Cape Cod Pharmacies Improve Patient Wait Times for Prescriptions with Paging Systems

Cape Cod Healthcare Pharmacies is a retail pharmacy chain located in a health facilities housing multiple medical offices and clinics. This Massachusetts-based company has two locations with plans to open future locations. Pharmacy Director Peter Scarafile recognized an opportunity to improve the wait time experience for customers needing to fill their prescriptions, and a need to better protect their privacy.

The Challenge: Cape Cod Pharmacies are conveniently located inside medical facilities, offering immediate access for patients that need prescription services. These medical buildings host a number of different offices including urgent care, primary care, lab services, specialty doctors and more. After patients are finished with their medical visit, Scarafile said many patients head straight to the pharmacy to fill their prescriptions. Much like traditional waiting rooms, patients were tethered to the wait area anxiously waiting for their names to be called to retrieve their prescription.

Cape Cod Pharmacy fills prescriptions for 50-100 patients a day. At any given time, there are 5-10 patients waiting for their medications in a shared waiting room with the other medical offices in the building. "We wanted a way to let people know prescriptions are ready and improve patient privacy at the same time," said Scarafile. Announcing names when prescriptions were ready was a concern for the operation. They wanted to eliminate broadcasting customer names when prescriptions were ready, and offer customers the opportunity to wait in adjacent areas outside of the shared medical office waiting room; whether in their car, hallway, or outside.

The Solution: Inspired by the simplicity and utility of pagers commonly used in restaurants, Scarafile envisioned a better patient flow using pagers for the pharmacy that would give patients their privacy by quietly alerting them when their prescription was ready, and improve the environment for both patients and staff.

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Patient Paging

"We share the same waiting room with primary and urgent care doctors. Rather than give someone a number or call out a name, we thought for privacy purposes, we'd be able to let them know when their prescription is ready with the pagers," said Scarafile. "At the same time, pagers give people the opportunity to leave the waiting area."

Scarafile said patients have the freedom to leave the pick-up area or waiting room to take a call or use the restroom without the fear of missing their name being called. Patients would also have the ability to go check for their lab or X-ray results and get everything they need done in one place more efficiently.

"They [patients] don't have to constantly come back and check to see if their name has been called. So using the pagers is a more efficient and a better way to protect people's privacy. People love it," said Scarafile. Using the pagers also eliminated hovering in the pick-up or waiting area, which improved the workflow for staff who experienced fewer interruptions from patients eager to pick up their medication.

The Results

Comfortable Wait Experience: Patients have the freedom to leave the waiting room with peace of mind knowing the pager will buzz when their prescription is ready.

Improved Work Environment for Staff: The paging system eliminated hovering and congestion near the pick-up area for medication. Staff experience fewer interruptions giving them a better work environment and more time to attend to filling prescriptions.

Improved Patient Privacy: Pagers replaced calling out numbers or names by quietly alerting customers providing more privacy to patients.

The Conclusion

With the simplicity of LRS pagers, Cape Cod Healthcare Pharmacies wwere able to improve the patient and customer experience in the wait room. The pagers allowed Cape Cod Healthcare to improve patient privacy and alleviate the need for customers to remain in the wait area. Simultaneously, pagers helped eliminate congestion in pick-up areas and improved the staff work environment. Scarafile said the pagers were a great solution and everyone is happy with the product.

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Business Benefits:

- Better wait experience
- Improved work environment
- Increased patient privacy

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