

**SPECIAL POINTS  
OF INTEREST:**

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**INSERTS**

**KINRAY  
RETURN SOLUTIONS  
VACCINE MARKETING**



## Get In The Game: The Pharmacy Marketplace of Tomorrow Is Here

By: David Benoit

In the May issue of the *Network News*, we described Synchronization, Adherence and Medication Therapy Management (SAMTM), as well as the 5-Star quality rating system for Medicare plans offering prescriptions. As you know, plans that can achieve 5-Stars become “preferred” plans financially and in a number of other ways. Our pharmacies need to get in the game. So we asked if each pharmacy would synchronize the medication of just one patient. We told you how important it will be to complete all of the MTM cases you have through Mirixa. We are told that these cases are primarily about increasing patient adherence and they pay \$20 per case. It is time for a report card. How are you doing? You need to know because your report card already exists and plans are looking at you!



NPSC’s goal is to have each Participating Pharmacy achieve a 100% completion rate for their MTM cases at Mirixa. Some of those cases will be Silverscript members and Caremark will pay pharmacies a bonus in early 2015 for their success with the 2014 cases. Besides paying -for-performance on the Mirixa cases, Caremark will also reward pharmacies that achieve the 5-Star targets for adherence with cholesterol meds, ACEs, ARBs, and antidiabetes meds. Caremark will also consider how close to the goal each pharmacy is with drug interactions and inappropriate medications in seniors.

This is an important introductory opportunity to experience the competitive pharmacy marketplace of tomorrow. This is the future you have heard about. It is here now.

There are numerous tools, resources, systems and commercial offerings to help you with Synchronization.

The one thing we cannot make for you is the time to do it. Only you can do that. As you read further into the newsletter you can find a nice article on the high priority of making the time to run, grow and direct your business to emerging opportunities. When you begin to make the time to drive Synchronization, that project will give you even more time in addition to increasing the number of fills for chronic meds by about three extra fills per year. I know that is a big deal, and you want those additional Rx’s!

This is also a good time of year to think about flu season. How will you market your immunization programs? Are your customers supposed to ask you for immunizations or will you ask them? Over 80% of your patients and their families are likely getting their immunizations elsewhere or not at all. Again, there are lots of ideas and support out there for the asking or taking. All you have to do is decide what direction your program will take.

You rely on your employees to execute your plan and to operate your business. This newsletter has some very interesting ideas that can increase the



## NEW NETWORK PARTICIPANTS

### *West Haven Pharmacy, West Haven, CT*

*“Get In the Game” continued from pg. 1*

success of your business through your employees. “A pharmacist is a pharmacist” is just not true. The one that smiles and greets your customers by name is much more valuable in your business than one that does not. If you have some crabapples, it may be time to do something about it. Your money is at risk.

There are several other articles that will interest you. There’s a discussion of the new error in electronic prescriptions – the mispick. You’ll find some interesting comments on audits by Catamaran.

As always, there is a considerable amount of effort that goes into each newsletter. I would like to thank all of our authors and contributors for the considerable talent and thoughtfulness represented in their selection of topics and their artful writing in every issue. All of this comes together under the watchful eye of our designer, editor and schedule minder, Valerie. Thank you all. Enjoy your reading.

## Trust Electronic Prescriptions Too Much?

*By Dianne Shaffer*

New technologies are intended to make our lives and jobs easier, convenient, more efficient and more accurate. In many cases this is very true. In the pharmacy world, time is a precious commodity and if there is a better way to meet your patients’ needs and demands and still have time to breathe or run to the restroom, it sounds like a great idea, right? The introduction of electronic prescribing into your lives was supposed to help increase efficiency, decrease errors and be a trusted improvement in every day operations. Unfortunately, you all know this is not completely the case.

When you receive prescriptions via electronic submission, do you have any procedures in place to ensure that you are filling EXACTLY what the doctor MEANT to order? Unfortunately, it is far too easy for a doctor to commit a mispick (wrong

strength, a drug with a very similar name, select an extended release instead of regular release, etc.). Even selecting the wrong directions for taking the drug are common. These errors (if caught), cause pharmacists the inconvenience of having to call the physician’s office in order to clarify the correct facts about the prescription. Inconvenient, but at least you caught the problem before it went out the door in your patient’s hand!

