

Differentiating and Optimizing your Pharmacy

Stepping it up in the new pharmacy
environment

Presenter disclosure

- Presenter's name: Michael Boivin, Rph, CDE, CTE
- I have the following relationships with commercial interests:
 - Advisory board/speakers bureau – AstraZeneca
 - Funding (grants/honoraria): Merck, Takeda, Teva, Apotex, Pfizer
 - Speaker/consulting fees: Novo Nordisk, Janssen, Purdue, Lilly, Merck, Sanofi Pasteur
- Speaking fees for current program:
 - I have received a speaker's fee from Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association for this learning activity

Learning Objectives

- Discuss why we need to change the way we deliver services
- Review the key principles of successful pharmacy owners
- Explore ways to improve the view and operation of several areas of your business
- Discuss some tips and suggestions to improve your pharmacy operation

Do we really need to focus
time and effort on this?

In the Eyes of the Public we are ALL the Same

- Every independent, chain, mass-retailer provides excellent dispensary services
- Each uses great technology
- All focus on productivity and delivery of care
- Very difficult to differentiate yourself from competitors base on service
- Cost – still can be done but it is getting to the point of diminishing returns



Everything Hinges on Patient Experience

- Not about how fast you can fill a prescription
- Not about the number of prescriptions you fill
- Not about the services you offer
- Not about the care you provide
- Not about the problems you catch and the interventions you provide

It is all about your 'Overall Experience' – each of these contribute to this but not one differentiates you

Patient Experience

- Patient experience is affected by every interaction with your pharmacy
- Not just you, but also:
 - Curb appeal
 - Feel, smell, lighting when entering the pharmacy
 - Your staff – even your part-time students
 - Your phone skills
 - Social media, website and online presence
 - Patient and client engagement – too much or too little
- It is completely subjective – love you one day and move on the next



Successful Pharmacy Owners Need to Optimize the Patient Experience

Patient Experience Drives Success

- It starts before they even enter your store
- Every staff member can affect the experience
- Strive to deliver it every day
- Consistency is CRUCIAL for experience
 - One bad experience can drive your patients to a competitor
- Experience extends beyond just the customer service and is modified by every physical aspect of the pharmacy

Successful Owners of the Future

- Focus on day-to-day delivery of excellent service/experience
- Innovate – What can be improved, NOT just dispensary and pharmacy services
- Take risks
- Business plan/case – not just about doing something, it is important to make money at it
- Reassess and reevaluate – Modify and D/C programs
- Invest time and money into their vision
- Focus on being first

Experience is Affected by
Every Interaction with your
Pharmacy

What Should you be Looking at?

- How the pharmacy is viewed by the community
 - Physically and community-involvement
- Accessibility
- Front-shop – major impact on experience
- Customer service
- Staffing
- Pharmacy dispensary and expanded services
- Selling and marketing you and your pharmacy

Remove your Blinders and
Look at your Store Critically

Outside of the Pharmacy

- Experience starts before they even enter the store
- Evaluate your store from the outside
- Compare it to your competitors and other stores with similar volume and community size
 - Day and night
 - Parking
 - Accessibility
 - Lighting
 - Is it inviting to go in? – signage, window covering
 - What clients are you trying to attract? – does it appeal to them?

Inside the Pharmacy

- You see it every day
- Easy to miss what your clients see
- Nothing is more of an experience killer than a poorly organized, dated and static store and design
- If there is a “black hole” in the store, what can you do to fix it?
 - Book section
 - DVD’s
- What is your high traffic areas?
- What is your high margin products?

Capturing is More than Just Looking at it

- Start with some pictures
- Hard to see any issues when you see them every day
- Pictures from a patient's point of view
- From many angles, but only where patients can access
- Not the dispensary point of view
- Give camera to a few 'regulars'



Photos to Include

- Every aisle of the pharmacy
- Sitting in the waiting area
- View from entry and pharmacy cash
- Patient view of front cash
- What they see when they walk into the pharmacy
- Move around and take many pictures

Lay Them All Out

- Watch for:
 - Clutter
 - Empty space on shelving
 - Dirt, uncleanliness
 - It's the little things, the stuff you might otherwise miss
- Things to think of:
 - How you would feel if you were the patient seeing this
 - Don't focus on one photo but on the entire picture
 - Where are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Ask people to look at the pictures, what do they see?

