

# Peer Perspectives on Electronic Prescribing: Time-savings, Less chance of error, Improved business and customer relations



## SITUATION

Jason Kasiar, R.Ph. and co-owner of Beck's Drugs in Eldorado, IL first learned about e-prescribing through Amerisource Bergen (Beck's Drugs is a Good Neighbor Pharmacy), and Primary Care Group, a local clinic of six physicians located in a nearby town, Harrisburg, IL. Primary Care Group is responsible for about 98% of the electronic prescriptions that come through Beck's Drugs.

"A physician from Primary Care Group had engaged me in a number of conversations about electronic medical records and then asked me if our pharmacy accepted electronic prescriptions," stated Kasiar.

This peaked Kasiar's interest because he thought e-prescribing could not only provide improved

efficiencies and time savings to his pharmacy, but also strengthen his relationship with Primary Care Group.

"I am a gadget guy and always like to be on top of technology," said Kasiar. "I wanted to find a way to create more efficiencies and reduce errors in the prescribing process as well as find a way to further advance our business."

Kasiar believed e-prescribing would

lessen the likelihood for errors by eliminating the illegible handwritten prescription from the prescribing process and result in a significant time savings that would allow him to have the prescription ready for patients upon arrival at the pharmacy. It normally takes Kasiar 4-5 minutes to process a prescription he has received via fax or paper (i.e., a "Walk-in").

Kasiar also thought that activating his pharmacy for e-prescribing would encourage more

## BECK'S DRUGS



**Jason Kasiar**  
owner/  
pharmacist

- Total number of employees: 20
- Number of prescriptions processed per day in the pharmacy: 400
- Number of months/years using the system: 1 year
- Number of renewal authorizations managed per day by pharmacy: 100-125
- Number of new electronic prescriptions received per day by pharmacy: 25 e-prescriptions

physicians in his area to get on board with e-prescribing. He believed physicians would see the efficiencies e-prescribing brings his pharmacy and want to apply them to their practices.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Beck's Drugs already had Healthcare Computer Corporation (HCC) in place for its pharmacy software management system. Since HCC is a SureScripts Certified Solution, getting connected to the Pharmacy Health Information Exchange™, operated by SureScripts®, was easy.

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— Jason Kasiar*

"Because we already had HCC, we simply had to call HCC and let them know we wanted to get activated for e-prescribing," said Kasiar.

HCC provided Kasiar with a 10-15 minute telephonic training session, which Kasiar said "was so simple." "The easiest part of the training was the simplicity of the interface with my computer system. There was nothing difficult about the process at all!"

"Whenever my system tells me there is a prescription ready I go to the queue and it automatically fills in the fields for me... doctor name, drug, etc.," added Kasiar. "This is where there is a major time savings."

## RESULTS

Kasiar has seen significant time savings on new prescriptions, refill authorizations, enhanced patient safety and improved patient satisfaction now that connectivity is in place.

"Time savings is the greatest factor," said Kasiar. "Not to mention less chance of an error occurring. There is never a question about the prescription. We no longer have to guess what the doctor wrote or call the physician's office for clarification. E-prescribing has undoubtedly made us more efficient." The significant time-savings also allows Kasiar and his staff to have more time to focus on business- and customer-related issues such as bill pay, daily budgetary issues and patient wait time. Further, Kasiar and his staff have more time to spend with individual patients.

It now takes Kasiar less than one minute to process a new prescription that is received electronically compared to the 4 to 5 minutes it takes to process prescriptions received by fax and/or paper walk-ins. "I can have the prescription ready for the patient by the time they walk in the door to pick it up," stated Kasiar. For new prescriptions, the staff at Beck's Drugs has seen a reduction in the number of callbacks and calls for prescription clarifications made to physician practices after the pharmacy implemented its electronic prescribing connectivity. They have seen a reduction of about 10 calls daily.

Another advantage to electronic prescribing seen at Beck's Drugs is the significant impact on the renewal authorization process. "It is much easier to send an electronic refill request than pick up the phone to call for refills and wait on hold," said Kasiar. "Time is money and we are saving time!"

Prior to pharmacy connectivity, Kasiar and his staff would spend approximately 3 to 4 hours daily on refill

## BEST PRACTICES

- Train specific people at the pharmacy to really know your e-prescribing system and process

requests alone. On average, Kasiar and his staff would receive 300 renewal authorizations/denials per day via phone and 250 via fax. Before the pharmacy became enabled for electronic renewals Kasiar said he and his staff would send about 300 faxes per day to obtain renewal authorizations.

Now that connectivity is in place Kasiar says it saves them at least an hour daily on refill requests. His pharmacy now receives 33% less renewal authorizations/denials per day via phone and 40% fewer faxes. Since the pharmacy became enabled for electronic renewals Kasiar and his staff now send approximately one-third less requests per day via fax to obtain renewal authorizations.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

"There is no question that e-prescribing is worth the money," said Kasiar. "If you think it's an investment you can't make because you are in a rural area and you won't benefit from it, that is not the case. You don't have to be in a metropolitan area to e-prescribe. Our pharmacy is located in Eldorado, a rural town with a population of about 4,000 and we have clearly seen a number of benefits to e-prescribing."

"For example, about 98% of the electronic prescriptions we receive come from Primary Care Group in Harrisburg, Ill.," added Kasiar.

"A fax machine costs you money with the costs associated with your ink cartridges, maintenance, the phone service and extra phone line for the fax, toner and paper."

"You would be amazed at how much time you save by not having to re-key information," added Kasiar. "We save an hour a day on refill requests alone now that connectivity is in place."

"You will love the look on patients' faces when they walk in your store and you say, 'I've got your prescription filled and ready for you. We processed it electronically!'"

"I wish everyone was on board with e-prescribing. I love it!"