JRP- Journal of Research in Pharmaceutics
**Volume 1, Issue 2 | October-2024**
**ISSN (online): 3065-9639; ISSN(Print): 3065-9620**

# Credentialing and Privileging of Pharmacists A Resource Paper from the Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy

**James Carter**
PhD Research Scholar, University of California, San Francisco, USA

**Received: 05-08-2024; Revised: 09-09-2024; Accepted: 28-09-2024; Published: 14-10-2024**

## Abstract

***This resource paper from the Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy provides a comprehensive overview of the credentialing and privileging processes for pharmacists. It emphasizes the importance of these processes in ensuring the competence and accountability of pharmacists in various practice settings. The paper discusses the role of credentialing in verifying qualifications, education, training, and practice history, while privileging determines the scope of practice and responsibilities. It highlights the need for standardized and consistent approaches to credentialing and privileging to support safe, effective, and high-quality pharmacy practice.***

**Keywords:** ***Credentialing, Privileging, Pharmacists, Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy, Competence verification, Scope of practice, Practice history.***

## 1. Introduction

Credentialing and privileging of pharmacists are critical processes designed to ensure that pharmacists are appropriately trained, qualified, and competent to provide safe and effective patient care. These processes are essential for maintaining high standards of pharmacy practice and ensuring that pharmacists can perform their roles within the scope of their qualifications. Credentialing involves the verification of a pharmacist's qualifications, education, training, and practice history, while privileging determines the specific roles and responsibilities a pharmacist is authorized to undertake. The goal of credentialing and privileging is to protect the public and enhance the quality of pharmacy services provided to patients.

**Importance of Credentialing and Privileging**

Credentialing and privileging are integral to the pharmacy profession, as they establish a standardized process for assessing a pharmacist's competency. This process includes verifying academic credentials, licensure, training, and clinical experience. It also involves evaluating professional development, such as certifications in specialized areas of practice. By ensuring that pharmacists meet specific qualifications and standards, these processes help protect patients from harm and ensure that pharmacists are equipped to handle complex medication regimens and patient care scenarios (1). Credentialing also serves as a safeguard against the practice of non-licensed or inadequately trained individuals posing as pharmacists, thus maintaining the integrity and trust in the profession.

**Scope of Credentialing**

The scope of credentialing for pharmacists typically includes verification of education and training from accredited institutions, licensure by the appropriate regulatory bodies, and demonstration of current competence. It may also involve background checks, verification of past professional practice, and assessment of clinical skills through practical exams or simulations. This comprehensive review aims to assess whether the pharmacist possesses the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the expected roles safely and effectively. The credentialing process should be ongoing, with regular updates to ensure that pharmacists remain current in their practice, particularly in the face of evolving medication therapies, technologies, and health care regulations.

**Privileging Process**

Privileging is closely linked to credentialing but focuses on the specific scope of practice and responsibilities a pharmacist can undertake based on their qualifications. This process allows institutions, such as hospitals or managed care organizations, to grant pharmacists the ability to perform certain tasks, such as medication therapy management, direct patient care, or involvement in multidisciplinary teams. The privileging process includes reviewing specific competencies required for these roles, such as patient assessment skills, drug therapy management, and collaborative practice agreements. It is a dynamic process, often reviewed annually, to reflect

changes in practice standards and the pharmacist's evolving professional development. Privileging ensures that pharmacists are only performing tasks they are competent to perform, thus safeguarding patient safety (2).

**Standardization and Consistency**

The need for standardized and consistent approaches to credentialing and privileging across practice settings is critical for the integrity of the pharmacy profession. A lack of standardization can lead to discrepancies in the qualifications of pharmacists practicing in different environments, potentially compromising patient care. The Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy advocates for the adoption of standardized processes that align with national and international best practices. This ensures that pharmacists, regardless of the setting in which they practice, meet consistent standards of training, education, and competency. Standardization also supports mobility for pharmacists, allowing them to practice in various settings without additional credentialing requirements that may be unnecessary. By establishing uniform criteria, credentialing and privileging can more effectively protect patient health and advance the role of pharmacists in healthcare delivery.

## 2. Literature Survey

The credentialing and privileging of pharmacists have been the subject of extensive research and discussion within the pharmacy and healthcare communities. This literature survey highlights key findings and themes from recent studies, guidelines, and policy statements that shape the current understanding and practices around these processes.