This can Help you Recognize and Prioritize

- You can recognize areas that negatively affect the overall experience
- What is an easy fix and what will require time and resources to address?
- Where do I go for help?
- Make a list and prioritize
- Not usually a panic, focus on at least one item at a time

Front Shop is Crucial for Patient Experience

“I Make No Money on My Front Shop”

- Many owners don't want to invest the time and money into their front shop
- Lower margins and ultracompetitive
- Front shops contribute to a large square footage of many pharmacies
- “My patients like it this way”, “How we have always done it”
- Poor front shop affects overall experience
- You may see a hole as one product missing
 - Client may see much more – lack of inventory, poor management, not caring about the products the clients need

You Need to Get Smart with Front Shop

- Planograms are great and keep it looking fresh
- You can make your own planograms through either:
 - Making a visit to other pharmacies
 - Evaluating what your patients are purchasing
- Fill your gaps and holes
- Shelving that is not too deep – 2-3 can look full
 - Low inventory
- Try to make aspects of your front shop uniquely your own

Point of Sale – Cheap & Useful Technology

- Point of sale will becoming an increasingly important requirement
- Invest in the training on the system
- Not just about inventory control and ordering
- Projecting and planning
- Focus on margins
 - Make changes and analyze – You can see the impact of your efforts
- It can be so much more than what 90% of people are using it for

Companion Sales

- Actively promote your front shop to your patients getting scripts
- Tailoring your recommendations based on their needs
- Can affect both front shop sales and patient adherence to script medication
- OAB – Dry mouth treatment
- Opioids – Laxatives, stool softeners
- Hypertension – BP machine
- Diabetes – hypoglycemia treatment, foot care, socks
- Any dermatological condition – cleaner, sunscreen, moisturizer

Power of the House Brands

- High margin
- Extends beyond the purchase of one product
 - “I recognize the name”
- Convince once to try, potential lifetime user
 - Business case for discounting for first-time users
- Opportunity to remove lower margin brands or decrease prominence
- Potential to use to compete with advertised sales of other pharmacies
 - They offer this product on sale for \$6.99 but our brand is consistently at \$5.49

Other Tips for your Front Shop

- Have staff watch your clients
 - Which aisles are popular, which are not?
 - What is constantly selling?
- What do you recommend regularly?
 - Walking too far for your recommendations?
- Multiple companion products in different locations in your pharmacy?
- Tinker with your margins

What I have Learned

- Many times people have no idea what they want
 - Health literacy and numeracy skills are poor
- Upsell on recommendations
 - 18-pack of loperamide is better for the patient and you
- Remove the 'dogs' – discount in high traffic area
- Higher margins on recommended products

Customer Service

Customer Service

- Consistency and standardization
 - Not just for one group of patients – 80/20 rule
- Do what you tell them you are going to do!!!!
- Focus on the patients you have
 - 5 times more time/cost to attract new customers than selling to current clients
- Focus on every point of entry to business
 - Every staff member, every interaction
- Business killer in competitive marketplace
 - Not about being a pushover but being fair/transparent

Phone skills are Notoriously Bad

- Removing visual communication and thus commonly misinterpreted
- Person on phone can't see if you have 30 people waiting, nor do they care
- Train staff appropriately and LISTEN to the calls
- Regularly discuss issues with staff; could they be handled differently
- Answering phone is productivity killer

Technology can be a Saviour

- Interactive voice response (IVR)
 - Most cost effective technology to improve customer service
 - Makes the store accessible 24/7/365
 - Patients love it – IF you train them and explain the reason you are using it
 - “Improving their care and the time you have when in the store”
- Automated refills
 - Improve sales for the right patient
- Auto calls
 - Takes care of a time consuming task

Engage Your Patients

- Go where your clients are
- Facebook, website
- About client engagement and sharing information
- Solidifying the relationship – patients feel ownership “my store”
- Takes work and time
- Don’t recreate wheel, look for content from other places
- Link out versus creating content

facebook

Connect with friends and the world around you on Facebook.



See photos and updates from friends in News Feed.

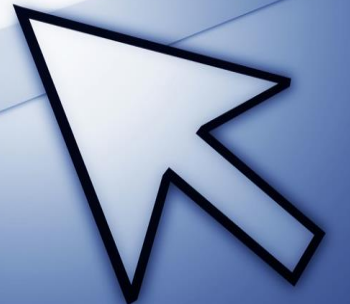


Share what's new in your life on your Timeline.



Find more of what you're looking for with Graph Search.

<http://www>



Staffing and Scheduling

Think Like a Big Business

- Staffing is your #1 expense and #1 resource
- Proper allocation can improve productivity, reduce stress and improve workflow
- If there were not people involved, we would manage this resource differently
- You run a multimillion dollar business
 - Think beyond the “Ma and Pa” mentality

HR Management is a Major Issue for Many Pharmacies

- Difficult part of owning a business
- Takes time and can create tension
- Transparent policies and procedures do help
 - More about the rules versus the exception
- Think of fairness and engagement
- Working together for a better business
- Little bit of effort regularly can reduce a major issue in the future



Staffing mistakes

- Static schedules and 9-5ers,
- Lack of cross training
- Hiring in desperation
- Staff specialization without backups
- Letting staff run your store
- Micromanaging great people
- Lack of openness and partnership

