Isn’t All of Pharmacy “Special”? 
Developing Specialty Pharmacy Services

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Learning Objectives
• Explain the unique benefits of an integrated health system specialty pharmacy program
• Identify operational and clinical metrics of a specialty pharmacy program
• Describe how certified pharmacy technicians play a role in delivering specialty pharmacy services
• Describe roles associated with the specialty pharmacy back office

Specialty Pharmacy
Definition

“Specialty pharmacy is a unique class of professional pharmacy practice that includes a comprehensive and coordinated model of care for patients with chronic illnesses and complex medical conditions. Specialty pharmacies provide expert therapy management services, coupled with patient education and counseling, that collectively drive adherence, compliance, and persistence, manage dosing, and monitor appropriate medication use. This unparalleled, patient-centric model is organized to dispense/distribute typically high cost, injectable/infusible/oral and other hard-to-manage therapies within a collaborative framework designed to achieve superior clinical, humanistic, and economic outcomes.”

Specialty Pharmaceutical Specialty Pharmacy
Treats complex, chronic illnesses Patient education
High cost Adherence coaching/monitoring
Special storage/administration requirements Benefits Investigation
Require ongoing efficacy/toxicity monitoring Prior Authorization
Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) Enrollment in patient assistance programs
Oral, injectable, infusible Refill reminders and shipping coordination
Limited distribution 24/7 access to pharmacist

Ongoing treatment monitoring
Specialty Pharmacy Spend & Patient Factors

Specialty Pharmaceuticals

- Account for ~33% of spend in 2014
  - $124.1Bn (up from 23% ~5 years ago)
  - $54Bn increase in 5 years (73% overall spend)
- Medicare specialty spend increased 45.9% – biggest drivers were oncology, multiple sclerosis and hepatitis C (57.8% of total specialty spend)
- Represent 42% of late-stage pipeline drugs

Ecosystem of Patient Care

Focus: Quality, Cost, Access  
Goal: Total Patient Care

- Provider
- Hospital
- Health Plan
- Pharmacy Benefit Manager
- Specialty Pharmacy
- Retail Pharmacy
- Urgent Care Clinic / Retail Care Clinic
- Infusion Center
- Nurse – Case Management

Ecosystem of Patient Care

Fragmented Model
Patient Case: Fragmented Care

- Patient with breast cancer prescribed lapatinib and capecitabine for treatment.
  - Health Plan is BCBS IL and PBM is Prime Therapeutics
  - Prime Therapeutics Specialty Pharmacy unable to fill lapatinib (limited distribution; no access to medication)
  - Patient directed to go to Walgreen’s Specialty Pharmacy for lapatinib and Prime Therapeutics Specialty Pharmacy for capecitabine
  - Patient has to coordinate with 2 mail order pharmacies for her oncology medications

- Benefits of a Health System Specialty Pharmacy
  - NM Specialty Pharmacy would have been able to provide seamless transition from clinic to home for this patient.
  - As an NCI designated center, NM Specialty Pharmacy has access to both lapatinib and capecitabine.

Patient Case: Coordinated Care

- Avoiding treatment discontinuation
  - during follow-up phone call for new HIV therapy, patient c/o rash since starting regimen but denied any other concerning symptoms
  - component of regimen known to cause rash—usually benign
  - Timely discussion with prescriber: pharmacist called patient and instructed to continue ART with symptomatic relief from an OTC product
  - Able to get an appointment with provider for the next day to assess rash: **AVO**
  - **DED disruption in therapy in patient with increased risk of progressing to AIDS**

Benefits Of A Health System Specialty Pharmacy

- Awareness of the patient with increased risk of progressing to AIDS
- Avoided disruption in therapy
- Improved quality of care
- Improved customer satisfaction
- New revenue opportunity
- Outcomes data
- Building relationships
- Providers
- Patients

Patient Perspective

Benefits of a Health System Specialty Pharmacy

- Coordination of care
  - 24/7 access to pharmacist
- Access to high cost medication
  - Prior authorization, appeals
  - Copay assistance enrollment
- Ongoing monitoring for safety/efficacy
- Adherence coaching
- Documentation in the health-record
  - Timely communication with team

Health System Perspective

Benefits of a Health System Specialty Pharmacy

- Improve quality of care
  - Hanson et al. (UI Health)
  - Barada et al. (NMH)
- New revenue opportunity
  - ~$1000/prescription
- Managing your “own” patient
  - Outcomes data
- Building relationships
  - Providers
- Patients
Opportunities to Optimize Care

- Collaboration!
- Continuity of care
- Adherence
- Side effect management
- Drug-drug interaction potential
- Access
  - Prior Authorization/Patient Assistance Programs
- Documentation (health record)

Development & Implementation Considerations

Big Picture Overview

☑️ Pharmacists performing medication management in specialty clinics
☑️ Staff to provide benefits investigation, prior authorization and payment assistance services
☑️ Payer contracts
☑️ 24/7 access for patients
☑️ Space for fulfillment and shipping
☑️ Accreditation as a future goal

Current State/Opportunities

- Fulfillment services already in place vs establishing completely new infrastructure
- Meet with clinical staff within specialty clinics
  - What works currently, what are their needs?
- Assess number of prescriptions within each clinic
  - Payer mix?
  - Revenue potential?

