

Expanding Medication Synchronization Services



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Executive Summary

City Center Drugs (CCD) is an independently owned, Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services Network (CPESN) pharmacy located in Jackson, MS looking to achieve a high level of patient care in all aspects. The pharmacy switched to the PioneerRx pharmacy software in 2022 which has a medication synchronization (MedSync) function built into its system. Although the pharmacy currently has capabilities to utilize this feature of the software, staff training requirements and the need for dedicated time to MedSync activities each week have proven difficult to add to the current workflow for this busy pharmacy.

This business plan focuses on how to improve the incorporation of service into the workflow of daily pharmacy activities in order to benefit the patients of CCD. This service can improve medication adherence for patients with multiple comorbid treatments as well as strengthen the relationship between the pharmacy and its patients for years to come.

Objectives of Implementation

- Increase medication adherence rates
- Increase the time dedicated to communicating with patients about chronic disease management
- Decrease number of patient trips to the pharmacy each month
- Increase patient satisfaction

Business Description

CCD is a family-owned independent pharmacy established in 2020 in a prime location within the District at Eastover community in Jackson. A pharmacist and two or three technicians work hard to fill over 400 prescriptions per day six days per week to serve their patients.



Current services provided by this pharmacy in addition to the possibility for a MedSync service include:

- App refills
- Vaccine administration and other shots such as B12 and Testosterone shots
- Curbside service
- Pill packaging (blister packing)
- Liquid medication flavoring
- Delivery
- OTC medications
- Vitamins and supplements
- Sale of local and handmade products and foods
- Gift wrapping

Mission Statement

CCD is dedicated to offering a convenient, friendly, and efficient pharmacy experience to its patients every day. Advocating for patients through education, collaboration, and unique services, the pharmacy strives to be a pharmacy patients can be proud of.

Service Description

Currently the MedSync service at CCD is run by the pharmacy residents when time permits. While some patients have requested MedSync due to struggling with organizing frequent refills and trips to the pharmacy, advertisement of this service has so far been minimal due to a heavy workflow. With only 34 patients enrolled in MedSync within the first 6 months of its initiation, an improvement in recruiting and managing the MedSync program is needed at this time.

This plan proposes to significantly improve this service through the following actions:

Training

- All current staff members should be trained on the MedSync function within the PioneerRx system in the first month.
- Pharmacy student(s) each month should be introduced to the MedSync system in order to involve them in the ongoing recruitment for this pharmacy service.

Patient recruitment

- Develop patient recruitment materials to promote this unique service.
 - o Print and place flyers at register to give to patients upon prescription pick up.
 - o Add the flyer to the home page of the mobile app currently utilized by many patients to refill medications each month with CCD.
- Phone calls
 - o The PioneerRx software has a prebuilt system used to generate a list of patients who may benefit from a MedSync service. This prebuilt list identifies patients who have any of the following conditions:
 - GAP score (days a patient has been without a medication) of 3 or more
 - Medication Possession Rate (days supply divided by the number of days the prescription is in the patient's possession) of 80 or less for any priority therapeutic class
 - Patient risk score (a calculation of hospitalization risk based on 30 day and 12 month patient histories) of 75 or more
 - Taking 3 or more medications from priority therapeutic classes.
 - o Utilizing this list, students and staff members can make a set number of phone calls to patients each week.
 - o 1 hour should be dedicated for every 10 recruitment phone calls planned for each week.
 - o Initial goal for service: make 30 recruitment calls per week related to the MedSync service over the next 6 months.

Service maintenance

- Each week, a list is generated by the PioneerRx system for patients enrolled in MedSync who have medications due to be filled in the coming days.
 - o This list of patients can be called by students or staff members each week in advance of patient due dates.

- This call will help with pharmacy workflow in multiple ways:
 - Preemptively ordering medications the pharmacy has out of stock prior to date needed.
 - Preemptively contacting prescribers for refill requests prior to date needed.
 - Helping patients efficiently plan when they will be able to come to the pharmacy.
 - Allow for pharmacists to help the patient manage multiple chronic conditions in one convenient phone call.
 - Strengthen the patient-pharmacy relationship.
- 1 hour should be dedicated for every 15 patients enrolled in the MedSync program.
- Initial goal for service: enroll a total of 250 patients in the MedSync service within the next 6 months.
 - This reflects a 1/3 success rate of enrollments in the MedSync program for recruitment calls.

