

What It Is Like to Work as a Managed-Care Pharmacist

August 25, 2017
The Nontraditional Pharmacist

Lenore Tominna is a PharmD who is a marketing liaison pharmacist at Blue Cross Blue Shield in Michigan. This interview highlights her client-facing role at a managed-care pharmacy. Here is a link to the [interview recording](#).

Matt: Matt Paterini here with The Nontraditional Pharmacist. We're here with Dr. Lenore Tominna, PharmD. Lenore has a very cool job in a managed-care position, and we are all excited to hear more about it. How about we start with you telling us a little bit about what you do and your role?

Lenore: My role is titled as a marketing liaison pharmacist at Blue Cross Blue Shield in Michigan. It is not your typical managed-care role, as it entails working directly with our client groups while educating them on their pharmacy benefits. We're looking at ways they can cut costs by implementing clinical programs. We also speak to the members (or patients) who may have individual questions at open enrollment benefit meetings. On a day-to-day basis, we're working through all the pharmacy issues that may be preventing a member from getting a prescription. We are the liaisons in dealing with our sales and marketing teams as well as our internal pharmacy department.

Matt: Now if you could, walk us through the step-by-step process of how you got to your role, including whom you talked to, when you started looking, and what exactly you did to get you to this role.

Lenore: I was not exposed to managed care throughout pharmacy school or any of these types of nontraditional roles. After graduation, I pursued a fellowship in biotech and then worked in a hospital pharmacy for a couple of years. I actually learned about the managed-care position through a former classmate of mine. And from there, I found out it was something I was interested in because it was dealing directly with clients, and I enjoyed being in that field position. And so I've been in my current role for about 5 years now.

Matt: What specific career goals does this position help you achieve?

Lenore: I think this position brought in all of my experiences and to focus in on the member, and

managed care really involves all different aspects of pharmacy. That knowledge is important in helping educate the client as well as the member. I think meeting the members makes us aware of the changes that are happening in health care, which is crucial to their well-being. That would be that is 1 very important thing that I'll take with me wherever my pharmacy career leads me.

Matt: We always like to ask, what information do you wish you would have received earlier in your pharmacy career?

Lenore: I wish I had been more involved with some of the student organizations in pharmacy school and also networked better with faculty and alumni. I believe there's a lot to be learned throughout pharmacy school besides the bookwork. Also, apply for various opportunities, even if you're discouraged because you may not have the experience. This is something I personally wish I had done more of during school.

Matt: What 3 specific action steps would you tell others that they could do within the next week to get them on a path similar to yours?

Lenore: The first step which really helped me throughout this process would be just networking, whether it's with classmates you know or a pharmacist that you've worked with in the past, or even speaking with alumni, such as myself, and learning more about these types of nontraditional roles. The second step I would say would be to get involved, whether it's as your role as a student, if you are working with a professional you know, or educating yourself on some of the online resources. For example, you can check out the Academy of Managed Care pharmacy website or your college of pharmacy's homepage for potential job postings. Lastly, work with what you have and get as many experiences out of it as you can. If you're interested in the nontraditional role, you could do a rotation or an internship within your school. Also, if you're already working as a pharmacist, you could shadow someone in the field and learn about a position that way.

Matt: Thanks for the interview! Please check out our nontraditional pharmacy network (www.thenontraditionalpharmacist.com), and make a profile today to start exploding your pharmacy network.