



Improving resident care by making meds easier

Tips from Monthly Webinars

Tips for Getting the Most Out of Your Pharmacy Partnership

Pharmacy relationships are a critical link in providing professional, proactive care for your residents and streamlining operations. A valued pharmacy partner not only plays a vital role in managing medications, but can help ease the burden of navigating complex clinical issues, operational challenges, and electronic health record (EHR) integrations.

Whether you are interested in enhancing an existing relationship or seeking a new pharmacy, consider these questions to foster a partnership that leads to operational and clinical success.

When evaluating a pharmacy partner, what attributes are priorities for your organization beyond the basics of cost and accuracy?

- › **Availability and operating hours** — In addition to later deliveries, is the pharmacy able to service your after-hour and emergency needs? Are pharmacy personnel routinely in your building as a resource for residents and staff?
- › **Pharmacy team** — What is the ratio of full-time to part-time or PRN staff? How many consulting pharmacists are on staff? Do they have long-term care expertise? Will they be responsive to immediate needs and onsite visits?
- › **Services** — What is the range of capabilities? What are the value-added services? What services are in-house or outsourced, such as IVs or consultants?
- › **Medication dispensing** — What types of packaging are available? Is there flexibility and options in packaging? Are they easy to use? How can they help you reduce waste and/or nursing time?
- › **Reporting** — How will the pharmacy help you with reporting? With compliance? What kind of support do they provide before, during, and after survey?
- › **Integration with electronic health records** — What is the pharmacy's technological ability to integrate with EHRs? What kind of support or assistance does pharmacy provide?
- › **Billing services** — Is the billing accurate? Is information provided according to your needs and timeline? Is the pharmacy responsive to your needs? Can they accommodate split billing?
- › **In-service or CE education** — Does the pharmacy support your team with required continuing education as well as general training and in-services?
- › **Customer service** — What type of support do they offer? Is anyone dedicated to your account? Is there a culture of adaptability and responsiveness to your needs? Are they willing to go that extra mile?

Let's look at key performance indicators (KPIs)—which should you use to determine whether your pharmacy partnership is working? Select those KPIs that align with your organizational priorities:

- › Ability to prevent tags
- › Accuracy rate
- › Follow through
- › Frequency of staff in building
- › Level of help provided to staff
- › Proactive approach to raising concerns/issues
- › Responsiveness and actual resolution of issues (fix root cause, not surface solution)
- › Satisfaction rate
- › Trustworthiness

What pharmacy processes, procedures, or services make life easier for you and your staff? Does your pharmacy partner provide:

- › A personal connection, a dedicated single-point of contact
- › A robust website with the ability to check order status or download billing, training, reference materials, and forms
- › Automation for efficiency and accuracy
- › Business reviews
- › Clear billing
- › Corporate-level services such as standardization across multiple facilities, reporting, program rollout, evaluation of services/performance
- › Electronic EHR interface
- › In-services and education
- › Integral & beneficial participation in key committees
- › Meaningful and understandable reporting, including operational, clinical, financial, and any custom reports
- › Privacy and security such as encrypted messaging

How many of these attributes and services does your pharmacy provide? Are you getting the most out of your relationship? Use this guide to help you assess and enhance the role of your pharmacy provider or find a more effective partner.

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