



Interactive Patient Care System Enables Hospital to Streamline Prescription Fulfillment for Patients While Improving Staff Efficiency and Bottom Line Profitability

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA HEALTH BOOSTS RETAIL PHARMACY REVENUES MORE THAN 53 PERCENT VIA GETWELLNWORK

Charleston, South Carolina-based MUSC Health, a 700-bed academic health science center that forms part of the six-college Medical University of South Carolina Center, wanted a channel to communicate the features and benefits of its three, 24-hour pharmacies and four hospital-sponsored retail pharmacies (<http://www.muschealth.com/prescriptionrefill/index.htm>) to employees, patients, family members and clinicians, including an understandably transient population of medical residents. With such robust inpatient and outpatient clinical pharmacy services, MUSC had the following three goals, all of which have been achieved—if not exceeded—with the help of GetWellNetwork:

- 1 Increase number of prescriptions filled at the MUSC pharmacies
- 2 Increase patient compliance with discharge prescription medications
- 3 Increase revenue to MUSC pharmacies

Prescriptions on the Rise

First installed at MUSC Health in 2004 as a baseline patient education and entertainment system, GetWellNetwork has emerged as a powerful channel for pharmacy promotion, staff engagement and drug education and training. After MUSC Health introduced its program for advance notification of prescription fulfillment to patients and clinicians via GetWellNetwork in late 2009, a hospital retail pharmacy took just one year to increase service from 1,735 prescriptions per month, 25 of which were through the GetWellNetwork, to 2,300 prescriptions per month, 370 of which were through GetWellNetwork.

Monthly statistics were equally impressive. One MUSC Health retail pharmacy fills an average of 2,800 prescriptions per month, 474 of which were through GetWellNetwork, while a second fills 9,500 prescriptions per month, with 845 coming through GetWellNetwork.

Kelly Crowley, PharmD at MUSC Health was part of a four-person team that initiated the pilot program to help promote the retail pharmacy at MUSC Health's 150-bed Ashley River Tower in February 2009. Just two months later, she and her colleagues rolled out the pharmacy promotion within the remaining units utilizing the GetWellNetwork system (currently just over half of the 700 beds support the system). Through the use of the television screen available in the patient rooms, patients and staff learned how MUSC Health's retail pharmacies could fill prescriptions at the time of discharge, while offering deeply discounted over-the-counter medications and \$4 generic drugs that are accessible to the patient without charge.

Increased Patient Medication Compliance

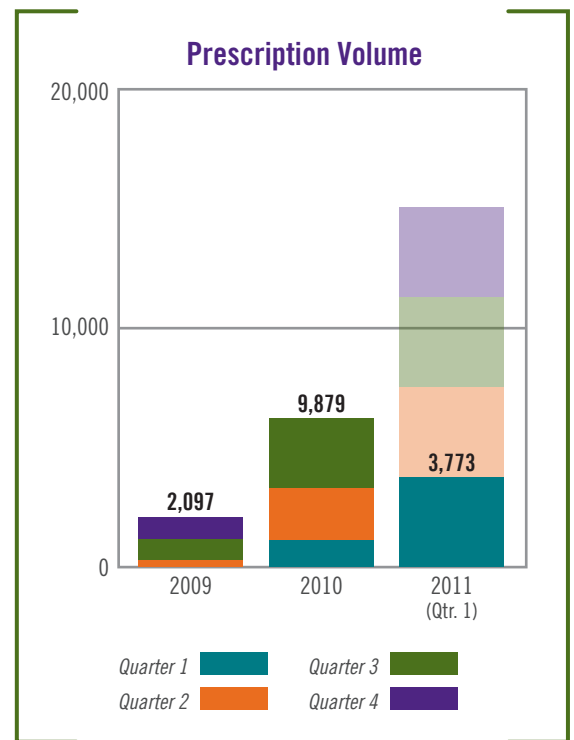
The process is simple and straightforward. Upon admission, patients and staff view a message about prescription fulfillment on the GetWellNetwork system, allowing the pharmacy to project an anticipated prescription fill timeframe based on possible discharge day. Using their remote, patients have the option to click "No, Thanks" to the pharmacy option, or postpone hospital prescription fulfillment at a later date. For the majority of patients who select "Yes, I'm interested" to retail pharmacy prescription fulfillment, the GetWellNetwork system generates a print-out for both the pharmacy and nursing station. Run daily, each print out contains a patient's medical record number, name, date of birth, room number and response to prescription fulfillment at discharge.

In addition to streamlining the medication process for patients, nursing staff and the pharmacy staff are also benefiting from getting advance notice of a patient's interest in prescription fulfillment. Because GetWellNetwork is integrated with the hospital's Electronic Health Record (EHR) system, the pharmacies are able to get a head start on accessing patient information on allergies, insurance and address in preparation for a possible prescription fulfillment request. Nurses, in turn, can expedite the discharge process with one-on-one education and generate reports on patient utilization of the GetWellNetwork. Both nurses and pharmacists depend on the system to minimize the bottlenecks that often occur at the time of discharge.

Prescription fulfillment through the retail pharmacies at MUSC Health offers the best alternative for efficient, compliant and safe medication administration. When a physician writes a prescription and sends it to one of the retail pharmacies, a pharmacist can easily identify any potential errors, omissions as well as insurance coverage and cost problems; contacting the prescribing physician through secure messaging or MUSC Health's paging system to discuss these issues in a quick step.

