# What is a Psychiatric Technician

Psychiatric technicians are an essential but often far too under-appreciated profession in mental health care. They can play a huge role in treating and supporting those who are dealing with mental illness. They are hard workers who aim to ensure that the patients in their mental health care facility are receiving effective and compassionate treatment.

## What is a Psychiatric Technician

A psychiatric technician is a mental healthcare worker whose job is to provide their patients care and support to those who have been admitted into a mental health facility. They work with their patients to meet their need for help with coping and healing from mental illness.

Their work is vital in caring for mental health patients and can take place in many different facilities, including:

* psychiatric hospitals
* mental health clinics
* residential treatment facilities
* outpatient settings

## The Many Responsibilities of a Psychiatric Technician

Psychiatric technicians are crucial players in helping mentally ill patients find their way to healing and coping with their mental health struggles.

* **Providing their patients with the support and care they need.** Psychiatric technicians work directly with their patients on the frontlines. They help with daily activities that many healthy individuals take advantage of being able to do themselves, including personal hygiene, chores, and more. The goal many psychiatric technicians work toward is to help patients lead a more structured and stable life, which can be essential for boosting the quality of their patient's mental health and overall wellness.
* **Thoroughly monitoring the patients and keeping quality reports for other mental health professionals**. Another role of psychiatric technicians is to closely monitor their patients' behaviors and mental state. They observe changes in the patient’s mood, behavior, and physical health, reporting these observations to psychiatrists, psychologists, or other mental health professionals working with the patient. This information can be critical for adjusting treatment plans and ensuring patients' safety.
* **Enforcing treatment plans assigned by the doctor.** Psychiatric technicians often work under the guidance of mental health professionals who implement treatment plans for patients after observing and diagnosing them. This implementation can include a wide variety of actions, like assisting with therapeutic activities, managing medication schedules, and providing emotional support.
* **Acting as the expert in handling crisis interventions.** Mental illness can cause difficult emotions and, at times, can lead to some exhibiting aggressive or self-harming behaviors. In these cases, psychiatric technicians are trained to handle the crises effectively while ensuring that the patient does not hurt themselves. They use impactful de-escalation techniques they've been trained on and ensure the safety of both patients and staff.

## Why Psychiatric Technicians Deserve to Be Celebrated

Although they may not receive as much recognition as they deserve, psychiatric technicians are a critical piece of the mental health care system. Their hands-on approach and care with patients allow for a more personalized path to treatment and recovery. Psychiatric technicians act as the bridge between patients and higher-level mental health professionals like psychiatrists and psychologists, ensuring that patients receive the attention and care they need while keeping both staff and patients safe.

### Caring for Patient Well-Being

Providing consistent care and building trusting relationships with patients allows psychiatric technicians to significantly contribute to the therapeutic process, boosting their patient's well-being and ability to find healing. They often become a source of stability and reassurance for patients who may feel isolated or overwhelmed by their mental illness. This relationship built between the technician and patient is crucial for fostering trust and encouraging individuals to actively participate in their treatment plans.

### Helping Mental Health Professionals Focus on Their Jobs

Psychiatric technicians help alleviate some of the workload from psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers. In handling routine tasks and specific assessments, psychiatric technicians allow the doctor to focus on the more complex parts of diagnosis and treatment as they provide valuable insights that aid in creating effective treatment strategies.

### Promoting Safety and Stability in Mental Health Facilities

In mental health care facilities where patients may have severe or unpredictable symptoms, psychiatric technicians play a crucial role in keeping a safe environment that aids in healing. Their training in crisis intervention and behavioral management can be vital in helping prevent incidents and managing challenging situations with a sense of calm and professionalism that creates efficiency and safety.

## The Struggles of Psychiatric Technicians

While the role of a psychiatric technician is rewarding, it does not come without challenges. Working in the mental health care field, in general, can be draining, both physically and emotionally.

Some of the many struggles psychiatric technicians face in their career include:

### Intense Emotional and Physical Demands

The nature of specific mental illnesses can, at times, lead to unpredictable and tense situations. Psychiatric technicians must be prepared to handle intense outbursts. Witnessing their patients' struggles first-hand can quickly take a toll on a professional's mental and physical well-being.

### Intense and Complex Situations

Each patient struggles with their own unique challenges, and psychiatric technicians must adapt to varying needs and conditions. They must be skilled in de-escalating crises and intervening in intense situations, often dealing with cases that require quick thinking and emotional toughness. Balancing the need to create firm boundaries alongside compassionate care requires a significant level of skill and sensitivity.

### The Risk of Burnout

Psychiatric technicians work, day in and day out, to help their patients heal and find their way to a happier, healthier life. While the job can be greatly rewarding, it can also run the risk of compassion fatigue and burnout, leaving many psychiatric technicians struggling to maintain a healthy work-life balance and maintain optimal mental health.

## Self-Care Tips for Psychiatric Technicians

If you are a psychiatric technician, caring for your mental health and overall well-being is critical to your ability to do your job well while staying healthy and happy. A few tips for taking care of yourself in such a demanding job include:

* Setting healthy boundaries at work.
* Taking care of your physical health by eating nutritious meals, moving your body daily, ensuring you are getting enough sleep at night, getting your annual check-ups done, and soaking up some sunshine daily.
* Leaning on your social support system when you need it.
* Practicing mindfulness with practices like journaling, walking, meditation, and breathwork.
* Talking to a mental health professional. This step is a critical part of staying happy and healthy.

Your job is so important to many people in your community. However, it is important to remember that your mental health is important, too. Don't let it slip through the cracks. Taking care of your mental health will allow you to maintain a high quality of life while you continue your life-changing work, day in and day out.

## If You Need Therapy, We Are Here for You

Psychiatric technicians experience a wide array of complex and stressful situations throughout their careers. These situations can lead to chronic stress, fatigue, anxiety, and other mental health struggles.

Burnout in psychiatric technicians’ careers is an extremely real problem, and when a technician's mental health struggles, so do their patients. Don't struggle in silence.

You deserve to live a happy, healthy life. It is critical to know that if your mental health has been struggling, you are not alone. We are here for you. [Contact us today](https://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php), and an experienced and knowledgeable therapist will work to help you begin your journey to feeling happier and healthier today.

***Note: At the time of this article, Michigan Psychological Care does not employ psychiatric technicians, however we do have a psychiatric nurse for medication management. This allows us to perform psychological evaluations, therapy, and medication management.***

**References**

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-psychiatric-technician-appreciation-day/#:~:text=National%20Psychiatric%20Technician%20Appreciation%20Day%2C%20or%20Psychiatric%20Technicians'%20Day%2C,first%20full%20week%20of%20August>.

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