Credentialing involves verifying a pharmacist's qualifications, which include education, training, professional licensure, and clinical experience. Several studies have underscored the importance of robust credentialing processes in safeguarding patient safety and ensuring that pharmacists possess the necessary knowledge and skills. Research by emphasizes that a standardized approach to credentialing is critical to prevent the practice of non-licensed professionals and to maintain public trust in the profession. Another study by noted that credentialing helps to identify gaps in training and knowledge, allowing pharmacists to engage in continuous professional development and adapt to evolving clinical guidelines (3).

Privileging, on the other hand, determines the specific roles and responsibilities that a pharmacist can undertake within a healthcare setting. The literature highlights that privileging should be based on demonstrated competencies rather than solely on academic qualifications. According to [Author Year], the privileging process is vital for aligning pharmacist roles with institutional needs and patient care requirements. This ensures that pharmacists are adequately trained and authorized to manage complex medication therapies and participate in multidisciplinary teams. The study by also noted that privileging is often an ongoing process, requiring regular reassessment to reflect changes in clinical practice and emerging roles for pharmacists.

The integration of credentialing and privileging processes within healthcare institutions is crucial for effective pharmacy practice. Research suggests that inconsistency in these processes across institutions can lead to variability in pharmacist competencies and scopes of practice, potentially impacting patient outcomes. found that lack of standardization may result in gaps in care, particularly in hospitals and managed care settings where pharmacists are expected to perform critical roles such as medication therapy management and patient education. This finding emphasizes the need for a unified approach to credentialing and privileging to ensure pharmacists can provide consistent, high-quality care across different settings.

The role of credentialing and privileging in advancing the profession of pharmacy is also supported by policy statements from professional organizations. The American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) has established guidelines for credentialing and privileging, which emphasize the importance of ongoing education, competency assessment, and scope of practice delineation for pharmacists. These guidelines serve as a framework for healthcare institutions to adopt standardized processes that align with best practices. Studies such as underscore the significance of these guidelines in facilitating pharmacist integration into clinical teams, enhancing interdisciplinary collaboration, and improving patient outcomes (4).

## 3. Existing and Proposed system

The existing system of credentialing and privileging for pharmacists has evolved over time to address the increasing complexity of healthcare and the expanding roles of pharmacists within it. Currently, credentialing primarily focuses on verifying a pharmacist's qualifications, including their educational background, training, licensure, and

**Volume 1, Issue 2 | October-2024**
**ISSN (online): 3065-9639; ISSN(Print): 3065-9620**

professional history. This process is designed to ensure that pharmacists possess the necessary knowledge and skills to provide safe and effective care. In many settings, credentialing is performed by health systems, institutions, or state boards of pharmacy, each using slightly different criteria and processes. Despite this variability, the core elements verification of education, training, and practice history remain consistent across systems. However, gaps still exist in terms of standardized criteria, which can lead to inconsistencies in pharmacist competencies and scopes of practice between different institutions and jurisdictions.

**Proposed System**

The proposed system for credentialing and privileging of pharmacists seeks to establish more consistent and standardized criteria across different practice settings. This system would ideally include a unified set of requirements for education, training, and experience that all pharmacists must meet, regardless of where they practice. Such standardization would enhance the portability of credentials, allowing pharmacists to move between institutions and practice settings without additional credentialing processes that may be redundant or unnecessary. The Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy recommends that this standardized approach be developed through collaboration among professional organizations, regulatory bodies, and healthcare institutions. By setting clear benchmarks for education, training, and clinical experience, this system would help ensure that all pharmacists are adequately prepared to take on roles such as medication therapy management, patient counseling, and involvement in multidisciplinary care teams.

The proposed system would incorporate several components to strengthen the credentialing and privileging process. First, there would be a requirement for pharmacists to complete standardized education and training programs that cover core competencies, including patient assessment, drug therapy management, and communication skills. These programs would be accredited and recognized across different practice settings to ensure consistency in pharmacist preparation. Second, ongoing professional development would be emphasized, with regular assessments of continuing education credits and competency evaluations. This would help maintain up-to-date knowledge and skills, particularly as new medications, technologies, and clinical guidelines emerge. Additionally, privileging would be based on demonstrated competencies rather than solely on academic qualifications, allowing institutions to tailor pharmacist roles to specific patient care needs.

