



Name: Alana Kroll

Practice: Mission Cancer + Blood

Title/Role: Director of In-Office Dispensing

**1) How did you hear about NCODA's Oncology Pharmacy Technician Association (OPTA)?**

I have been a member of NCODA since 2017. My involvement with NCODA sparked my interest in OPTA.

**2) How can OPTA or NCODA help you and your practice?**

NCODA is a wonderful organization and advocate for the community oncology field. NCODA has provided and continues to provide valuable, helpful, support and thorough resources to aid and guide my dispensary to the highest level of success and patient care.

The NCODA website is a vital tool offering essential information where my team and I can go to access and retrieve sources for education resulting in best patient outcomes. Some of the tools I use often are the Positive Quality Intervention documents and Oral Chemotherapy Education sheets.

NCODA also helps me to stay informed regarding PBM information and provides strategies to assist me with inventory control and waste management.

NCODA is a one stop destination providing my staff the resources needed to be a successful operation and to offer the best care and value for our patients.

**3) What type of pharmacy does your practice contain (i.e. Medically Integrated Pharmacy, Retail, etc.)?**

Mission Cancer + Blood is an oncology center of excellence offering a comprehensive model of care inclusive of a medically integrated dispensary care team known as the Mission Cancer + Blood IOD (In-Office Dispensary). We have 21 Physicians, 21 ARNPs and 12 Physician Assistants (total of 54

providers) who provide excellent service and care to the Des Moines area, locally and to 22 surrounding outreach clinics. The Mission Cancer + Blood IOD fills for only our patients, focusing on the overall success of a patient's care plan.

The IOD setup includes:

Director/Manager of the IOD (Myself CPhT)

4 pharmacy technicians, including myself, who carry out the daily operations which include: new order intake and processing, filling of prescription orders, patient refill/adherence calls, specialty mail order pharmacy follow-up calls and prioritizing and completing miscellaneous requests and tasks throughout the day.

1 additional pharmacy technician in charge of all Financial Assistance needs.

Advance Practice Providers (APPs) who perform drug to drug interaction checks, dose verification checks, who verify and check prescription orders and provide clinical and drug education to our patients prior to each new oral drug treatment start.

A nurse who is responsible for the 7- and 14-day follow-up calls on all new oral drug treatment starts.

#### **4) Explain your current role at your practice.**

I oversee our In-Office Dispensary and manage a team of 5 pharmacy technicians including myself. My focus and oversight in my department includes but not limited to the following: staff interviewing and hiring, staff training and evaluations, daily operations, effective workflow, staff education, billing and insurance, PBM and internal audit reports, prior authorizations, strong communication and relationships with the physician/nurse teams and advance practice providers, patient care and advocacy, inventory control and financial assistance.

#### **5) What do you enjoy most about your current position?**

I enjoy coming to work each day knowing I and my team make a difference in so many patients' lives. I observed and facilitated the growth of our In-Office Dispensary from a one pharmacy technician (me) operation filling approximately 45 prescription orders per month to a team of 5 pharmacy technicians now filling 400+ prescription orders per month. I am humbled to be a part of the success, growth, and the advocacy we provide to all our patients.

#### **6) What do your day-to-day responsibilities include?**

I am a working manager who joins my technician team and assists when needed with the day-to-day operations and tasks.

## **7) Do you assume any specialized duties/responsibilities from time-to-time?**

Besides overseeing the day-to-day operations and management of my team as mentioned earlier, I am also a part of a multi-manager team at Mission Cancer + Blood. I attend monthly meetings, provide input, and stay engaged in the entire practice.

I attend drug education programs/dinners and establish strong relationships with our local oncology pharmaceutical drug representatives.

I stay informed on PBM news and contract changes.

I interact with the Mission Cancer + Blood staff clinical pharmacist on IOD policy and procedures, PBM contracts and recredentialing.

I coordinate with our local drug repository program in the state of Iowa to help financial hardship patients.

## **8) Do you have any “best-practices” that you use at your practice that you would like to share with other OPTA members?**

I initiated the practice of a weekly team rounding with round table discussion. This is where ideas and concerns are welcomed and discussed. The goal of these sessions is to constantly improve and stay up to date on education, best practices, and individual and team success.

I also provide weekly updates via email to my staff, highlighting pertinent information affecting the dispensary along with directives from me.

I and my team have well-established lines of communication developed between our physician/nurse teams and the IOD. This relationship ensures that the patient is well taken care of from the beginning point of receiving a new prescription order to receiving the medication, whether the prescription is filled through our In-Office Dispensary or through a Specialty Mail Order Pharmacy.

## **9) Are there any areas where you / your pharmacy can improve (i.e. patient education, improved process workflow, etc.)?**

Each day holds opportunity for improvement and each task we perform has the possibility for improvement. As growth continues, adjustments can be made.

Mostly recently I improved our daily workflow by assigning specific tasks for each technician based on their start time and rotating this schedule every two weeks. This system and schedule provide each technician the ability to perform each task with proficiency and confidence.

## **10) What advice do you have for any technicians who are new to the oncology/hematology field?**

I hope YOU feel privileged and honored to be at this point in your career. Know that you have the skill, the knowledge, and the heart to make a difference in so many lives. BE PROUD of YOURSELF. It's an achievement to work in the oncology field. Stay involved, continue to learn and be active in the community.