

DOCUMENT WORKFLOW: Improving pharmacy workflow, workspace, and audit compliance

THE CHALLENGE

Independent long-term care pharmacies have recently experienced decreasing reimbursement from third-parties, competition from larger corporations, and pressure to lower prices. In the midst of these market challenges, many pharmacies face day-to-day difficulties such as increasing workload demands and complicated workflows that decrease efficiency.

As an independent operation, IHS LTC Pharmacy experiences these pressures acutely. Operating out of a small business space with limited counter areas, a tidy, efficient workflow is paramount. However, a paper-driven process cluttered the small office with multiple baskets, files, and paper documents, creating a chaotic environment and an “absolute nightmare” in their labeling queue.

Increasingly demanding audits aggravated their problems. Despite estimating a 50/50 chance on having signed documents at hand, they were able to handle the one or two claim desktop audits with relative ease. However, IHS knew they needed a change after an auditor came on location and asked for twenty prescriptions. Despite being able to pull most of the requested scripts, it took an incredible amount of staff time to find every document, and was frustrating for everyone involved.

In the midst of these challenges, IHS started searching for solutions that would help them streamline workflow, consolidate and safeguard revenues, and increase operational output.

THE SOLUTION

While researching an adherence packaging system at a nearby pharmacy, Brendon Weeks, Director of Operations at IHS, noticed that the host pharmacy was clean, efficient, and didn't have all the papers, baskets, and operational headaches that he and his staff were experiencing. During the conversation, the topic of document and workflow management came up.

“The gentleman who was showing me around the pharmacy asked me if I had DocuTrack and I said no,” said Weeks. “He looked at me like I had another eyeball in my head and said, ‘What is wrong with you? You need to get DocuTrack right now.’”

“He went off on a little bit of a rant, and showed me how awesome DocuTrack was. Right after that, I realized we should probably get DocuTrack if we want to actually do things right.”



About IHS LTC Pharmacy

Since March of 2011, IHS has served Ohio's long-term care market. Serving over 1,600 beds, IHS implemented DocuTrack in the summer of 2015. IHS uses DocuTrack in conjunction with QS/1 PrimeCare.

Interfaces:

- QS/1 PrimeCare®
- eMAR – Accu-flo

About DocuTrack

DocuTrack is a workflow and content management system that organizes, routes, stores, and retrieves content. Experience instant order access, a convenient audit assist workspace, intelligent archiving, automated routing, and eRx functionality.

About Integra

Integra is a pharmacy management software company whose suite of products – DocuTrack, DeliveryTrack, Logix, and Integra Cloud Fax – reduce pharmacy costs, increase productivity and profits, and enable the highest levels of customer service. For more information about Integra products, contact Sales at (866) 257-4279 or visit www.integragroup.com.

However, before purchasing a new system, Weeks knew he needed to research available options and speak to other industry professionals about the solutions they had success with in their pharmacy practices.

In his research and discussions, DocuTrack was the name Weeks heard continually; everyone was using it. And not only were they using it, they were happy with the results it gave them. He also found that DocuTrack's focus on the pharmacy market was a huge benefit over the numerous generic workflow systems.

"At that point, it was pretty much a no-brainer," said Weeks. "Getting DocuTrack into our pharmacy was something that we needed to do if we wanted to continue to grow our business, or even continue to maintain it."

RESULTS

After implementing DocuTrack, IHS saw immediate results. Improved workflow and streamlined processes made receiving and working scripts easier. The office environment was even tidy.

The biggest benefit IHS found with DocuTrack was not having to worry if they had received scripts, processed and delivered them, or had all appropriate paperwork. "Our workflow in general improved tremendously in almost every aspect," said Weeks.

Audits especially were simplified. "Now, when we get an audit, we just type in the number in DocuTrack, and pull up the prescription and the delivery sheet and everything else within just a couple seconds," said Weeks. "It's so much easier. That's one thing I think everyone here would say: How on earth did we do this without DocuTrack?"

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:

- Customizable workflow
- Integration with other technologies
- Document search
- Audit history
- Barcode processing

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Increased Efficiency

- Data entry – saved 20% on payroll just from having orders come in and everything being easy to scan
- Business – Grew volume by a few hundred beds without adding staff
- QA pharmacist – increased processing volume to 300-400 new orders and refills in a few hours, as opposed to 200-300 prescriptions during a full day
- Labeling department – more efficient because the process was smoother
- Office workspace – no more baskets or papers cluttering a small office

IHS has found an additional benefit; DocuTrack helped protect their business by improving customer service. Able to track all documents and pull an individual script up on the computer in seconds, pharmacy staff can now answer inquiries from facilities with confidence.

"I can't tell you the number of times that we used to answer questions with 'I don't think we made a mistake, but I don't know,'" said Weeks. "If you can fax a customer a document that has everything that happened on it, that's huge. In the end, it's going to help the residents and the patients, which is why we do what we do."

IHS is now looking to the future. Thanks to DocuTrack, IHS is free to focus on being proactive instead of reactive, concentrating on continuous process and workflow improvement.

Weeks had one last comment. "If you're trying to operate a long-term care pharmacy and move any kind of volume efficiently, then you 100% should have a document management system like DocuTrack. If you want to be competitive in this environment, then it's something you have to do. I would say it's not really even an option."