

[working hed #1] How to Improve the Patient Experience In Your Outpatient Specialty Pharmacy

[working hed #2] How to Increase Patient Satisfaction In Your Outpatient Specialty Pharmacy

Healthcare consumerism has never been stronger and in 2022, the patient experience is essential for hospitals and health systems in the U.S. looking to improve health outcomes, drive engagement, and lower healthcare costs.

Patients want a seamless, effortless, personalized care journey.

According to a recent Tegria [survey](#) conducted by The Harris Poll, 61% of people say they want a healthcare experience that's akin to the consumer experience of an online convenience service app, such as Amazon Prime, Uber, or Instacart.

Although healthcare has traditionally lagged behind other industries, many organizations are finally taking note.

In fact, 4 in 10 healthcare CFOs say their organizations plan to improve the patient experience this year, [a recent survey](#) found.

An optimal patient experience not only improves retention and loyalty and increases referrals, but better HCAHPS scores are linked to higher profitability.

A report by Deloitte found that hospitals with “excellent” HCAHPS ratings between 2008 and 2014 had a net margin of 4.7%, on average, compared to 1.8% for hospitals with “low” ratings.

For those with chronic diseases who need specialty medications and rely on a hospital [outpatient pharmacy](#), in particular, providing an excellent, personalized healthcare experience couldn't be more important.

Yet with limited resources, managing the front-end processes of an outpatient specialty pharmacy and providing an exceptional patient experience at the same time is challenging for most organizations.

[H2] The Growth Of Specialty Medicine—and the Need for A Better Patient Experience

In the U.S., the specialty pharmacy market is growing at a rapid pace. In fact, more than [60% of the 600 drugs](#) expected to gain FDA approval this year will be specialty medications.

What's more, in 5 years, nearly 60% of medicine spending will be from specialty medicines in developed markets, a 2021 [report](#) by The IQVIA Institute for Human Data Science found.

Therefore, for hospitals and health systems looking to increase quality, reduce hospital readmissions, improve retention and loyalty, and generate new streams of revenue, outpatient specialty pharmacy has proven an effective solution.

[H2] Outpatient Specialty Pharmacy: Improving the Patient Experience

For hospitals that have an outpatient specialty pharmacy or are looking to optimize an existing one, a patient care services team is important to ensure continuity of care, drive engagement, and provide the best possible patient experience.

Since most hospitals don't have the resources to provide this service internally, however, a partner can help manage the program from beginning to end.

A patient care services partner can provide a team of off-site clinicians, pharmacists, and technicians who are experts in specialty pharmacy and can effectively manage the complicated, front-end processes of prescription management for their patients.

Allocating resources in this way takes the burden off of hospitals and allows them to focus on dispensing specialty medicines, clinical care, and maintaining trusted relationships with their patients.

A patient care services solution can handle:

Patient intake: conduct initial outreach and obtain demographic and historical data and insurance information.

Benefits investigation: determine coverage, prior authorization requirements, patient co-pays, co-insurance, and out-of-pocket costs.

Prior authorization: 90% of specialty medicines require prior authorization, which is a time-consuming process. Revenue cycle experts can work with the patient and the provider to get approval.

Clinical reporting and medical billing: fulfill the requirements for reporting, care, clinical outcomes, and claims adjudication.

With all of the front-end processes managed, patients take advantage of a seamless, consistent, and optimal care journey that results in patient retention, loyalty, and referrals.

[H3] Patient Care Services Accreditation Matters

For hospitals and health systems considering a patient care services solution, looking for a partner that is accredited by the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission (URAC) is important. The URAC designation is a key differentiator and ensures that the partner has met the strictest quality standards, provides consistency across the care continuum, and will meet regulatory compliance.

Azina provides an end-to-end solution for hospitals and health systems looking to develop a fully-integrated delivery network focused on the entire ambulatory and specialty pharmacy ecosystem, and is the only URAC partner with accreditation in the specialty pharmacy services program.

To learn more about how we can help your organization improve the patient experience, drive revenue, lower costs, and manage compliance risks, [contact us](#) today.