

Coaching for chronic care

Transforming pharmacy workflow to identify patients with chronic conditions

by Brooke Kulusich, PharmD



As Ashley Duggins, PharmD, was calling patients for monthly adherence check-ins, she discovered that one patient was several months overdue on filling her diabetes medications. Upon further discussion with the patient and a review of her prescription history, Ashley learned that the patient had recently adopted two foster children, one of which was a newborn. As she acclimated to her new role as a caregiver, the patient admitted to neglecting her own health and allowing her A1C to creep upwards.

This “coaching call” is just one example of how Ashley, owner of Prevo Drug in Asheboro, N.C., and her team have transformed their pharmacy workflow to identify patients with chronic conditions who otherwise might fall through the cracks. Using Flip the Pharmacy resources as a blueprint, Ashley enrolled the patient in the pharmacy’s adherence packaging program. Within two months, the patient’s medication adherence improved drastically and her diabetes became controlled.

“Our participation in Flip the Pharmacy has enhanced communication with patients and allowed us to focus more on chronic disease state management,” Ashley says.

VALUE-BASED CARE

As a part of Flip the Pharmacy, Prevo Drug works as part of a team of community-based pharmacies to convert their business models away from point-in-time, prescription-level transactions toward patient-level, value-based care. Utilizing monthly change packages and coaching support, Flip the Pharmacy participants implement six

key transformation domains over 24 months, such as leveraging the appointment-based model and establishing working relationships with other care team members.

Monthly calls are the foundation of a successful appointment-based model at a bustling pharmacy like Prevo Drug. Regular patient check-ins allow the pharmacy team to reconcile any medication changes, address adherence barriers, and schedule a pick-up time.

More complicated patients may be referred to Prevo Wellness, the pharmacy’s extension across the street with a focus on preventive care, health education, and lifestyle changes. Patients can sign up for services including immunization screenings, diabetes education, and private health coaching for pre-diabetes, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and weight loss.

“Solid communication and open discussions with our patients have made all the difference in our practice,” Ashley says.

ENHANCING ADHERENCE

Patients who struggle with adherence are enrolled in Prevo’s adherence packaging program, where medications are organized into pouches based on time of administration. Investing in automated adherence packaging technology has enabled Prevo to scale its medication synchronization program, where medication refills are scheduled for pick up at a single appointment time. Not only has this program improved medication adherence rates, but it has also caught the attention of local physicians.



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“Physicians and local health care professionals are starting to catch on,” Ashley says. “With our adherence packaging program, they are noticing improved patient outcomes and referring patients to our pharmacy.”

PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS APPRECIATIVE

Physicians are not the only ones who appreciate Prevo’s investment in automation. “Patients love it and so do caregivers,” Ashley says. “We see so many daughters and spouses of patients who are having a hard time. This program really takes the burden off them.”

Prevo Drug uses RxSafe, a proud sponsor of four Flip the Pharmacy teams, for its pharmacy automation system. Additional funding for Flip the Pharmacy is donated by the Community Pharmacy Foundation, along with national and local team sponsors.

Ashley envisions future community pharmacies as health care triage centers with an emphasis on chronic care management. Following the Flip the Pharmacy model of enhanced communication and integration with providers, pharmacies will be better positioned to tackle more clinical aspects of care.

SCALABLE TRANSFORMATION

Flip the Pharmacy focuses on scalable pharmacy practice transformation, which requires changes to workflow, care processes and business modeling in repeatable, consistent, and achievable increments. Change packages prescribe those incremental changes in logical sequencing alongside near-real time feedback. Practice transformation teams utilize change packages in unison with the local support of practice transformation coaches. Coaches develop close relationships with participating pharmacies, engage in frequent on-site visits, and provide insights on workflow, care processes, and business modeling.

The Flip the Pharmacy program has more than 1,000 community pharmacies actively engaged in practice transformation, which are supported by over 450 pharmacy coaches from 63 local Flip the Pharmacy teams and 10 Technology Solutions Partners. To learn more, please visit www.flipthepharmacy.com and access the publicly available change packages ■

Brooke Kulusich, PharmD, is the marketing manager for CPESN® USA.