Some software programs can automatically enter the newly received e-prescription directly into the patient’s profile. If there seems to be a conflict or inconsistency, the system will alert staff, who can then perform an override if necessary, after verifying the prescription is correct. In many other cases, however, prescriptions are received, entered and filled with-



*Continued on pg. 3*

“Electronic Prescriptions” continued from pg. 2

out any automatic alert flashing in your face. How do you handle e-scripts to avoid any dispensing errors? Do you print out all of your e-scripts and take the time to compare them carefully with the patient’s profile BEFORE it’s counted and in the bottle for final check? Or do you trust that it must be right and put maybe a little too much faith in the doctors’ skill in targeting when selecting all of that crucially important information? What do YOU do? If you haven’t really put any special procedures in place regarding filling e-scripts, now is the time to address it. Technology is a wonderful thing, but it’s only as good as the data that is entered. You are your patient’s advocate and final check to ensure that their medication is 100% correct when it leaves your store. Electronic Rx or not, do as you always have: when in doubt, call the M.D.



## CLASSIFIEDS

Bob has some Streater shelving for sale. Shelving is all new, never used, and most is in the original wrapping. He will take 50% for whatever they are currently selling for. If you are interested please contact Bob at 203-729-4567. Items include:

8"x48" (11)	12"x 24" (24)
10"x48" (33)	19"x 36" (7)
12"x48" (13)	3"x 48" wire shelf front fence (1 full bx)

\$15,000 worth of Designer Greetings and American Greetings Cards for sale. Any reasonable offer will be accepted. Also 2 pharmacy balances for sale. Call Ed @ 860 668 2480.

Avoid diminishing the value of your pharmacy.  
Don't leave money on the table when you  
transition the ownership of your business.



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### CONSIDER THESE IMPORTANT ISSUES...

1. **Confidentiality is CRITICAL to maintaining business value.** The more people who know about a sale (employees, suppliers, customers), the less value it will ultimately have. Limit your conversations to trusted advisors, associates and family members.
2. **Connect to the largest group of QUALIFIED BUYERS to create the highest price,** by leveraging the highest level of interest in your business. Limiting your buyer pool (e.g. ONLY your wholesaler's customers), limits your ability to sell and sale price.
3. **DO NOT engage in conversations, information sharing or negotiations with ANY buyer without professional representation,** particularly if contemplating a sale to a chain. Thirteen years of experience selling pharmacies has shown us time after time that direct engagement rarely—if ever—gets the independent owner the best price or the best deal.

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## APPLYING FOR MEDICARE B

### IMMUNIZATIONS (flu shots) Medicare B PROVIDER #



**PLEASE NOTE: CMS IS CURRENTLY  
TAKING IN EXCESS OF 90 DAYS TO  
PROCESS CMS 855B APPLICATIONS**

CMS 855B <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/CMS-Forms/CMS-Forms/downloads/CMS855B.pdf>

CMS 588 EFT FORM <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/CMS-Forms/CMS-Forms/downloads/CMS588.pdf>

Application fee: \$542 (every three years) <https://pecos.cms.hhs.gov/pecos/feePaymentWelcome.do>

### Medicare B SUPPLIER # (DME – including diabetic supplies or DRUGS ONLY)



CMS 855S <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/CMS-Forms/CMS-Forms/downloads/cms855S.pdf>

CMS 588 EFT FORM <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/CMS-Forms/CMS-Forms/downloads/CMS588.pdf>

Application fee: \$542 (every three years) <https://pecos.cms.hhs.gov/pecos/feePaymentWelcome.do>

- \* New pharmacies must be accredited to bill DME (all items listed on page 9 of the application)
- \* New pharmacies **can** apply for Medicare number for DRUGS only (listed on page 8 of the application) without being accredited.
- \* This application requires a \$50k Surety bond. See page 13. (average cost is \$250 yearly)
- \* Beginning in 2014, CMS will be implementing finger-print based background checks for all new DMEPOS enrollees.



### TUESDAYS AT 10

Argosy Group is offering the NPSC network FREE monthly webinars with the best in DME information! This is a wonderful service that many of our network stores have come to look forward to. It will be the best 30 minutes you spend all day!