The proposed system also advocates for the integration of technology to enhance the credentialing and privileging processes. Digital platforms can facilitate the verification of education, training, and licensure in real-time, reducing administrative burden and speeding up the credentialing process. Moreover, electronic systems can track continuing education credits and required competency assessments, providing a centralized database for pharmacists' professional development. By leveraging technology, the system would not only improve efficiency but also ensure transparency and accountability in the credentialing and privileging process. This integration would also facilitate communication between healthcare providers, allowing for better coordination of care and consistent implementation of pharmacist roles across different settings.

## 4. Credentialing and Prioritization's Objectives

The purpose of credentialing and privileging in the pharmacy profession is multifaceted, primarily focused on ensuring the safety, competence, and accountability of pharmacists as they provide care to patients. Credentialing and privileging are crucial processes that help in maintaining high standards of pharmacy practice, which ultimately benefit the health and well-being of patients.

Credentialing serves as the foundation for verifying a pharmacist's qualifications. This process includes the assessment of an individual's educational background, professional training, and licensure. Credentialing ensures that pharmacists have met the minimum educational and practical requirements necessary to practice safely and effectively. It involves reviewing their academic degrees, certification in pharmacy practice, and training in specific areas such as medication therapy management, patient counseling, and clinical pharmacy. Through credentialing, health systems and institutions can confirm that a pharmacist has completed an accredited pharmacy program, passed a national licensure examination, and has the requisite knowledge and skills to deliver pharmaceutical care. This verification process is critical to prevent the practice of non-licensed individuals and to protect the public from harm caused by inadequate training or lack of competency (5).

Privileging, on the other hand, focuses on granting pharmacists specific roles and responsibilities within a healthcare setting based on their demonstrated competencies. Privileging is not solely about academic qualifications but also considers practical experience and clinical skills. It determines the scope of practice for a pharmacist, allowing them to perform tasks such as medication therapy management, administering injections, or participating in collaborative practice agreements with other healthcare professionals. Privileging ensures that pharmacists are authorized to provide care that is commensurate with their training and competence. It allows for the customization of pharmacy roles according to the needs of different patient populations and healthcare settings. Through the privileging process, institutions can align pharmacists' competencies with the clinical needs of the patient population they serve, enhancing the quality and safety of patient care.

The purpose of credentialing and privileging is to safeguard patient health and enhance the quality of pharmaceutical services. By setting clear criteria for pharmacist qualifications and granting privileges based on demonstrated competencies, these processes help in reducing the risks associated with medication errors and ensuring that pharmacists are equipped to manage complex medication regimens. Credentialing and privileging also facilitate a framework for ongoing professional development, requiring pharmacists to participate in continuing education and regular competency assessments. This ongoing assessment process is crucial in adapting to new drugs, technologies, and clinical practices, ensuring that pharmacists remain current in their knowledge and skills. Regular review of credentials and privileges also allows for the adjustment of a pharmacist's scope of practice as they gain experience and demonstrate increased competency in new areas.

In addition to protecting patient safety, credentialing and privileging are essential for maintaining the integrity and trust in the pharmacy profession. They establish a standardized approach to verifying qualifications and determining practice roles, thereby enhancing the mobility of pharmacists between institutions and practice settings. With a unified credentialing system, pharmacists can more easily transition from one healthcare setting to another, carrying their validated credentials with them, which can be crucial for responding to workforce shortages or advancing to new roles within the profession (6). The processes also support interdisciplinary care by enabling pharmacists to engage in collaborative practice agreements with other healthcare providers, thus promoting team-based care and improving patient outcomes.

Overall, the purpose of credentialing and privileging is to create a robust framework for ensuring that pharmacists are competent, accountable, and capable of providing safe and effective care. These processes not only protect patients from harm but also support the evolving role of pharmacists in healthcare delivery. By setting clear standards and enabling institutions to tailor roles to specific needs, credentialing and privileging help pharmacists to meet the demands of contemporary pharmacy practice, thus advancing the profession and ensuring its relevance in modern healthcare systems.

## 5. Principles that guide pharmacists' post-licensure credentialing

The guiding principles for postlicensure credentialing of pharmacists are essential for ensuring that pharmacists continue to provide safe, effective, and high-quality care throughout their careers. These principles provide a structured framework for assessing and validating the ongoing competence of pharmacists as they assume new roles, responsibilities, and practice settings. The aim is to support the evolving scope of pharmacy practice, maintain public safety, and enhance patient outcomes. Below are the key principles that underpin postlicensure credentialing for pharmacists:

**Standardization and Consistency:** A primary guiding principle in postlicensure credentialing is the need for standardized and consistent processes across different practice settings. This ensures that all pharmacists are held to the same standards of competence and are qualified to perform their roles safely. Standardization helps in reducing variability between institutions, thus allowing pharmacists to transition between different practice environments without additional credentialing hurdles(7). Standardized processes also facilitate the development of a portable record of competencies, making it easier for pharmacists to work across states or regions. By aligning credentialing processes with established best practices and guidelines, institutions can ensure that pharmacists possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and experience to deliver care safely and effectively.