Additionally, there is a five-person team assigned to help financially distressed patients find medications through not-for-profit or pharmaceutical company-sponsored programs. This team is also trained to work through the insurance process, allowing physicians to devote as much time as possible to caring for patients and easing the worry and stress these matters can cause. In cases where team members have to wait several days for insurance company verification, they sometimes are able to dispense a supply sample of the medication or negotiate with the patient's physician to modify the prescribed therapy.

The scenario for patients who opt not to use MUSC Health's pharmacies varies greatly and can come with a number of unforeseen issues and potentially health-related consequences as well. For instance, when a patient is discharged with the prescription instead of taking the medication home with him or her, it is not uncommon, particularly for those with complex conditions like transplant or oncology patients, to discover that their friendly neighborhood pharmacy cannot fulfill the prescription in the quantity or dose they need, or that it has already closed for the day, delaying the dose.



In these cases, the pharmacy must order the prescribed medications, postponing treatment for at least a day. There is also the issue of obtaining prior authorizations with the insurance company that can take anywhere from two days to two weeks. In other cases, a pharmacy may discover that a prescribed drug carries a \$200 co-pay that the patient is unable to meet. The result: stress, potential complications and in worst case situations, even a costly but preventable hospital readmission.

“Once patients and family members leave campus and are on the other side of the state, it’s more difficult for our staff to resolve issues such as drug supply at the local pharmacy, clarifying a prescription order or payment assistance,” said Crowley. “The advance prescription notification process available through GetWellNetwork allows us to identify and resolve issues while the patient and family members are still available for face-to-face communication and decision making. We are preparing patients to better manage their condition upon discharge by educating them throughout the care process.”

GetWellNetwork has also opened the door to interactive medication education. MUSC Health physicians and nurses can prescribe any of 300 available videos on tests, conditions, procedures and drugs such as LovenoX, Coumadin or Percodan. Each video, which ranges in length from two to seven minutes, functions as an adjunct to related patient teaching and covers topics ranging from possible side effects and food interactions to disease management.

Increased Pharmacy Revenues

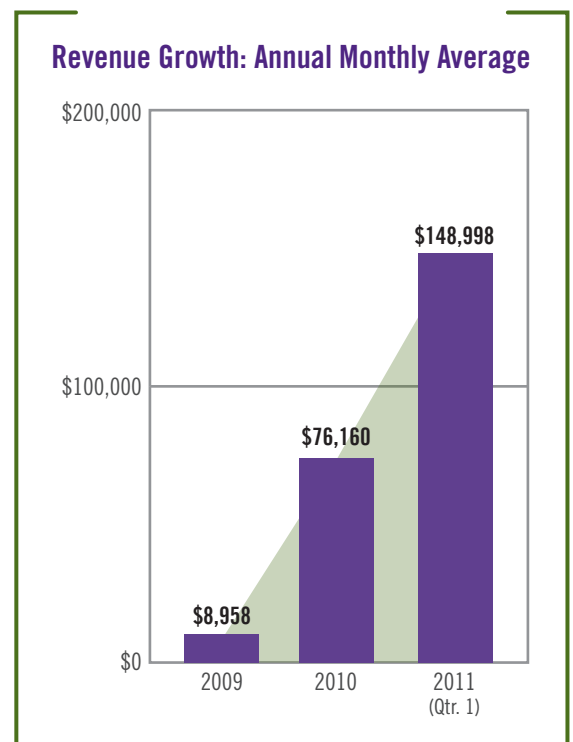
Because the GetWellNetwork system includes these direct-to-patient capabilities with multiple avenues for hospitals to cross-promote their pharmacy services, revenues have increased significantly.

“Like the other tools available within the GetWellNetwork solution, the pharmacy application provides measurable results in quality, service and operations,” said Crowley.

Crowley suggests that hospitals follow these principles in using GetWellNetwork for prescription fulfillment:

- Educate nurses to educate patients. Explain to patients that just because the hospital fills a prescription at discharge doesn’t mean it must fill the refills on the prescriptions. The hospital can easily fill the prescription and transfer refills to a local pharmacy.
- Track useful statistics. Look at the total number of prescriptions written by physicians against those filled through advance notification of prescription fulfillment.
- Evaluate patient response. Identify the number of patients who respond “yes” to advance prescription notification against the total number of prescriptions filled.

MUSC Health is in the process of developing a mail delivery pharmacy program to cover its large transplant population, as well as pediatric patients who require compound medications typically not available at neighborhood pharmacies. With plans to expand the program to clinic patients and those who have minimal follow-up on the MUSC campus, Crowley will again rely on GetWellNetwork to announce program features, functions, benefits and facilitate communication between pharmacists, nurses, patients and physicians.



Visit GetWellNetwork.com or call 877-633-8496.

GetWellNetwork uses the bedside TV to entertain, educate and empower hospital patients and caregivers to be more actively engaged in their care. This patient-centered approach improves both satisfaction and outcomes for patients and hospitals. GetWellNetwork is the leader in interactive patient care solutions and is exclusively endorsed by the American Hospital Association.

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