



# HEALTH-SYSTEM PHARMACY ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP RESIDENCY CANDIDATE GUIDE

*Developed by the ASHP Pharmacy Administration and  
Leadership Residents' Collaborative*

# Health-System Pharmacy Administration and Leadership Residency Candidate Guide

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## HSPAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES & HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### What is a Health-System Pharmacy Administration and Leadership (HSPAL) Pharmacy Residency?

Health-System Pharmacy Administration and Leadership (also called “HSPAL”) Residencies develop an individual’s competence in the delivery of patient-centered care and pharmacy operational services to prepare future leaders who can assume leadership and managerial responsibilities. HSPAL residencies lay the foundation for continued growth in management and leadership skills.

Visit the [ASHP Residency Information Webpage](#) for more details on the HSPAL Competency Areas, Goals, and Objectives.

### The Value of HSPAL Residencies

ASHP and its members believe that all pharmacists have a professional obligation to serve as leaders in the safe and effective use of medications and encourages pharmacy practitioners, administrators, faculty members, preceptors, and students to advance patient care and strengthen the pharmacy profession by embracing the responsibility to exert leadership in their practices ([ASHP Statement on Leadership as a Professional Obligation](#)).

A [2004 survey](#) found that, at the time, only 30% of pharmacists and 62% of pharmacy students were interested in pursuing a leadership position within pharmacy. Additionally, the profession would need 4,000-5,000 pharmacy managers and directors over the next 5-10 years. These findings brought awareness to the pharmacy leadership crisis. The call to action by author, Sara White, was to enhance current leadership training programs for current and future pharmacy leaders.

*“A lack of leadership will mean that health-system pharmacy will no longer be in a position to enhance patient safety, to optimize medication therapies across the continuum of care, to make a real difference in the lives of the patients that we serve.”*

**– Mick Hunt (2000 ASHP Presidential Address)**

*“For me my Leadership residency allowed me to experience the actual difference I could make through the projects I completed and enhanced my self-confidence.”*

**– Sara White**

## **What are the goals of HSPAL Residencies?**

To produce leaders equipped to manage constant change as the pharmacy profession evolves and to direct the future of the profession. Hands-on training and experience in a wide variety of clinical and administrative areas will equip graduates with the necessary skills to improve delivery of pharmacy services to patients and expand the role of pharmacists within healthcare.

### **Key Residency Competencies Include:**

- Leadership Development
- Quality, Safety, and Process Improvement
- Human Resource Management
- Informatics
- Clinical and Operational Management
- Finance and Budgeting
- Project Management

### **Why Consider an HSPAL Residency Program:**

- Opportunity to influence patient care on a large scale
- Ability to lead important initiatives to advance the pharmacist scope of practice
- Ability to influence the direction, funding, and implementation of clinical programs
- Seek challenging and rewarding experiences that can lead to the growth and development of others
- Make a difference in the lives of patients

*"The impact of pharmacy leaders can be generational - when we think about the influence of one leader on the mentorship and development of a careers worth of pharmacists - it is immense." – David Zilz*

### **Potential Career Opportunities Post-Residency:**

#### **Traditional**

- Clinical Manager
- Operations Manager
- Medication Safety
- Pharmacy Informatics
- Health System Leadership (non-pharmacy)

#### **Non-Traditional**

- Consultants
- Medical Science Liaison (MSL)
- Working for a Start-Up

Also, check out this ASHP podcast: [Leadership in Pharmacy: Traditional and Non-Traditional Career Paths](#)

## HSPAL PROGRAM LOGISTICS

### Types of HSPAL Residency Programs:

#### PGY1/PGY2 Combined Programs

- The combined two-year HSPAL residency program is a great option for candidates who have a strong desire to pursue a future in pharmacy leadership and administration. These programs typically consist of a clinical-focused PGY1 year and an administrative-focused PGY2 year. Many programs also offer a master's degree component.

#### PGY2 HSPAL Programs

- Stand-alone PGY2 HSPAL programs are flexible and great for pharmacy residents who developed an interest in pharmacy administration during their PGY1 year. These programs are heavily focused in pharmacy administration, and less commonly contain a master's degree component.

### Types of Master's Degree Options

#### MS in Pharmacy

- Several HSPAL programs offer a master's degree in pharmacy. Coursework is often tailored to the needs of HSPAL resident in a wide array of content such as operations, finance, and pharmacy leadership.

#### Additional Degree Options

- While some HSPAL programs offer pharmacy specific degrees such as a Master of Pharmacy Leadership and Administration, non-pharmacy specific degrees such as Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA), Master of Public Health (MPH), or Master of Business Administration (MBA) are also available. Coursework for these programs follows a standard set of requirements for degree conferment.

