

Stress less, sync more

Atchley Drug Center is making a difference in people's lives

by Brooke Kulusich, PharmD

Any community pharmacist knows the gut-dropping feeling of checking the refill queue at opening hour. An endless list of prescriptions consumes the monitor, voicemail messages await responses, and anxious patients press their noses against the storefront windows.

In their efforts to minimize this daily morning stress, the pharmacists at Atchley Drug Center had made numerous attempts to proactively align patients' medication fills on the same appointment day. However, their medication synchroni-

zation program never could gain any momentum. The staff lacked accountability and coaching. That changed when they enrolled in Flip the Pharmacy.

"Med sync has completely eliminated those pressures for our staff and leveled out our workflow to make time for other clinical services," says pharmacist Will Giddings, owner of Atchley Drug Center, located in Greeneville, Tenn. "Plus, the response from patients has been overwhelmingly positive. When they come in, we're ready."

LEVERAGING THE APPOINTMENT-BASED MODEL

Leveraging the appointment-based model through med sync represents one of the six key practice transformation domains that constitute the Flip the Pharmacy program. Participating pharmacies work in teams to transform their practice models away from point-in-time, prescription-level transactions toward longitudinal, value-based care. Atchley's is one of more than 1,000 community-based pharmacies that have benefitted from this scalable practice transformation initiative.

Along with med sync, the team at Atchley Drug Center has implemented numerous enhanced patient care services since enrolling in Flip the Pharmacy. Atchley's newest clinical lead, Mallory Tucker, PharmD, catalyzed the expansion of its medication therapy management services and nearly doubled its adherence packaging program in just a few months. Another pharmacist, Mason Man-ship, PharmD, became a certified fitter of therapeutic shoes and built a strong rapport among patients with diabetes.

IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM TRANSFORMED

Furthermore, Atchley Drug Center has completely transformed its immunization program. The pharmacy that previously offered only occasional influenza vaccines is nearly unrecognizable after emerging as Greeneville's leader in the COVID-19 pandemic response. Atchley's partnered with a local church and other independent community pharmacies to immunize more than 600 people against COVID-19 at a community-wide vaccine clinic. Will, who admittedly used to dread "shot days," is immensely proud of his team's progress. "Flip the Pharmacy has given us confidence in our immunization abilities," he says.

“Med sync has completely eliminated those pressures for our staff and leveled out our workflow to make time for other clinical services.”

Using monthly change packages, Flip the Pharmacy coaches guide local pharmacy teams through the program's four progressions: hypertension, opioid management, immunizations, and diabetes/social determinants of health. Coaches emphasize patient care planning with documentation in various Pharmacist eCare Plan platforms.

COACHING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Will doubts his pharmacy team could have achieved its practice transformation without the constant encouragement of its Flip the Pharmacy coach, Jessica Robinson, PharmD. Her unwavering commitment, accessibility, and resourcefulness have instilled a sense of accountability and yielded massive results. For example, Atchley's admittedly struggled with using the Pharmacist eCare Plan for documentation from the beginning; however, with Jessica's persistent coaching, the pharmacy found itself in the top 25 percent of all CPESN® USA pharmacies submitting care plans.

Flip the Pharmacy coaches are funded by the Community Pharmacy



Atchley Drug Center owner Will Giddings credits the Flip the Pharmacy program for jump-starting the pharmacy's med sync efforts.

Foundation and national and local team sponsors. Atchley Drug Center is a member of Team Greater Appalachian Transformation Effort, which is funded in part by a team sponsorship donation from Corley's Pharmacy, Inc.

FUTURE PLANS

Looking ahead, Will is excited to continue engaging his pharmacy technicians in practice transformation activities such as med sync, blood pressure checks, and immunizations. The pharmacy is also exploring point-of-care testing for influenza, strep, and COVID-19.

“There are so many new opportunities for pharmacies that we've never had before,” Will says.

While independent community pharmacy ownership comes with its many stresses, Will is grounded by

his mission to positively affect the lives of the patients he serves daily.

“I recently received a note from a patient thanking me for going the extra mile after getting the out-of-pocket price for her eye drops next to nothing” Will says. “This is what I love about independent community pharmacy. Making a difference in people's lives through loving, compassionate care.”

The Flip the Pharmacy program has more than 1,000 community pharmacies actively engaged in practice transformation. These pharmacies are supported by more than 450 pharmacy coaches from 63 local Flip the Pharmacy teams and 10 technology solutions partners. Learn more at www.flipthepharmacy.com. ■

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