

A Stepwise Approach

It may be useful to consider a two-step approach to the recognition of specialist pharmacists.

The first step is to address the barriers to formally acknowledging specialized pharmacy practice by developing a program to certify pharmacists with advanced skills and training.

The second step is to identify the obstacles to pharmacists' carrying out their responsibilities in monitoring medication therapy and exploring mechanisms to remove those obstacles. Some of these obstacles include the difficulty pharmacists have in accessing necessary medical information about their patients, in ordering laboratory tests, and in dealing with limited scopes of practice that may prohibit pharmacists from carrying out physical assessments and modifying or initiating drug therapy.