TAKING ON NON-ADHERENCE ONE PATIENT AT A TIME

Medication non-adherence is a serious issue. When a patient does not take their medication as prescribed, it causes problems — for both the patient AND the pharmacy.

For the patient, non-adherence often has a negative effect on health outcomes. Changing the frequency, dosage, or even the time of day a patient takes their medication can have serious repercussions on their health and well-being.

For the pharmacy, patient non-adherence can torpedo Star Ratings, increasing DIR fees and potentially decreasing the number of Medicare networks that will work with the store. Unfavorable patient outcomes can also damage the pharmacy’s reputation within the community.

There’s a lot at stake here.

As the owner of Love Oak Pharmacy in Eastland, Texas, Ben McNabb, PharmD, has dedicated himself to improving medication adherence in his patients and in his community. And his efforts haven’t gone unnoticed. In 2018, the NCPA awarded McNabb its Outstanding Adherence Practitioner Award. McNabb, an APRx customer, has shown that he’s not afraid of a challenge. “The pharmacies that will win, ultimately, are the ones willing to take non-adherent patients and fix the problem,” said McNabb. “You have to learn to prioritize and shift some of your time toward patients that are hard to treat.”

McNabb had a plan. He just needed the tools.

FDS ENGAGE helped an independent pharmacy improve adherence through medication synchronization.

Love Oak Pharmacy’s Outcomes with FDS ENGAGE

50%
Of prescription volume generated by med sync

1/3
Of patients on med sync program

Improved adherence, better patient outcomes
The Problem of Non-Adherence

According to McNabb, the average Love Oak Pharmacy customer takes eleven prescriptions. Patient non-adherence on even one of those had already proven to be costly in the past. “In one case,” McNabb remembered, “one patient not adhering to one drug cost [our pharmacy] $8,000.”

In addition to lost potential revenue, non-adherence can sink Star Ratings. To increase their own star ratings with CMS, health care plans will often rework their preferred networks to include only pharmacies with high Star Ratings. If a pharmacy has a higher percentage of non-adherent patients, they are less likely to be included in preferred networks.

“A lot of pharmacies don’t know how much money is on the line and how much could be retrievable through an improvement in their scores,” said McNabb. “Some [pharmacy] owners act like they’ve almost given up on their scores.”

While McNabb, like many other pharmacists, feels the criteria used to judge a pharmacy’s value and effectiveness are not always fair, he still rises to the challenge. “We’re left to play by the rules that have been set before us,” said McNabb. “We have to do what we can with the system we have.”

One thing Love Oak Pharmacy could do, McNabb determined, was implement and offer a medication synchronization program.

Non-Adherence by the Numbers, According to the CDC

Deaths per year caused by medication non-adherence in the United States

125,000

New prescriptions never filled at the pharmacy

20-30%

Prescriptions not taken as directed

50%

Improving Adherence with Med Sync

One key to maintaining adherence is to establish a routine. Medication synchronization allows all of a patient’s prescriptions to be picked up from the pharmacy at the same time each month. Always adherence-minded, McNabb saw opportunity. Implementing a med sync plan would put his patients at the counter on the same day of every month. “How are we going to leverage that interaction and that extra time we have with those patients to keep them on their care plan?” he asked himself.

McNabb and his team were able to offer consultations and advice when patients came to pick up their prescriptions for the month. Combined with an adherence packaging initiative, medication synchronization with FDS ENGAGE would allow Love Oak Pharmacy to provide the kind of care their community deserved while boosting the pharmacy’s revenue.
The FDS ENGAGE Med-Sync Strategy

Medication synchronization can be a difficult program to manage without help. When McNabb made the switch to FDS ENGAGE, he knew he had the right tool to take his med sync program to the next level. As a member of American Pharmacies, he had already been utilizing the RxCOMPASS platform, powered by FDS analytics technology. Enlisting FDS ENGAGE to help with his patient care efforts only made sense. The solution’s simple, intuitive design made it easy to take even better care of his patients, and the built-in medication synchronization feature delivered exactly what he was looking for.

As a result of their FDS ENGAGE med sync program, Love Oak Pharmacy saw a significant increase in prescription volume. More patients were taking their medication as prescribed instead of lapsing and falling behind. Today, Love Oak Pharmacy has over a third of their patients on their medication synchronization program. However, it generates around half of their prescription volume.

Enabling Extra Care

A CPESN luminary, McNabb has developed a reputation for going above and beyond what is expected of today’s pharmacists. As an example, Love Oak Pharmacy has recently introduced point-of-care testing, like strep and flu testing. They were also recently certified in diabetic care. For McNabb, it’s important that his community has access to the resources it needs, regardless of regular office hours. “A pharmacy,” he said, “can many times be the only place someone can get healthcare advice and care during those non-physician hours.”

That’s why FDS ENGAGE is so important. While many other platforms ensure the health of your pharmacy and your business, FDS ENGAGE also ensures the health of your patients. And with value-based care initiatives coming into play, the healthier your patients are, the healthier your pharmacy is.

“We strengthen the health of pharmacies and their patients. At FDS, we help our clients build the clinically focused New Era Pharmacy, enabling their business to thrive now and successfully transition to a provider of community and population health with data, technology, and clinical services. We’re not just a technology company, but a team of pharmacy experts with experience and playbooks developed from our work with more than 10,000 pharmacies and partnerships with leading PSAOs. Our clients have improved adherence and care coordination in their communities while achieving significant increases to revenue and profitability.”