

## Profile: *Justine Davidson*

**Pharmacy Assistant—  
Nightingale Pharmacy, South Lakes**

### **WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR JOB?**

Pharmacy Assistants are always with people and in a position where they can contribute to making a difference in their lives. Every person's health is their main asset in life, so if I can in any small way help to educate my customers on how to improve or maintain good health, I think that this is extremely rewarding.

Working in a team environment is important, the communication skills that I have learnt has enabled me to do this. This understanding has also helped me within my personal relationships.

Training is essential in my job because a Pharmacy is constantly growing and diversifying into broader based services.

### **CAREER HIGHLIGHT:**

Attaining my Certificate II in Community Pharmacy because it gave me the basic knowledge to be able to do my job well and to advise customers on health needs and assisting them in managing their health program.

The information that I have learned has encouraged me to further my career-path and grow within the Pharmacy Industry.

### **MOST USEFUL SKILL ACQUIRED:**

Working in a pharmacy, I have acquired many skills which has helped me work more efficiently and have a greater ability to understand the needs of people and to provide quality advice and service.

I have learnt skills that lets me communicate with, and relate to people. These same skills have been very effective in my personal relationship with friends and people from all walks of life.

### **STUDY/TRAINING:**

Whilst attending school I commenced a School Based Certificate in Pharmacy, this assisted me in finding a full-time position. I completed my Certificate II in Community Pharmacy and I am currently doing my Certificate III which will be completed very soon.

Pharmacy is constantly changing, which means that increased services need to be delivered. Health Supplement Programs and Management have been introduced and I plan to further my career by specialising in this area with the possibility to further progress . . . . .

*into Natural Therapy Medicine .*

### **CHECKING ON COURSES**

Some courses are clearly promoted as being based on a training package, but others are not. To find out whether a course is based on a training package, you can contact the training provider and ask.

Obtain any written course information you can from the training provider. You could contact them to request an information pack, and/or check their website.

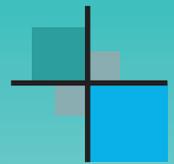
- *Check this information to see if it makes it clear that the course will lead to a **Nationally Recognised Qualification or Statement of Attainment.***
- *Make sure that the organisation is a registered training organisation for the relevant qualifications or units of competency.*

To find more information, visit: [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au)



## Choose a Career in

# Community Pharmacy



*advise, assist &  
make a difference*

*.... consider*

## **Community Pharmacy**

### *Why consider . . . . . Community Pharmacy ?*

In most cases the front-line of any Pharmacy is usually a Pharmacy Assistant. As the welcoming face for a pharmacy, they are a vital cog within the Pharmacy Healthcare Team.

A job in Pharmacy will see you dealing with the community in a vast range of professional health, personal care and beauty issues.

Pharmacies provide services ranging from accepting and filling prescriptions through to infant care, wound and skin care, cough and cold care and beauty advice.

In recent years, the role of the Community Pharmacy has expanded in the services that they offer. Today a Pharmacy is a complex health and well-being advisory centre and the Pharmacy Assistant has a primary position in offering correct information to customers.

Some career choices for you in Community Pharmacy could be:

## PHARMACY ASSISTANT

Community Pharmacy Assistants work in pharmacies and provide customers with medicines, pharmacy products and advice and health care information. They act as a filter for information between the customer and the Pharmacist where the customer requires further advice.

*Pharmacy Assistants may perform the following tasks:*

- ◆ Develop detailed knowledge of general and non-therapeutic products and services offered by the Pharmacy and advising customers on these products.
- ◆ Advise customers on the selection and use of their medicines and pharmacy products, under the close supervision of the Pharmacist.
- ◆ Refer the sale of Pharmacist Only Medicines, Prescription Only Medicines and customers with health conditions to the Pharmacist for further advice.
- ◆ Refer prescriptions to the Pharmacist and advise customers of when the prescription will be ready.
- ◆ Advise customers on medicines and pharmacy products such as to assist them to make a purchase.
- ◆ Operate cash registers or point of sale terminals to accept payments.
- ◆ Price stock, re-order and replenish stock and participate in stock takes.
- ◆ Maintain merchandise displays and the general neatness and appearance of the Pharmacy

## DISPENSARY ASSISTANT

Dispensary Assistants help Pharmacists prepare and supply prescription medication, maintain customer records and serve customers in the Pharmacy. Dispensary Assistants need a general knowledge about medicines and their Regulations and an understanding of the human body. Dispensary Assistants work directly with the public and need to develop good interpersonal skills as they often attend sick people who require efficient and sensitive service.

*Dispensary Assistants may perform the following tasks:*

- ◆ Receive and prepare prescriptions including counting tablets, mixing, preparing and labeling medicines for Pharmacist approval
- ◆ Issue complete prescriptions
- ◆ Maintain prescription and customer records
- ◆ Acting as a filter for information and referring customers to the Pharmacist where the customer requires further advice on medications, treatments or medical conditions, for both personal and phone enquiries
- ◆ Operate cash registers or point of sale terminals to accept payments
- ◆ Operate computing equipment to input and process scripts
- ◆ Perform customer service and sales duties within the pharmacy
- ◆ Participate in stock control, including checking incoming stock, pricing, and stock-takes.

## RETAIL PHARMACY MANAGER

Pharmacy Supervisors have responsibility for the co-ordination of a team of pharmacy assistants under the direction of the Pharmacist.

The work of Pharmacy Supervisors includes maintaining store safety and security, co-ordinating interaction with customers, managing sales and service delivery, leading and managing staff and managing merchandise and store presentation.

They often need to have extensive experience in pharmacy and/or dispensary work, as well as having good retail supervision skills. They provide customer service through the support and motivation of a strong team. Most Retail Pharmacy Managers are employed in larger pharmacies.

*Retail Pharmacy Managers may perform the following tasks:*

- ◆ Front of pharmacy management.
- ◆ Supervise the recruitment, training, rostering and work of staff.
- ◆ Supervise all activities of staff to make sure the business is performing well in all areas of sales, service, security, presentation, merchandising, stock control and profit.
- ◆ Maintain a high level of customer service which also includes resolving complaints.
- ◆ Implement and oversee security procedures for stock and cash.
- ◆ Oversee the presentation of the store and stock to ensure it is as appealing as possible.

## What training do you need?

While it is not essential to have formal qualifications in order to work within the Industry, formal training can help build your skills and your career options. Under the Quality Care Pharmacy Program, Pharmacy and Dispensary Assistants are required to complete an accredited unit "Support the Sale of Pharmacy and Pharmacist only Medicines".

**There are a number of nationally recognised qualifications available within the industry in WA.**

### Certificate II in Community Pharmacy (Pharmacy Assistant)

Is designed as the first step qualification within the Industry. The skills involved include interacting with customers, performing stock control, merchandising products, accepting and returning prescription medication under the supervision of the Pharmacist, and demonstrating an understanding of medicines, products and services.

### Certificate III in Community Pharmacy (Pharmacy and Dispensary Assistant)

Is designed for more experienced employees whose work involves a greater degree of responsibility. The role could also include assisting in dispensing, pharmacy administration, front of pharmacy co-ordination, merchandising and sales co-ordination.

There are specialist product knowledge, dispensary or administration skills development options available at this level.

### Certificate IV in Community Pharmacy (Supervisor)

Is designed for more experienced employees in management or supervisory roles. Roles would include front of pharmacy management, specialist training and/or assessor role, quality and continuous improvement management, people management and stock and merchandise management.