#### Next Webinar

Date: August 12, 2014  
Time: 11:00 AM (EST)  
Topic: The Power of the IVR System and Proper LCD

To Register:  
Visit [www.northeastpharmacy.com](http://www.northeastpharmacy.com)  
Click on the Tuesday at 10 Tab  
Click on Tuesday at 10 Link

# Happy Employees Are Key to Increased Profits

By Dianne Shaffer

**E**ven if you are a small store that only has one employee, you may never have realized just how important that employee is! They aren't just important to save you from running around, trying to do EVERYTHING yourself. Your employees, whether a technician or store clerk, are incredibly important to the quality of customer service your store delivers which directly affects your profits! Believe it or not, their attitude and **your customer's perception of their attitude are vitally important to your business's success or failure.**



Everyone has had interactions with store clerks who make it clear to you that they hate their job, their boss, or maybe even both! It certainly doesn't make for a pleasant shopping experience, and it makes the customer wonder what is wrong with a business that would make an employee display such a poor attitude. As a store owner, it's important to realize that your employees are your ambassadors to your customers and the public outside of your store. Employees will project their true feelings about their job both on the job and off the job, speaking with friends, family or acquaintances. Don't you want the most positive and heartfelt, happy comments coming from the mouths of your staff?

Happy employees who feel appreciated will help you increase your profits! A book written by Dr. Noelle Nelson, "Make More Money by Making Your Employees Happy" explains how this is true. In the book, Dr. Nelson cites a study from the Jackson Organization, a survey research consultancy since acquired by Healthstream, Inc., which shows that "companies that effectively appreciate employee value enjoy a return on equity and assets more than triple that experienced by firms that don't. When looking at Fortune's "100 Best Companies to Work For" stock prices raised an average of 14% per year from 1998-2005, compared to 6% for the overall market." (1)

1. Be open and honest with your staff about how things are going in the business. This can avoid them feeling "in the dark" which can lead to resentment. Treat them as an important part of your team!
2. Do something out of the ordinary and unexpected to bring them a little lift and show them you appreciate them, maybe a store outing (bowling party, pizza night, or ice cream sundae party at a lengthened lunch?). Or maybe an extra day off with pay around the holidays? These are just a few suggestions that can raise morale and make your employees feel important and appreciated.
3. Most of all make sure your team knows they can talk to you and that you have an open door policy. Let them know you respect and value them, and you will see that respect,

Employees work for monetary compensation, however many (including myself), happiness and feeling valued at a job are worth so much more than that extra little bit in the paycheck.

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(1) Nelson, Noelle C. *Make More Money by Making Your Employees Happy*. MindLab Publishing, 2012. Amazon Digital Service eBook.

## CATAMARAN AUDIT ALERT: HHS/OIG EXCLUSION LIST REVIEW

Providers are required to maintain proper policies and procedures related to training on Compliance including Fraud, Waste and Abuse. Additionally, the provider must have a policy and procedure for checking the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) List of Excluded Individuals (LEIE) and Government Services Administration (GSA) Excluded Parties Lists System (EPLS) to confirm no employee, volunteer, consultant, governing body member, or contracted individual or entity is excluded from participation in federal programs



PLEASE EDUCATE your PHARMACY STAFF on the importance of validating all employees or contractors responsible for the provision of pharmacy services, against the HHS/OIG exclusion list.

- Pharmacy should maintain a policy and procedure which defines the requirement and the procedure to complete the review process.
- Review is required to be completed upon initial hiring of any employee or contractor and at a minimum monthly thereafter.
- Pharmacies should maintain documentation including a list of all employees/contractors for whom the verification was completed and the date of completion. If verifications are conducted directly on the website documentation of the image detailing confirmation of no exclusions must be maintained and accessible for audit.
- The pharmacy is required to remove any employee or contractor found to be on the exclusion list immediately from any pharmacy services and notify the Catamaran FWA hotline at 888-625-5685.
- The website for review can be found at [www.exclusions.oig.hhs.gov](http://www.exclusions.oig.hhs.gov)
- for the OIG LEIE and [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) for the GSA EPLS.

### REMINDER - Check OIG Exclusion List Monthly!

If you have not already been doing so, you should begin checking the OIG exclusion list on a monthly basis. The site allows you to enter five names and you should print the pages each month and keep them in a folder. Catamaran auditors are asking to see this.

The link to check the exclusion list is <http://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov/>

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What are the goals of PUNCH and this lawsuit?

1. To show legislators, insurers and the public how PBM's operate
2. To shed light on the damage preferred networks and other non-pharmacy friendly practices of PBM's do to patient's choice and the distribution of pharmaceuticals
3. Depositions made by the PBM's will include how they calculate things like MAC
4. With information their lawyers already have they believe they can already move to contingency and sue for damages going back to Rx's filled since 1/1/2013
5. You can still join this action for \$500 until 8/30/14. There are no expenses except to the attorneys – Keystone is footing the bill for all the administration.
6. If you are interested in joining, contact Mel at the above number.