**Ongoing Competency Assessment:** Continuous assessment of a pharmacist's competencies is crucial for maintaining professional excellence and adapting to the evolving needs of healthcare. The guiding principles advocate for regular competency evaluations that encompass both knowledge and practical skills. These assessments

**Volume 1, Issue 2 | October-2024**
**ISSN (online): 3065-9639; ISSN(Print): 3065-9620**

should be conducted through a combination of self-assessment, peer review, direct observation, and participation in simulated exercises. Regular assessments should also include feedback from other healthcare providers and patients, helping pharmacists identify areas for improvement and maintain proficiency in their practice. The goal is to ensure that pharmacists not only keep up with current clinical guidelines but also master new therapeutic areas as they expand their roles, such as in primary care, geriatrics, or specialized clinical settings.

**Requirement for Continuing Education:** Postlicensure credentialing should mandate participation in ongoing education and professional development. Pharmacists must engage in regular continuing education (CE) to stay current with emerging drugs, technologies, and clinical practices. The guiding principles recommend that CE be closely tied to the pharmacist's specific practice area and include a variety of learning formats such as workshops, webinars, seminars, and online courses. The inclusion of interactive learning opportunities, such as case studies and problem-solving exercises, can enhance the learning experience and application of new knowledge in practice. Continuing education credits should be periodically reviewed to ensure relevance and appropriateness, supporting pharmacists' ability to meet evolving standards of care.

**Tailoring Privileging Based on Competencies:** Privileging should be based on demonstrated competencies rather than solely academic qualifications. Pharmacists should undergo a structured privileging process to gain authorization for specific tasks, roles, and responsibilities within their practice setting. This involves identifying core competencies required for particular roles, such as medication therapy management, immunization administration, or involvement in collaborative practice agreements. Through privileging, pharmacists can be allowed to perform advanced duties, such as managing complex drug regimens or conducting comprehensive medication reviews. The privileging process should be flexible, allowing for adjustments based on ongoing assessment of competencies, thus enabling pharmacists to expand their practice as they gain experience and proficiency.

**Promotion of Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Guiding principles for postlicensure credentialing also stress the importance of fostering interdisciplinary collaboration. Pharmacists should be credentialed and privileged in ways that allow them to participate fully in multidisciplinary care teams, collaborate with other healthcare providers, and contribute to patient-centered care(8). This may involve participation in formal collaborative practice agreements, where pharmacists work directly with physicians and other healthcare providers to manage patient care. The credentialing process should reflect the pharmacist's ability to work effectively as part of a team, demonstrating competencies in communication, collaboration, and shared decision-making.

**Adapting to Changes in Practice and Healthcare Delivery Models:** The guiding principles for postlicensure credentialing also need to be flexible and adaptable to the changing landscape of healthcare. As the roles of pharmacists expand, there is a need to adjust credentialing criteria to include new responsibilities such as managing chronic diseases, overseeing transitions of care, and participating in public health initiatives. The principles advocate for a dynamic approach that allows for the continuous review and update of credentialing processes, reflecting new clinical evidence, technological advancements, and changes in healthcare policy. This adaptability ensures that pharmacists remain equipped to provide high-quality care in a rapidly evolving healthcare environment.

By adhering to these guiding principles, the postlicensure credentialing system for pharmacists can effectively support their professional development, ensure patient safety, and enhance the quality of care provided in various healthcare settings. The goal is to create a robust system that not only recognizes the qualifications of pharmacists but also fosters a commitment to lifelong learning and continuous improvement in practice. This comprehensive approach will help pharmacists meet the demands of contemporary healthcare, advancing their role as essential members of the healthcare team.

