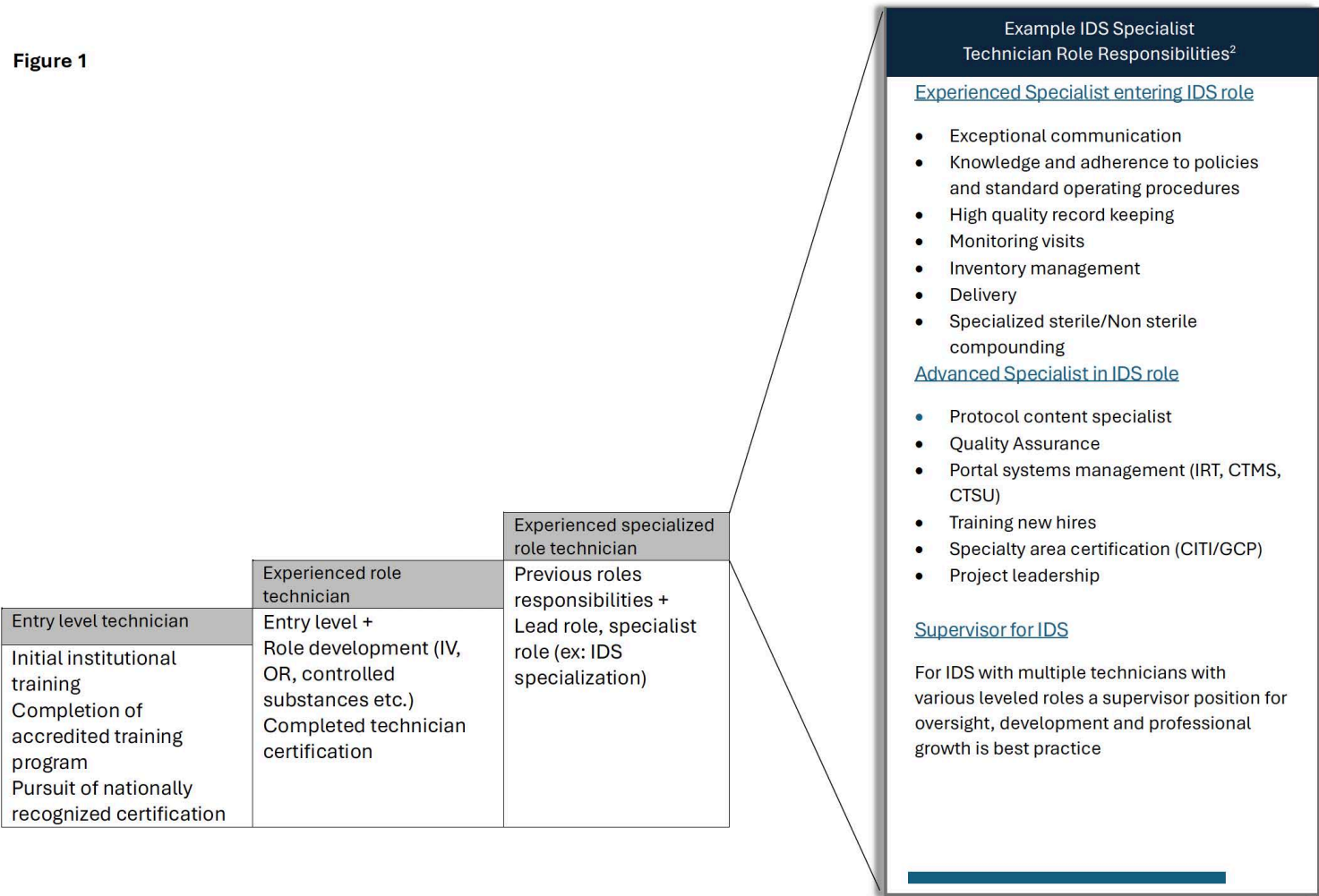
Areas of the IDS technician practice that scope the role as a highly skilled and unique specialist include:

- Maintenance of specialized training including advanced and additional certifications
- Perform high level administrative functions
- Coordinating and meeting with representatives external to the organization
- Complex problem solving

Beyond these specialized functions and training, as technicians grow in the IDS role there must be a path for further career development. Several publications have demonstrated the need and impact of technician career paths.^{2,3,4,6} As O'Neil and colleagues documented, there are high turnover rates and dissatisfaction for technicians without a clear path for growth.⁴ Thames and colleagues delineated well the various levels of technician growth and development within a career ladder along with commensurate compensation for the advancing education, development and responsibilities of technicians.⁶ There remains a need in the IDS specialty area to delineate a path for career growth as technicians in the role grow into leadership and supervisory responsibilities. Ensuring IDS specialized technicians are titled commensurate with level of expertise, fairly compensated and have manageable workloads are starting points to keeping the field engaged and growing. As leadership and supervisory responsibilities grow incentives must also grow. IDS areas with the personnel to assign specific tasks to developmental roles will foster career pathways that allow for engagement and professional growth. Figure 1 outlines a growth path for IDS specialist technicians. IDS areas with more limited personnel resources can utilize the spectrum for determining enhanced compensation where IDS technician specialists are performing higher level duties.

1. Amin, S et. al. National Comprehensive Cancer Network investigational drug service consensus recommendations. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2022; 79:486-491.
2. Arya, A, Trueba, S, Ricchiuti AB, Yu, K. Development of a pharmacy technician training program and advanced pharmacy technician roles: A health system's journey amidst an evolving national practice landscape. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2025; 82: e108-e112.
3. ASHP Practice Advancement Initiative 2030: new recommendations for advancing pharmacy practice in health systems. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2020; 77(2): 113-121.
4. O'Neil D, Henderson JM, Gifford HR, Karpinski TA. Building a pharmacy technician structure for the future: A lesson from a multihospital academic health system. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2023; 80:304-311.
5. Siden R, Tamer HR, Skyles AJ, Dolan CS, Propes DJ, Redic K. Survey to assess the role of pharmacy technicians and nonpharmacist staff in the operation of research pharmacies. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2014; 71:1877-89
6. Thames, L, Johnson, C, Cash, J, Holder, M, Voils, A. Implementation of a pharmacy technician career ladder and pharmacy technician training program. *Am J Health-Syst Pharm.* 2024; 81: e437-e442.

Figure 1



1. Thames, L. et. Al. Implementation of a pharmacy technician career ladder and pharmacy technician training program. Am J Health-Syst Pharm. 2024; 81: e437-e442.

2. Amin, S et. al. National Comprehensive Cancer Network investigational drug service consensus recommendations. Am J Health-Syst Pharm. 2022; 79:486-491.