## Tips and Strategy for Marketing Your Flu Vaccine Program

By Scott Campbell

Vaccinations are a great income generator for pharmacies while adding to your professional image as a healthcare provider. The percentage of seniors who get their influenza vaccinations is a CMS star measure for Medicare advantage plans. Pharmacies that vaccinate their Medicare patients are more valuable to the Medicare insurance plans than pharmacies that do not vaccinate. Many physician practices are not administering flu shots and advise their patients to get their flu shot “at the pharmacy”. Do your patients know you offer vaccinations? Do people driving by your store who may not be your customers know you give flu shots? What are you doing to market your vaccination services?

Vaccinations are still a relatively new service for pharmacy. You will have to promote this service in the form of both verbal and non-verbal communications. Using multiple communication channels will help you stand out.

Verbal communications are very effective. Use your cashiers to ask **every** customer if they have had their flu shot and let the customer know you do them and when you do them. Do physicians in your area know you give flu shots? Let them know in case they want to send people away from their practice to get the flu shot.

Lawn signs can be a very effective communication tool. This is an excellent way to advertise to people who may not be your customers. How about a professionally designed and produced poster for your windows? Buttons for your employees to wear are another great non-verbal communication tool. Change mats that are placed on the store checkout counters are effective. These mats grab your

customer’s attention every time they make a purchase. How about an 8.5 x 11 inch sign in a sign holder placed on the pharmacy counter or in the waiting area that states the vaccinating pharmacist is on duty or flu shots available? Colorful bag stuffers or stapling a bag leaflet to the outside of the bag are another great way to get your message across to your customers.



Offer a flu shot clinic at your local churches, local companies, fire and police departments, town hall, local gyms, and civic organizations like Rotary, Lions Club or the Chamber of Commerce. Try writing a letter asking the organization if they would like you to come to them and give flu shots. Follow that up with a phone call within 5 days. I heard a story of a pharmacist who gave the flu shots at a Rotary meeting. One of the Rotarians owned a company that employed 250 people. The owner invited the pharmacist to his company to vaccinate all of his employees.

Get your employees excited about giving vaccinations. First you have to have 100% commitment of your pharmacist. Giving vaccinations is now the standard of practice in pharmacy. If your pharmacist doesn’t want to learn this new skill, then you may have to look for a pharmacist who will perform vaccinations. Once your pharmacists are on board, it’s time to get the staff excited. Educate your staff on the importance of flu vaccinations and how important it is for the customers to get their flu shots. Set a goal for how many flu shots you want to give. Second, track your progress to show the staff how the store is progressing toward the goal. A pie chart or thermometer chart in the break room that gets filled in weekly is a great visual to let the staff know how well the store is progressing. How

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“Tips and Strategy” continued from pg. 8

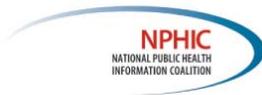
about paying a commission to staff and or pharmacist for every shot that is given? Maybe 50 cents to each technician/cashier who gets a customer to get a shot and 50 cents to the immunizing pharmacist. Can you set a goal for the store, and if the goal is reached maybe give the employees something fun like a pizza party or an ice cream social? To keep people motivated it is good to acknowledge accomplishments frequently. Update the flu shot scorecard weekly. If you are paying commissions, do it weekly or biweekly. How about a Facebook campaign to try to get your community involved in getting people vaccinated?

Maybe you can kick off your flu vaccination season with a wellness campaign. Can you get a radio station to come down and do a remote? Can you get a wellness van from somewhere to pay a visit to your store? Make it exciting, make it fun. Pharmacy is a serious business but launching a new marketing campaign gives you a chance to add some excitement to your business.

Pharmfresh media ([pharmfreshmedia.com/2014-flu](http://pharmfreshmedia.com/2014-flu)) has produced a flu season marketing kit. The kit includes 2 color posters, 500 color bag stuffers, 5 buttons for your employees, and 1 counter mat. Lawn signs are available for an extra fee. This is a \$300 value that you can get for \$129.00 plus \$14.95 shipping and handling. Tell the people at Pharmfresh media that you belong to NPSC and receive a 10% discount. If you can just give 15 flu shots at \$10.00 administration fee, that will pay for the marketing kit.