**How privileges are bestowed and maintained for persons**

Individuals are granted and retain privileges within the pharmacy profession through a structured process known as credentialing and privileging. This process ensures that pharmacists are competent to perform specific tasks and roles within a healthcare setting. It is designed to safeguard patient safety and the quality of care provided by pharmacists. Here's how individuals are typically granted and retain privileges:

**Initial Credentialing:** The process begins with the initial credentialing of pharmacists, which involves verifying their qualifications. This typically includes a review of educational background, such as the completion of an accredited pharmacy degree program, passage of the national licensure examination (e.g., North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination - NAPLEX in the United States), and any additional certifications relevant to the

practice area. Additionally, credentialing involves checking the pharmacist's professional history, including previous employment, practice settings, and disciplinary actions. Institutions may also require documentation of relevant continuing education and clinical experience. Through this process, healthcare organizations verify that the pharmacist meets the minimum standards for safe and effective practice.

**Competency Assessment:** After credentialing, pharmacists must undergo a formal competency assessment to be granted privileges. This assessment typically involves a review of the pharmacist's practical skills, knowledge, and clinical judgment through direct observation, simulation exercises, and case-based evaluations. Competency assessments may be conducted by peers, supervisors, or through structured feedback from other healthcare professionals. The assessment also includes the pharmacist's ability to make therapeutic decisions, communicate effectively with patients and other healthcare providers, and manage complex drug regimens. Based on the results of these assessments, healthcare institutions decide which privileges to grant, tailored to the pharmacist's scope of practice and expertise.

**Privileging Process:** The privileging process involves granting specific roles, responsibilities, and tasks based on demonstrated competencies. Privileges are determined according to the pharmacist's scope of practice, which may include tasks such as managing chronic disease states, initiating and adjusting therapy, providing immunizations, and participating in medication reconciliation processes. To retain these privileges, pharmacists must maintain proficiency in their area of practice. This is achieved through periodic re-assessment of competencies, often every one to three years, depending on the healthcare institution's policy. Re-assessment involves reassessment of skills, knowledge, and adherence to clinical guidelines, with a focus on the pharmacist's ability to safely manage patient care and contribute to positive health outcomes.

**Documentation and Communication:** Granting and retaining privileges also involve thorough documentation and communication processes. Pharmacists must maintain accurate records of their credentials, including their education, training, certifications, and past clinical experiences. These records are used by healthcare institutions to track continuing education, competency assessments, and professional development. It is important for these records to be up-to-date to demonstrate ongoing competency and to support any adjustments to the pharmacist's practice privileges. Communication between pharmacists, healthcare institutions, and licensing bodies is critical to ensure that any changes in a pharmacist's credentials, practice scope, or privileges are promptly documented and communicated to relevant stakeholders.

**Ongoing Professional Development:** The retention of privileges requires pharmacists to engage in ongoing professional development and continuing education. Healthcare institutions often require pharmacists to complete a specified number of continuing education credits annually or biennially, tailored to their practice area. These requirements are typically linked to professional competencies and may include courses, workshops, and clinical simulations. Pharmacists must also participate in regular competency assessments, which may involve peer reviews, direct observation, and written or oral exams. By engaging in continuous learning and maintaining proficiency in clinical skills, pharmacists demonstrate their capacity to retain and expand their privileges within their practice settings.

Through these structured processes, pharmacists are granted and retain privileges based on their demonstrated competence and ability to provide safe, effective care. The system emphasizes the importance of ongoing evaluation and professional development to adapt to new clinical guidelines, technologies, and changes in healthcare delivery. This framework ensures that pharmacists are not only qualified at the time of hire but also throughout their careers, providing a robust mechanism for maintaining high standards of practice and safeguarding patient safety.

## 6. Creating processes for pharmacy accreditation and privileges

Designing effective pharmacy credentialing and privileging processes is crucial for ensuring that pharmacists are qualified, competent, and capable of delivering safe and effective care. These processes need to be comprehensive, standardized, and adaptable to accommodate the diverse roles and responsibilities pharmacists may undertake within various healthcare settings. Below are key considerations and steps for designing robust credentialing and privileging processes in pharmacy:

**Establishing Clear Standards and Criteria:** The first step in designing a pharmacy credentialing and privileging process is to establish clear standards and criteria for credentialing. These standards should be based on the competencies required for the specific roles and responsibilities that pharmacists may be expected to undertake. This

**Volume 1, Issue 2 | October-2024**
**ISSN (online): 3065-9639; ISSN(Print): 3065-9620**

includes verifying educational qualifications, licensure, and certifications from recognized accrediting bodies. Additionally, there should be criteria for experience, such as the number of clinical hours, specific practice areas, and previous roles held. By setting these clear benchmarks, healthcare organizations can ensure that pharmacists meet the minimum requirements for practice, thus protecting patient safety and enhancing the quality of care. Standards should also be periodically reviewed and updated to reflect changes in the pharmacy profession and advancements in medical knowledge and practice.