## APPLYING FOR HSPAL RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

### How do I know if an HSPAL program is a good fit for me?

- Desire to positively impact the profession of pharmacy
- Serve fellow pharmacists in a formal leadership capacity
- Solve problems and find creative solutions
- Be a role model and demonstrate strong leadership traits

## **How do I stand out when applying for HSPAL programs?**

- Highlight your whole self by showing programs not only your GPA and leadership roles but also your work experience, community service, and research experience
- Spend time crafting a Letter of Intent that's personalized to the program and discusses your short and long-term career goals
- Obtain [Letters of Recommendation](#) from preceptors or mentors that know the real you!
- Be confident in your strengths and weaknesses, and share your motivation to grow and learn with programs

## **ASHP Tools for Success**

- [Curriculum vitae \(CV\) development tools](#), including the [ASHP CV Review Program](#).
- [ASHP Pharmacy Student Forum](#), which has multiple advisory groups that advocate for the needs of students. They also offer online tools such as the [Student Residency Guide](#) and [Match Day Resources](#).
- Pursue an administrative rotation, or the ASHP [Association Management APPE Rotation](#), to gain a better understanding of issues facing pharmacy and develop your leadership and communication skills.
- Participate in Pharmacy Placement Service (PPS) at [ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting](#) to network with prospective HSPAL programs.
- ASHP Podcast: [Administration and Leadership Residency Application and Interview Preparation](#)

## **Application Timeline**

### **Application Tips from HSPAL Residents:**

- This process will come and go quickly, it is important to take it one step at a time. Following each interaction with a program, take time for self-reflection or journaling. Try to remember how each program made you feel and consider this when choosing the best fit for you.
- You will meet a lot of people throughout this process. Try to develop a network with pharmacy leaders, residents, and student pharmacists, as this will not be the last time your paths cross during your career.
- When evaluating programs, it may be handy to make a tool comparing the qualities of each program that you value, such as teaching certificate options, elective rotations, and research opportunities ([Residency Search Spreadsheet example](#)). A lot of this information can be found via the [ASHP Residency Directory](#) or the program's website.

## ADVICE FROM HSPAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM LEADERSHIP

*“Characteristics I’m looking for in my HSPAL resident candidates include excellent interpersonal skills, drive to be a life-long learner, and ability to adapt to meet the needs of the team.”*

- **Binita Patel, PharmD, MS, VP Pharmacy Services Memorial Hermann Health System**

*“Completion of a HSPAL program will be critically important in shaping our future pharmacy leaders. In terms of what I most look for in potential HSPAL residents is a continued track record of success, willingness to respond well to feedback, and a high work ethic.”*

- **Todd Karpinski, PharmD, MS, FASHP, Chief Pharmacy Officer at WVU Medicine**

*“HSPAL programs provide structured and formidable experiences that prepare a resident to navigate complex health systems, manage multifaceted projects, facilitate varying degrees of conflict, and eloquently communicate a common vision. The two-year program is strenuous and humbling, but also very rewarding, as well as packed with experiences and connections that last a lifetime. The HSPAL program was the pinnacle of my educational career and taught me the value of being a life-long learner, mentor and how to make healthcare a better place.”*

- **Ryan K. Roux, PharmD, MS, FTSP, FASHP, VP Pharmacy at MD Anderson Cancer Center**

*“The key to HSPAL residencies is the opportunity for high level and well-rounded training and to develop strategies to directly innovate practice and overcome the many challenges facing healthcare. HSPAL programs provide residents the tools and exposure to become strong managers and future leaders.”*

- **Christopher R. Fortier, PharmD, FASHP, Chief Pharmacy Officer at Massachusetts General Hospital**

## ADVICE FROM RECENT HSPAL GRADUATES

*“An HSPAL Residency Program will allow you to be exposed to many areas of pharmacy practice including clinical practice management, ambulatory care, informatics, academia, operations, specialty, and so much more. It also will allow you to acquire an additional degree while using facets of the degree to amplify your skills and strengths. Through several projects and leadership opportunities within the program, you will be more equipped than you realized when you go for your first formal leadership role within a hospital or health system.”*

- **Joshua “Josh” Blackwell, PharmD, MS, Clinical Pharmacy Manager, Ambulatory Services & HSPAL Residency Program Coordinator at UT Southwestern Medical Center**

*“HSPAL residency training provides foundational knowledge, skills, and experiences that can be used to pursue so many different career paths and directions, both inside pharmacy and beyond! I knew that completing HSPAL residency training would open up the most opportunities for me in the future, whether staying in clinical practice or pursuing positions in healthcare administration, association management, industry, or even academia. HSPAL residency training was rigorous, challenging, and truly life changing. No matter what comes my way now, I know I have the skills, confidence, and a network of mentors and colleagues alongside me to face any challenge”*

- **Brianne K. Bakken, PharmD, MHA, Pharmacy Manager at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin and Assistant Professor at Medical College of Wisconsin School of Pharmacy**

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