

Pharmacare Hawaii Optimizes Productivity and Improves Quality of Care with Citus Health

Specialty pharmacy drugs are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. pharmaceutical business and with that rapid uptick in patient volume, specialty pharmacy organizations that are using outdated manual business processes and communications to coordinate patient onboarding and care face a tremendous challenge. These archaic processes, including constant email, calling and faxing with patients and physicians, and making 4-6 attempts to gain patient consent for medication delivery, are what drove Honolulu's number one local pharmacy, Pharmacare Hawaii to look for a way to streamline patient engagement and automate their workflows for their specialty pharmacy, enteral and home infusion patients and staff.

"Our patient base is steadily growing with 90-100 new referrals a week and it was not a sustainable solution to have my staff making 60-100 follow up calls per day. It was imperative that we implement the most efficient workflow and patient engagement tools available in order to grow our business."

*Karie Terada, Assistant Director of
Pharmacy Operations, Pharmacare*



For over 90 years, Pharmacare Hawaii has taken pride in being a third generation, locally owned and operated pharmacy business. Originating as Yoshino Drug in 1927, then Value Drug, today Pharmacare Hawaii continues the legacy and commitment to the health of their patients. Pharmacare operates seven retail pharmacies on the island of Oahu, as well as offering pharmacy services in infusion therapy, nutritional and enteral services, specialty pharmacy, long-term care pharmacy services, vaccination clinics, and pharmacy benefit management. Pharmacare offers the most comprehensive suite of pharmacy services for residents, delivered with the same Aloha Spirit as they did for generations.

Patient engagement challenges

Because of the urgency of the medication Pharmicare Hawaii provides and the significant challenges engaging patients, the specialty pharmacy leadership team knew they wanted to implement a solution that would enable digital patient engagement to reduce the multiple attempts often required to connect with patients, easily obtain signed consent, and enable them to improve time to delivery and therapy adherence rates. The research team set out to find an innovative solution that would solve these critical challenges, which led Pharmicare Hawaii to choose Citus Health to help optimize their business processes

and the patient experience with a HIPAA-compliant suite of digital patient engagement and automated workflow solutions.

“We found during our evaluation that the Citus Health platform was the only solution available in the market that allowed us to not only digitally engage with the patient, but also improve our workflow across our entire team, including our pharmacists, clinicians and delivery staff as well physicians,” added Terada.

Citus Health streamlines patient communication, authorization and delivery

Pharmacare Hawaii initially launched the Citus Health Platform with their specialty pharmacy division to automate workflows and streamline patient and staff communications with HIPAA-compliant, secure messaging tools, electronic forms, and eSignatures. To date, the specialty team has onboarded nearly 50% of its 1,000 specialty medication patients, which has greatly reduced the number of monthly follow up calls and time spent on outreach for refill reminders, critical documentation, and signatures required for deliveries and reimbursements. Feedback from patients using the Citus mobile application has also been very positive with many citing how much they like the ability to easily send a **“where’s my order”** text that even when short staffed the pharmacy can quickly respond to and start the refill process immediately within the Citus app.

Pharmacare Hawaii’s 15 specialty pharmacy staff members are all now utilizing the platform with a continued focus on onboarding the majority of specialty refill patients onto the Citus platform.

“With the implementation of Citus Health for our specialty pharmacy team, we are saving 1-2 hours/per day/per patient care assistant on follow up phone calls to patients, allowing them to be more productive and accrue less overtime,” added Terada. “Previously, we were also sending refill reminders out individually, which took our staff away from more productive functions. Now, with Citus, 100% of our outbound refill reminders are sent in batches nightly, which saves our staff several hours every week.”

The platform has proven to benefit the entire Pharmicare Hawaii specialty pharmacy team, including help staff to resolve complicated patients, referral challenges and more by simply being able to have all communications with the patient in one central location.

The significant reduction in call volume has enabled Pharmicare Hawaii to go from three team members dedicated to patient follow up to two, while also enabling staff to stay **“on-day”** with their workload versus 2-4 days behind. The implementation of the Citus Health platform has also helped Pharmicare Hawaii improve cash flow and expedite reimbursements with the ability to quickly obtain signed consent for deliveries and ensure proper documentation for confident claim submission.



Citus further optimizes patient and financial outcomes across the business

“Not only are we getting orders out faster, we have had more on-time deliveries sent and less rushed or missed deliveries by using Citus Health. In fact, this solution is saving our pharmacy a tremendous amount by not having to pay overtime, gas, maintenance and more, for unscheduled deliveries,” added Terada.

Building on that success Pharmacare Hawaii has begun Citus Health’s quick onboarding process to empower their enteral and parenteral nutrition staff with the new patient engagement tools and workflow automation to further improve operational efficiency and patient satisfaction as the pharmacy continues to grow. The Pharmacy’s home infusion staff and patients will also utilize the Citus Health end-to-end digital suite of solutions.



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“We have been extremely pleased with the collaborative approach of the Citus Health team and their ability to quickly innovate to meet new market requirements. As a locally owned pharmacy we pride ourselves on being able to deliver prompt personalized care and since deploying the Citus Health Platform we have not only seen an increase in productivity but more importantly, we’ve further extended our ability to deliver the highest quality care in the most efficient way possible.”

*Byron Yoshino, PharmD, President and CEO,
Pharmacare Hawaii*

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About Citus Health

Citus Health is a digital health transformation leader that automates critical post-acute care services to reduce per-patient costs and increase patient satisfaction. Led by a post-acute care nurse with domain expertise and internationally recognized med tech expert, Citus Health delivers the only comprehensive on-demand digital and mobile solution set that transforms archaic processes to set a new standard of patient care and engagement. For more information, visit citushealth.com.