**Incorporating Competency-Based Assessment:** An effective credentialing and privileging process must incorporate competency-based assessments. This involves evaluating pharmacists not only on their academic credentials but also on their practical skills, clinical judgment, and the ability to apply knowledge in real-world scenarios. The assessment process should be comprehensive and multifaceted, including direct observation, written and oral exams, case-based scenarios, and simulation exercises. Competency assessments should cover areas such as medication therapy management, patient counseling, clinical decision-making, and the pharmacist's ability to collaborate with other healthcare providers. These assessments are critical for determining which privileges should be granted to pharmacists, enabling healthcare institutions to match pharmacists' capabilities with the specific needs of their patient population.

**Development of Privileging Frameworks:** The privileging framework should be developed based on the competencies assessed and the specific roles pharmacists will perform. Privileges should be clearly defined, specifying what each pharmacist is authorized to do within the healthcare setting. This could include prescribing medications, administering immunizations, participating in patient care rounds, managing chronic disease states, and conducting health screenings. The framework should be flexible enough to accommodate different practice settings and evolving roles, such as those emerging in ambulatory care, telepharmacy, or specialized clinical areas like oncology or geriatric care. Each privilege should be linked to a specific competency assessment, ensuring that pharmacists are not granted privileges they cannot safely perform. Periodic review and re-assessment of these privileges are essential to maintain the accuracy and relevance of the pharmacist's practice scope.

**Implementation of a Continuous Monitoring System**: Continuous monitoring is a critical aspect of designing pharmacy credentialing and privileging processes. This involves regular evaluations of pharmacists' practice, often through peer review, feedback from other healthcare providers, and direct observation. The system should include mechanisms for pharmacists to update their credentials, report professional development activities, and demonstrate adherence to clinical guidelines and best practices. Regular reassessments should be scheduled at least annually or biennially to ensure that pharmacists maintain the necessary competencies for their roles. The monitoring system should also be integrated with broader healthcare systems, allowing for real-time updates and adjustments to a pharmacist's privileges based on their clinical performance and ongoing professional development.

**Integration of Technology and Data Management:** The design of pharmacy credentialing and privileging processes should incorporate the use of technology and data management to streamline the process and ensure accuracy. Electronic health records (EHRs), specialized credentialing software, and centralized databases can be used to track pharmacists' qualifications, competencies, and privileges. These technologies allow for seamless updates and communication between healthcare organizations, licensing boards, and pharmacists. They can also facilitate the verification of continuing education credits and certifications, making it easier for pharmacists to meet credentialing requirements across different settings. Technology enables real-time monitoring of pharmacists' practice and provides analytics to identify trends, gaps, and areas for improvement in the credentialing and privileging process.

**Collaboration and Communication Across Healthcare Settings:** Designing effective credentialing and privileging processes requires collaboration and communication across various healthcare settings, including hospitals, clinics, community pharmacies, and specialty care facilities. Healthcare organizations should work together to establish uniform standards and shared criteria for credentialing and privileging pharmacists. This collaboration can help create a consistent credentialing process across different regions, making it easier for pharmacists to move between practice settings and maintain their privileges. Regular communication between pharmacists, healthcare organizations, and licensing boards ensures that changes in policies, regulations, and clinical practices are promptly reflected in the credentialing and privileging process. It also fosters a supportive environment where pharmacists can discuss challenges, share best practices, and seek guidance from peers and experts.

By designing comprehensive and adaptable credentialing and privileging processes, healthcare organizations can ensure that pharmacists are qualified to meet the demands of their roles and provide safe, high-quality patient care. These processes not only protect patient safety but also support the professional development of pharmacists, allowing them to expand their roles and responsibilities in response to the evolving healthcare landscape.

## 7. Conclusion and Future work

The conclusion and future work in the design and implementation of credentialing and privileging processes for pharmacists provide an opportunity to reflect on the current state of these systems and identify areas for improvement and development. The conclusion underscores the importance of maintaining rigorous standards and adaptability to meet the evolving needs of healthcare and the profession itself. Future work should focus on enhancing these processes to accommodate new roles and responsibilities for pharmacists, ensuring continued patient safety, and fostering professional growth within the pharmacy workforce.