I know it's the middle of summer, but flu season will be here before you know it. The chains will start marketing their flu vaccination services starting in August or September at the latest. The time to think and plan for the upcoming flu season is now. Some ideas to promote your flu vaccination service and a Flu Season checklist is included as an insert in this newsletter.

## August is National Immunization Awareness Month



“making public health public”



## Promote the Importance of Immunizations for Life with the 2014 NIAM Communication Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to help you communicate the importance of immunizations during this annual observance - and throughout the year. The toolkit contains key messages, vaccine information, sample news releases and articles, sample social media messages and links to web resources from CDC and other organizations. Go to: <http://www.nphic.org/niam>

### Upcoming Immunization Training

August 20, 2014

UConn Avery Point Campus

8:15AM – 4:15PM

Register: <http://pharmacy.uconn.edu/academics/ce/immunization/>

August 21, 2014

MCPHS University, Boston, MA

Register: <http://www.pharmacist.com/pharmacy-based-immunization-delivery-2014-program-series>

# Is Your Business Managing You?

By Scott Campbell

I once met a pharmacy owner who owned 10 pharmacies. I listen closely when someone that successful has something to say. In our discussion we were talking about why many independent pharmacies were struggling to adapt to the changing pharmacy environment. He said to me “many owners need to work **on** their business, not **in** their business”. Owning and managing an independent pharmacy takes a vast array of skills. An owner must manage operations, human resources, regulatory compliance, finances, and marketing just to name a few. As the owner we are the person responsible for the business. How much time do you spend working **on** your business?

Pharmacists measure their value in terms of production. How many prescriptions filled per day equates with how much money earned. It is easy to make that the total focus of your business. The other facets of the business are equally as important and can also lead to an increase in profitability. By spending time managing your business you can increase the volume of business, make your business more efficient, and help prevent audits and keep regulators from assessing chargebacks and fines which will take money out of your pocket. As the owner you have to learn that time spent away from production and time spent in managing is equally as effective and equally as important. The more you say “I don’t

have the time or the money to do that”, the more you *need* to do that. If you don’t have the time or money to manage your business, than your business is managing you. If your business is managing you things may already be out of control and you may be managing from day to day. Although day to day management allows you to get through today, it makes it difficult to grow your business and to enjoy your life.



If you feel overwhelmed at work and can’t find the time to work on your business than it’s time to make a change. Somehow you must carve out time to work on your business. Start with 2 hours a

week. This means during store hours bring in another pharmacist, and work in your office away from production. At first this may feel like a waste of time because you are paying close to \$75.00 per hour with benefits to create time for you to think. As time goes on you will get more effective at this and make this time more productive. Use this time to think about your staff. Do they need more training? Is the staff scheduled for when you need them or can you adjust when people are working? How can you bring more business into the store, should you be marketing at physician offices, or senior centers? Should you be working with a professional marketer to design brochures to keep in your store or distribute around town? How about auditing filled prescriptions? By removing yourself from production and reexamining prescriptions as an auditor would, you can educate your staff on the necessary

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*“Business Managing” continued from pg. 10*

requirements for a prescription. How can you start a vaccination or medication synchronization if you are totally absorbed in production? According to two recent studies a medication synchronization program can increase both your prescriptions filled and your patients’ health. These two programs will pay for themselves by increasing your gross dollars if you take the time to work on your business.



As you start to accept that time spent on managing and away from production is productive you should find that your business is becoming less hectic and more manageable. This will lead to a happier owner which will make your employees happier. A happier owner will also be happier in his or her personal life. If you find that your business is out of control, and there is nothing you can do but continue to keep slogging away, the time has come to stop the insanity.

An owner, John D., had worked in the family pharmacy his grandfather started all his life. Following his 60th birthday, he opened a second, third and eventually a fourth pharmacy. He was having a lot of fun, too. When I asked why he had not opened these stores twenty years earlier his answer was very short. He said, “I was too busy working.” It may be that success is a choice, just like almost anything else.

I invite you to carve out 2 hours per week to improve some aspect of your life, whether business or personal. To continue to do the same thing and expect a different result is the definition of insanity according to Einstein. The most successful owners I have met appear to take time to work on their business, not in their business.

*Scott has invited you to take 2 hours out of your week to improve. What have you done? NPSC would like to hear from you. Tell us how it went and what changes you made to your business management in just 2 hours per week. Email us at [valerie@northeastpharmacy.com](mailto:valerie@northeastpharmacy.com). You could be featured in an upcoming issue of Network News.*

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