Staffing tips

- Invest in cross training
- Specialize in areas of dispensary
 - Creates accountability and maximizes productivity
- Every staff member is important – everyone represents your business
- Take your time hiring – mistakes are costly
- Engage in mutual goals and ask for help

Your Pharmacy Dispensary

Evaluate the challenge areas

- Physician faxes and calls
- Drawer – empty it and assign it to a part-timer
- Compounds – specialize and premix, train patients
- Intake and output – can it be done better
- Ordering and receiving
- Blister packaging

Rx Problems and Refills

- First question – “Is it truly a problem?”
- Second question – “Can I adapt or refill myself?”
- Make it part of routine to address regularly
 - “Stuff” piles up and nobody deals with it
- Who puts it there, is accountable for it
 - Creates chaos in busy store
- Keep patient in the loop regularly

IVR and Internet Refills

- Maximize IVR refill rate
 - This is transformational
- Train patients to use it when they present in pharmacy with bottles
- Tell patients how much it helps you
- Ideally day before you need it
- “Gold star” to thank patient who uses it

Blister Packaging

- Leads to massive increase in Rx volume
- Identify and promote in Medscheck, offer to everyone with 6 or more meds
- Sell the benefits to the patient
- Charge - at least for packaging costs
- Automate refills – batch processing
- Specialize staff - accountability
- OTCs in pack - \$ fee per month

Inventory

- Inventory control – just do it!
- Tinker and adjust
 - Watch minimums, carrying more than you need
 - New generic coming?
- Check pack size and DINs
- One person to fill all balances – look for patterns
- “If you owe, give them a low amount”
- Train patients to call ahead – IVR is the greatest

Remove the Paper Clutter

- Say “no” to pamphlets from anybody
- Move to digital documentation
 - Bookmark on your system, folder on desktop
- Create a store email address (Gmail)
- Email attachments to patients
 - Better for your patient, environment, no digging
- Form letters for MD

Productivity

- Look for better ways to improve your workflow
- Not all staff are created equal
- Less writing and direct computer entry
- Checklist of services that your staff could offer
 - Medscheck, blister packaging, immunization
 - “What expanded service can I do for this patient today?”

Invest in Technology

- Pill counters are a must
 - Can improve productivity
 - Better than ever
 - Can help to keep inventory counts consistent
 - Many different price ranges
- Bar coded water dispensers
 - Reduce error rate
 - Improve safety
 - Increase productivity

Special Thanks to Wayne Caverly for Recommendations

Adherence

- Massive impact on your patients and your business
- 50% of patients on chronic meds
 - The impact on your profitability is massive
 - “Not at my store” – Wrong!
- Moving target – people are not constant
 - Deliberate nonadherence is common
- Addressing it is NOT nagging your patients

PharmaCheck

- Do I
 - Sometimes change the amount of medication I am taking?
 - Keep old bottles of medication, just in case I need them?
- Do I feel that
 - I am taking too many medications?
 - My medication is making me sick?
 - My medication is not working?
 - My medications are working against each other?

PharmaCheck



Am I Getting
the Most from my
Medication?

It's S.I.M.P.L.E

- Simplifying the regimen
- Imparting knowledge
- Modifying patient beliefs
- Patient communication
- Leaving the bias
- Evaluating adherence

Strategies to Prevent Audits and Clawbacks

- “Document, document, document”
- Staff training –key policies of adjudicators
- Know requirements per your payer agreements
- NO to override codes to get it to go through!
- Pay attention to response codes; e.g., fill too soon, poly-pharmacy or duplicate therapy - investigate first

Special Thanks to Peter Zawadzki

Expanded Services

Expanded Services

- Actively market and sell these services
- Approach your current patients FIRST, new patients second
 - Easier to sell to people who already support you
- Know the rules and conditions
 - Know who you can and can't bill for
 - Ensures you protect against an audit
- It is about tailoring your messaging to address the needs of your patients

Continuing education

- Certification differentiates you in a competitive marketplace – by patients and HCPs
- Many to choose from:
 - CDE, CRE, CGP, ISTM, CTE
- Investment in you, demonstrates commitment and builds confidence tremendously
- Training is available – take advantage of it
- Have an end game in mind – what are you going to do with it?
 - How you are going to market and sell it

Sales and marketing

Sales

- What the product/service will do for the patient
- Watch your lingo
- Charge for your services
- Rejection is ok
- Use language that focuses on the client
- Teasers
- Offer more and compromise
- Listen and don't make assumptions

Marketing

- Proactive versus reactive
- Look beyond your four walls
- Look for partnerships that can be mutually beneficial
- Differentiate yourself from competitors
- Unique services

Key points

- Small changes can make a difference
- Look at your business through a new set of eyes
- Every aspect of your business is important
- Some of what we discussed you do well and others things you may not. The goal is to constantly improve
- Productivity and efficiency are crucial
- Take the time today to set your pharmacy apart from everyone else

Questions?

This continuing education workshop has been developed by  pear | Health eLearning