In conclusion, the credentialing and privileging of pharmacists play a vital role in maintaining high standards of care and ensuring patient safety. The current processes are critical for verifying the qualifications, competencies, and professional development of pharmacists, allowing them to practice safely and effectively across various healthcare settings. However, there is always room for improvement. As the healthcare landscape continues to evolve, so too must the systems that govern pharmacy practice. The introduction of new medications, technologies, and clinical roles for pharmacists necessitates a review and adaptation of current credentialing and privileging processes. This includes the need for more flexible frameworks that can accommodate emerging areas such as telepharmacy, specialty pharmacy, and integrated care models. The future of credentialing in pharmacy should focus on a more patient-centered approach, ensuring that the privileging process aligns with the specific needs of patient populations and the evolving scope of practice for pharmacists.

Future work should be directed towards enhancing the adaptability and responsiveness of credentialing and privileging processes. This involves integrating advanced technologies such as electronic health records and credentialing databases to facilitate real-time updates and verification of pharmacists' qualifications and competencies. The use of these technologies can streamline the credentialing process, reduce administrative burdens, and improve communication between pharmacists, healthcare organizations, and licensing boards. Additionally, there should be a stronger emphasis on continuing education and professional development, with more robust mechanisms for pharmacists to demonstrate competency through regular assessments and reaccreditation. This approach will not only help in retaining privileges but also encourage lifelong learning and skill enhancement among pharmacists.

Moreover, the future work should address the standardization of credentialing processes across different healthcare settings and jurisdictions. This is particularly important for pharmacists who work in multiple settings or move between regions. Standardized processes can facilitate smoother transitions for pharmacists and ensure that their qualifications and competencies are recognized universally. Collaboration among professional organizations, healthcare institutions, and regulatory bodies is crucial in developing and implementing these standardized processes. Such collaboration will help in creating a unified framework that supports the diverse roles of pharmacists, from community to hospital practice, and addresses the challenges of credentialing in an increasingly global healthcare environment.

Furthermore, there is a need to continuously review and revise the credentialing and privileging processes to reflect changes in healthcare delivery models and the integration of pharmacists into multidisciplinary teams. This includes evaluating the effectiveness of current competency assessments and privileging frameworks in preparing pharmacists for new roles, such as those in clinical decision-making, patient care management, and public health initiatives. The development of role-specific privileging frameworks can ensure that pharmacists are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to take on these responsibilities confidently and competently.

In conclusion, the future of pharmacy credentialing and privileging requires a forward-looking approach that anticipates the changing landscape of healthcare and prepares pharmacists for new challenges and opportunities. This involves continuous improvement in the standards, processes, and technologies used to verify qualifications and grant privileges. By focusing on adaptability, integration of new technologies, and collaboration across settings and jurisdictions, the credentialing and privileging system for pharmacists can support the delivery of safe, effective, and

high-quality care. This approach not only safeguards patient safety but also positions pharmacists as integral members of the healthcare team, capable of meeting the demands of modern healthcare practice.

**Acknowledgement:** Nil

## Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare

## References

1. Adams AJ. Credentialing and privileging in pharmacy: A framework for advanced practice. American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy. 2019;76(2):118-126.
2. American Pharmacists Association. Credentialing and privileging in pharmacy practice: A resource guide. Journal of the American Pharmacists Association. 2020;60(4):e34-e42.
3. Bradshaw SJ, Doucette WR. Credentialing and privileging of pharmacists: A necessity for advancing clinical practice. Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy. 2018;14(1):98-104.
4. Carter BL, Ardery G, Dawson JD. The role of credentialing in collaborative drug therapy management. Journal of Clinical Pharmacy and Therapeutics. 2017;42(6):707-713.
5. Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy. Credentialing and privileging for pharmacists in advanced practice roles. Journal of Pharmacy Practice. 2019;32(5):518-527.
6. Currie JD, Mullen A, Lamb K. Credentialing and privileging: Supporting advanced pharmacist roles. The Consultant Pharmacist. 2020;35(3):149-157.
7. Desselle SP, Holmes ER. Credentialing and privileging in community pharmacy practice. International Journal of Pharmacy Practice. 2018;26(4):267-275.
8. Giberson S, Yoder S, Lee MP. Credentialing of pharmacists in the Department of Veterans Affairs: Lessons learned. American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy. 2017;74(8):586-592.