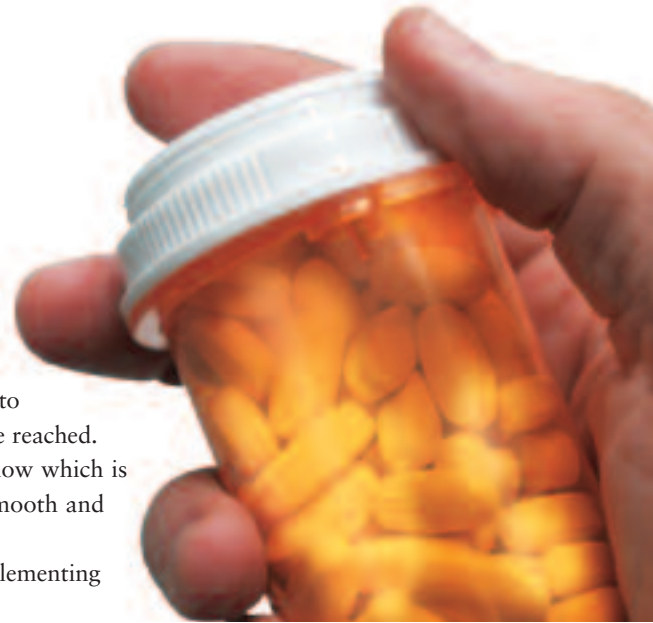


CASE STUDIES:

Automating Your Outpatient Pharmacy



REASONS TO AUTOMATE YOUR OUTPATIENT PHARMACY OPERATIONS ABOUND. FOR some facilities, workflow efficiency is of the utmost concern, whereas others are solely interested in increasing patient safety or improving the services provided to patients. However, for most outpatient pharmacies, all three of these goals need to be reached.

With many sophisticated vendor systems available in the market, how do you know which is right for you? Furthermore, how can you ensure that the implementation will be smooth and that products will perform at their optimal levels?

On the pages that follow, outpatient pharmacists share their experiences with implementing automated technology and optimizing the use of various vendor products. **FR&P**

CASE STUDIES:

Productivity and Safety

By Don Nelson, DPH

Jackson-Madison County General Hospital's outpatient pharmacy serves our 7,000 employees and their families, and fills an average of 300 to 450 prescriptions daily. We had a goal to improve productivity while maintaining our customers' safety, and robotics offered us an opportunity to do that. In addition, with a plan to move to a new location on the horizon, we wanted something portable and with a small footprint.

Our pharmacy installed Parata RDS (Robotic Dispensing System) about a year ago. At just 12 square feet, it fits nicely on the end of our shelving. More than 75% of all our prescriptions come through Parata RDS, which counts doses and selects, labels, caps, and sorts vials by a patient's last name. The robot can fill a 30-count script in about 20 seconds.

Before installing Parata RDS, we had limited counter space for counting and filling, leading to opportunities for filling mistakes during extremely busy times. Over the past year, not one patient has come back with a prescription error. I feel confident that our prescriptions are correct, and we have more time to pay close attention to our patients.

Our administration is pleased with the technology because it will pay for itself in just two or three years. If we can get the job done more accurately with our current staff, the hospital can assign pharmacy staff to other areas of the hospital, to a satellite pharmacy, or to clinical rounds.

For our customers, the biggest change is wait time. Before implementing Parata RDS, we had lines that were 15 to 20 people deep during our busiest times. Now I have customers out the door in less than a minute. There is essentially no wait time. We also have more time to answer patient questions, making our workdays much more satisfying.

Don Nelson, DPH, is the head pharmacist at Jackson-Madison County General Hospital's employee pharmacy.



Parata RDS can fill a 30-count prescription in about 20 seconds.



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