



Phoenix VA Health Care System PGY1 Pharmacy Residency Program

Program Contact Information:

[Phoenix VA Pharmacy Residency Website](#)

Director: Courtney Speaks, PharmD, BCPS (she/her/hers) – Courtney.Speaks@va.gov

Coordinator: Taylor Kirby, PharmD (she/her/hers) – Taylor.Kirby@va.gov

Purpose Statements:

PGY1 pharmacy residency programs build on Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) education and outcomes to contribute to the development of clinical pharmacists responsible for medication-related care of patients with a wide range of conditions, eligible for board certification, and eligible for postgraduate year two (PGY2) pharmacy residency training.

Residency DEI Statement:

The Phoenix Veterans Affairs Health Care System (PVAHCS) Pharmacy Residency programs commit to promote resident diversity. We strive to ensure that every resident knows they belong and feels they are appreciated and supported. We believe that recruiting, supporting, and promoting a diverse resident and preceptor workforce improves education and clinical decision-making. We commit to be intentionally inclusive in the culture and curriculum offered to the residents. We believe that a diverse workforce will better serve the needs of our Veteran community.

Location:

- The medical center is located in Phoenix, Arizona near the downtown metro area. Community based outpatient clinics are located in surrounding suburbs.
- America's 5th largest city offering sunshine 300 days a year
- Close to major sport/concert venues
- Accessible to outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, hunting, boating, and national parks (ex. Grand Canyon, Sunset Center)

About the Phoenix VA Health Care System:

- Capacity for 230 inpatient beds
- 9 Community Based Outpatient Clinics
- Serving more than 100,000 Veterans annually
- 75+ clinical pharmacy team members

Application Process:

- Applications submitted via PhorCAS
- CV
- Pharmacy transcript(s)
- 3 letters of recommendation
- Essay question addressing interest in residency
 - See our website for program specific requirements
- On-site interview

Requirements and Schedule:

- 8 required rotations and opportunities for 3 elective rotations
- PGY1 residents are required to staff every 3rd weekend and rotating holidays
- Residents do not staff at night or have on-call duty

PGY1 Required Rotations

- Internal medicine I and II
- Primary care (PACT) I and II
- Geriatrics
- Mental Health (Inpatient or Outpatient)
- Anticoagulation
- Administration

Benefits:

- Free parking
- 13 paid vacation days and 13 paid sick leave days
- 11 paid Federal holidays
- Subsidized health insurance plan options
- Travel support for a national conference
- Access to numerous online drug-related references

Current Resident Contact Information:

Lierra Barrett, PharmD – Lierra.Barrett@va.gov

India Bhatia, PharmD – India.Bhatia@va.gov

Alexandra (Alex) Brown – Alexandra.Brown2@va.gov

Katherina (Kat) Marchese – Katherina.Marchese@va.gov

Victoria (Tori) Sjoblom – Victoria.Sjoblom@va.gov

Taylor Tellez – Taylor.Tellez@va.gov

Frequently Asked Questions**Q: How many residents does the program have?**

A: The PGY1 pharmacy residency currently offers 6 positions.

Q: How flexible is the program if interests change throughout the year?

A: The residency program director and coordinator do their best at accommodating learning experiences, schedules, and elective rotations if interests change throughout the year. All preceptors at the Phoenix VA are focused on ensuring the residents are able to get the most out of their residency year.

Q: How many electives does each program offer and what are the types of electives offered?

A: During orientation the residents will attend an “elective pitch” where they learn about potential elective rotations. PGY1 residents can complete up to three elective rotations (four weeks per rotation). Required learning experiences may be repeated if desired or needed. Some electives include emergency department, critical care, academia, substance use disorder, infectious diseases, palliative care, women’s health, and others. Other elective learning experiences may be developed based on resident interest and preceptor availability.

Q: What is the staffing requirement?

A: PGY1 residents participate in both inpatient staffing and discharge education. The residents will staff every third weekend and rotating holidays. The residents do not staff at nights or have on-call duty.

Q: What PGY2 programs are available at Phoenix VA?

A: The Phoenix VA currently does not have any active PGY2 programs as of September 2023. We are always looking to expand residency programs and improve patient care and hope to start PGY2s in upcoming years.

Q: Is there an opportunity as a PGY1 resident to early commit to the PGY2 program?

A: The VA was recently approved by ASHP to offer nationwide early commitment to VA PGY1 residents interested in continuing training at a VA location. This is new for PGY2s starting in July 2024 so we are learning the process.

Q: How are residents evaluated?

A: Residents receive a Learning Experience Description (LED) at the beginning of each rotation that lists the goals and objectives of the rotation. The program utilizes PharmAcademic as the residency evaluation system. Residents receive frequent verbal feedback from the preceptors throughout the rotations, but formal written evaluations are completed by the resident and preceptor at the end of each learning experience. For longitudinal learning experiences, written evaluations are required quarterly. The residency program director also provides residents with an evaluation of their progress on a quarterly basis.

Q: What types of positions have former residents accepted?

A: Phoenix VA has been offering the PGY1 pharmacy residency program since the late 1980's. Currently, approximately 40 preceptors at the Phoenix VA Health Care System were former VA PGY1 or PGY2 residents. The majority of graduated residents have stayed within the VA health care system; all have procured employment post-residency.

Q: Do the residents have their own office?

Yes. Residents also receive a laptop to allow for work flexibility.

Q: Where do residents park?

A: Parking at the medical center and community based outpatient clinics is available for staff and residents.

Q: Does the residency program offer a teaching certificate?

A: A formal teaching certificate program is required as part of the Professional Development longitudinal rotation.

Q: Does the residency program have an opportunity for dual appointment?

A: Currently the facility offers an opportunity for dual appointment. This is subject to change each residency year.