Northwestern Medicine (NM) Specialty Pharmacy

Business Plan/Goals brought to Growth Committee:
Offer NM patients specialty pharmacy services through a closed door setting
- Improved continuum of care
- Improved medication safety and patient outcomes
- Improved patient and provider satisfaction

Rationale

- Providing specialty pharmacy services can improve the continuum of care in the health system. It can also improve health outcomes through safe and effective medication use through a closed loop system.

NM Specialty Pharmacy

Mission:
To help patients with complex or chronic diseases receive exceptional care by delivering specialty pharmacy services in a safe and efficient manner at an affordable cost.
Starting From Scratch!

External Involvement
- Group purchasing organization
- Healthcare furniture
- Manufacturer accounts
- Packaging
- Pharmacy Management System: ScriptPro®
- Shipping: FedEx®, UPS®, Courier Service
- Wholesaler accounts

Intra/Inter-departmental Involvement
- Clinical Administration
- Environmental Services
- Facilities
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Informatics
- Information Technology
- Internal Audit
- Managed Care
- Marketing
- Materials Management
- Physician and Nurse Leaders
- Revenue Cycle
- Telecommunications
- Treasury

Planning
- Kick off presentations describing new services to key stakeholders
- Hiring staff
- Contracting: Consultant
  - Identify top 20 PBMs
  - Obtain applications
  - Revenue cycle
  - Work-flow between front and back end
- Pharmacy Management System (ScriptPro®)
- Hardware installation
- Interface development
- Clinical Care Plans
- Case Management System

NM Specialty Pharmacy: Prescriptions Work-flow

Clinic pharmacist meets with patient to educate on new specialty medication

Pharmacist recommends use of NM Specialty Pharmacy and if pt agrees, prescription sent to NM Specialty Pharmacy

As can be filled, delivered to clinic or mailed to pt
Rx cannot be filled: NM Specialty Pharmacy facilitates transfer to appropriate pharmacy with documentation and call to pt

Call at 72 hours to confirm patient is taking and tolerating regimen
Call monthly to assess adherence, tolerability and need for refill

Specialty Pharmacy submits prior authorizations and/or helps to apply for patient assistance programs

Patient Care Advocates
Certified technicians engaged in direct patient care
- Prescription fulfillment
- Prior authorization completion
- Copay assistance enrollment
- Monthly refill/adherence calls
- Documentation in clinical case management tool
- Documentation in EHR

New Opportunities: Back Office Roles
- Data Analyst
  - Metrics reporting (financial/clinical)
  - Value-based reimbursement
- Revenue Cycle/Finance
- Payer Contracting
- Communication with Pharma

Metrics
Operational
- Number of prescriptions filled
  - Capture rate in each specialty clinic
- Number of prior authorizations completed
  - Rate of prior authorization approval
  - Time to prior authorization approval
- Time to first fill (prescription written to prescription filled)
- Number of enrollments into medication assistance programs
- Patient/provider satisfaction surveys
Metrics

Clinical

- Pharmacist interventions on:
  - prescribing errors (correct indication, drug, dose, schedule)
  - drug interactions
- Adherence
  - adherence (MPR/PDC)
- Patients educated
- Time to treatment
- Number of re-admissions avoided
- Number of admissions avoided
- Number of ED visits avoided

Specialty Pharmacy Networks

- UHC Specialty Pharmacy Program
- Excelera™ Specialty Pharmacy Network
- Gain access to limited distribution agents
- Gain access to payer contracts
- Data management

Why Choose NM Specialty Pharmacy?

Integrated specialty medication management

- Pharmacy staff integrated in clinic practice
- Face to face interaction with patient in clinic setting creating a seamless transition
- Experienced Clinical Pharmacists
  - Board certified pharmacists
  - Focused practice specialty area
- Educating future Clinical Pharmacists
- Post graduate residency training in ID, Cancer, Transplant
- Access to EMR
  - Reduce time to obtain prior authorization
  - Communication and documentation of medication related issues in EMR
  - Call Center
- Ongoing follow up and management of patients by pharmacy staff

Summary

- Health system specialty pharmacy can optimize patient care by facilitating access to medication and therapy management while at the same time generating a new revenue source
- Certified technicians can be utilized in advanced roles that allow for more direct patient care
- Specialty Pharmacy programs can provide metrics that support value based reimbursement

References

5. Barada, F. Identification of Patient Factors Associated with Hepatitis C Treatment Failure in a Pharmacist Managed Hepatitis C Program. Pending poster presentation at ID Week; October 7-11, 2015 San Diego Convention Center.
Isn’t All of Pharmacy “Special”?

Lana Gerzenshtein

1. What are benefits of a health system based specialty pharmacy?
   A. Coordination of care, education for patients and ongoing treatment monitoring
   B. Pharmacy staff can send prior authorization paperwork back to providers
   C. Pharmacists and technicians have less direct communication with providers
   D. Pharmacists do not have access to the EHR

2. Which of the following is an operational metric that can be measured within specialty pharmacy services?
   A. Number of patients that achieved successful clinical outcomes with completion of Hepatitis C therapy
   B. Prescription capture rate within each specialty clinic
   C. Number of patients that were able to go back to work after starting therapy with a specialty medication
   D. Adherence rates

3. Which of the following can be performed by a certified pharmacy technician within specialty pharmacy?
   A. Verifying prescriptions
   B. Educating patients on new specialty medications
   C. Filling out and submitting prior authorizations
   D. Writing SOAP notes

4. Which of the following roles can be fulfilled within the specialty pharmacy back office?
   A. Data analyst
   B. Medical assistant obtaining patient vitals
   C. Prior authorization review
   D. Patient copay assistance enrollment