Public Workshop: Ensuring Access to Effective Patient Medication Information
Renaissance Dupont Circle Hotel
Washington, DC
October 12, 2010

Session IV: Effective Distribution of PMI

Will Lockwood

American Society for Automation in Pharmacy

ASAP Background

Mission Statement: To foster understanding of the role that technology plays in assisting pharmacists to promote patient safety and the proper use of medications, comply with laws and regulations, and operate their practices more efficiently by providing a forum for sharing diverse knowledge and perspectives on the modern practice of pharmacy.

- More than 170 member companies and organizations. System vendors account for roughly 90% of systems installed in pharmacies.

- List of members available at www.asapnet.org/directory.html

Pharmacy Capabilities and Infrastructure

Pharmacies can distribute PMI as part of their workflow and are doing so now. But there are limitations on what can be printed at the pharmacy.

• Double-drawer printers are standard in chains.

• Independents also use double-drawer printers, but there will be a greater range of printing technology, even including dot matrix.

• Possible need to upgrade printers.

• Single pass label stock is common and includes vial label, receipt, warning labels, and PMI sized to fit the remaining space.

• Possible workflow issue with double-drawer printing in matching PMI with right patient label. This is one reason why single-pass label is common.

• Color laser printing is currently not an option.

Possible Paperless Distribution Methods

- Text messages (possible privacy issue if text includes a link directly to PMI).

- Email (same privacy issue as text).

- Pharmacy Web sites.

- Secure consumer Web portals.

Caveat: These tools have not necessarily been designed with distributing patient-specific PMI in mind.

Mixing Paper and Electronic Distribution

• Likely scenario for the near future is a mix of paper and electronic distribution.

• Important to remember that there are two audiences – patient and caregiver.

• Single-page printed documents should indicate how to find more information, e.g. using a URL or phone-readable tags/barcodes.

Sources of PMI

PMI specifically formatted for white space, font, spacing, boxing, etc., needs to come from a controlled source:

•Drug information publishers.

-Advantage of an existing distribution channel

•Web-based distribution.

-Disruptive to pharmacy workflow.

Assessing Effectiveness

- Shopper surveys can gauge whether PMI is reaching patients.
- Certification/auditing can ensure that systems and software versions are producing PMI in the approved format.
- PMI distributed through pharmacies will be using pharmacy resources and require software and workflow changes.
- Certification/auditing costs will be passed on through user fees.
- Question is who pays?
- Cost should not be borne by pharmacies.

Pilot Programs

- Pilot program will require system vendor involvement.
- ASAP can help.
- Members represent the vast majority of pharmacy software installed base.
- Experience connecting companies and organizations with pharmacy technology vendors.
  - Examples: Manufacturer requesting special prescription label wording and feasibility study for paperless professional labeling.
- Note: most pharmacies cannot make changes to their software, though some major chains do develop and manage their own software in-house.
- Ample lead time is necessary for any changes.
- How will development costs be funded?

Contact Information:

will@computertalk.com

610-825-7783