Recruitment

30 CALLS PER WEEK

Enrollment

1/3 SUCCESS RATE OF
RECRUITMENT CALLS

Maintenance

1 HOUR EACH WEEK PER 15
PATIENTS ENROLLED

6 month goals

250 TOTAL PATIENTS
ENROLLED IN THE SERVICE

Market Plan

Marketing Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Desire to provide the highest level of care to patients• PioneerRx system already in place has the medication synchronization feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current workflow does not leave much room for adding another service which would require significant time to learn and maintain• Not many staff are trained in using the medication synchronization function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving adherence for customers with many comorbid medications can improve overall sales• Customer satisfaction can improve for individuals and families with this service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedication to the project could suffer from staff prioritizing other services• Delegating these tasks could easily fall all on one person rather than as a team effort

Marketing Strategies

- Advertise in-store with flyer alerting patients at register of the service.
- Advertise on the pharmacy app of this service.
- Advertise on the pharmacy website of this service.
- Recruit current patients who may most benefit from this service through phone calls close to next refill date to engage them in the service at a time when they would already be thinking about calling in refills.

Financial Plan

Financial Statements

CCD currently contracts with PioneerRx for use the pharmacy software. The medication synchronization function of the software would cost no additional money for the pharmacy to use. Training of personnel to use the medication synchronization function would require an estimated 2-3 hours per staff member which would need to be compensated for. This dedicated training time would require additional staffing during training time(s) as the trainee would need to be excluded from regular pharmacy workflow while training.

Financial Projections

Costs:

- Total training costs = \$639
 - 3 full time technicians x 3 hours of staff coverage x \$16 an hour (estimated hourly wage based on market value)^{1,2} = \$144
 - 3 pharmacists x 3 hours of staff coverage x \$55 an hour (estimated hourly wage based on market value)^{3,4} = \$495
 - Future pharmacy residents would perform training during normal rotation hours as early as orientation and would need no additional funding to train
 - Future pharmacy students are unpaid and would perform training during normal rotation hours and would need no additional funding to train

Revenue:

The potential increase in revenue is difficult to estimate for this service. However, past studies suggest medication synchronization programs keep patient groups with multiple chronic conditions more adherent to medication refills compared to patient groups who are not utilizing a medication synchronization program.^{5,6} This increase in consistently refilling chronic medications can provide an increase in profits over the course of a year.⁵ This type of service also has the potential to impact patient satisfaction by promoting more efficient interactions between the pharmacy and the patient, strengthening the pharmacy-patient relationship.⁶

Management Team

Technicians: 3 full-time technicians

- Responsibilities:
 - Recruitment tasks
 - Maintenance tasks

Pharmacists: 2 full-time pharmacists and 1 part-time pharmacist

- Responsibilities:
 - Recruitment tasks
 - Enrollment tasks
 - Maintenance tasks
 - Oversight of all MedSync enrolled patients and monitoring all activities related to the service within the pharmacy.

Pharmacy residents: 2 part-time residents

- Responsibilities:
 - Recruitment tasks
 - Enrollment tasks
 - Maintenance tasks

Pharmacy students: up to 1 full-time student

- Responsibilities:
 - Recruitment tasks
 - Maintenance tasks

Operations

Outside of the regular operations of the pharmacy's dispensing processes, the following activities would need to be completed for the success of this service.

Recruitment activities:

- Point of sale promotion utilizing displayed flyer.
- Explaining the process of short fills to patients and emphasizing the benefits of this service.
- Calling patients identified by the medication synchronization system in the PioneerRx software to discuss interest in the service and basic information about the process of signing up for the service.

Enrollment activities:

- Enrolling patients in the PioneerRx software's medication synchronization system.
- Identifying appropriate medications to enroll in sync and adding them to the cycle fill list under the patient's profile.
- Identifying an appropriate initial sync date taking into consideration the following:
 - o Day supply preference (30 vs. 90 days)
 - o Brand names (to avoid opening bottles unnecessarily)
 - o Available inventory
 - o Pharmacy business hours (closed Sundays)
 - o Other family member(s) pick up dates (if on a family MedSync plan)
- Setting up short fills for each medication needing to be synchronized to the initial sync date.
- Entering pertinent notes in the medication synchronization system which is displayed throughout the fill process.
- Notes related to short fills as they are completed to keep notes section relevant and easy to read by all staff members.

Maintenance:

- Identify which patients need a monthly call for MedSync by utilizing the medication synchronization system's Sync warning function in PioneerRx which identifies patients by their upcoming sync date.
- Calling enrolled patients each month for confirmation of medication refills.
- Processing and printing labels for refills for enrolled maintenance medications.
- Contacting appropriate prescribers for refill requests needed for enrolled maintenance medications held in the print queue.
- Updating which prescriptions are to be included in the sync cycle each time a prescription is replaced due to a change, discontinuation, or renewal of a maintenance medication
- Re-establishing a sync date and processing short fills needed for patients who get off their expected cycle

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