

PerceptiMed's ScripClip looks to reduce will-call errors, improve efficiency

By DAVID SALAZAR

When PerceptiMed was launched in 2011, its founder, neurosurgeon Dr. Alan Jacobs, set out to ensure that adverse medical events resulting from a patient receiving the wrong medication or wrong dose could be avoided. To do so, the Silicon Valley-based company worked to develop its proprietary VeriFill technology, which powers its IdentRx medication verification device and can read manufacturer imprints on the sides of every pill as a medication is dispensed.

As he worked within different pharmacies, Jacobs found that will call is another aspect of a retail pharmacy operation that, aside from being inefficient, also could lead to adverse health events if a patient is given the wrong medication as a result of an organizational mistake. So the company developed ScripClip, a will-call solution that matches a drug's NDC number to a proprietary RF tag that's scanned into a pharmacy's management system. When a patient arrives to pick up their prescription and gives the pharmacy staff identifying information, the clip will light up, identifying the patient's medication.

"In places where there

are high numbers of prescriptions dispensed or multiple Smiths, Johnsons or Garcias, going through that alphabetically in many cases can take some time, and sometimes the wrong bag is given out and distributed," Frank Maione, PerceptiMed's chief business officer, told *Drug Store News* about the main situation ScripClip works to avoid.

ScripClip eliminates the requirement to organize prescriptions alphabetically because of the proprietary light-up technology, and it will identify multiple prescriptions for a patient that might not be in the same bag. Additionally, it makes easier the process of returning to stock prescriptions that haven't been picked up after a while. Rather than requiring a paper manifest, pharmacy staff can query bags that were filled within a certain time frame, causing all of them to light up and allowing them to return to stock.

And pharmacies that use a central fill model can scan multiple prescription bags into the pharmacy system simply by scanning a code on the outside of a bin to which its contents are tied. Additionally, it allows pharmacy staff to fill a prescription with an unclaimed one if there's none left in inventory but there's one waiting that

hasn't been picked up. In these scenarios, in addition to reducing the potential for errors, ScripClip also helps with pharmacy efficiency.

"We are finding, in our various pilots and where we are now commercially, that the aggregated amount of timesaving is minimally at about 30%, and greater in many instances," Maione said. "We've done time and motion studies before our system went in and then afterward, and we're finding ScripClip to be a significant timesaver for the store personnel, as well as the customer who might have been waiting in line for some time."

PerceptiMed piloted the ScripClip technology at two pharmacies — one in Salinas, Calif., and the other in Lowell, Ark. Both pharmacies reported a 30% increase in pharmacy operational processes.

Maione said ScripClip is now commercial in four states.

"It's leading-edge; it's low cost; it requires no remodeling, no reconfiguring within stores; and it delivers on the promise of three things," Maione said. "First, there's quality assurance and higher overall customer satisfaction with greater HIPAA information protection. Second, it delivers on speed of delivery of medication that a customer has come to pick up. Third, financially, it covers both optimization of inventory in stores and it utilizes manpower more effectively within a business model."



PerceptiMed's ScripClip

BUZZ 'N BYTES

Ateb convenes Community Pharmacy Advisory Board

RALEIGH, N.C. — Ateb convened its Community Pharmacy Advisory Board in November in an effort to foster leadership about the issues facing community pharmacy, and suggesting solutions that would drive profitability.

Among the big changes the board envisioned for the future of pharmacy was pharmacogenomics testing, which pharmacies now can offer through Ateb's solution to help identify how pa-

tients metabolize their medications and maximize the benefit of patients's medications.

The advisory board also discussed the role community pharmacies play in helping patients choose Medicare Part D prescription drug plans. Ateb's Patient Management Access Portal integrates with iMedicare, allowing community pharmacies to help their patients compare and choose the plan that suits their needs. The advisory board members in attendance were Jana Bennett of Medicine Shoppe Pharmacies, Nord's Pharmacy and Gifts's John Nord, Graves Drug Stores's Dared Price, Hometown Pharmacies' Amy Baloh and Bartle's Pharmacy's Michael Doscher.

Arete looks to PrescribeWellness for patient communication, med sync

IRVINE, Calif. — PrescribeWellness and pharmacy services administrative organization Arete Pharmacy Network have entered into a partnership that makes PrescribeWellness Arete Pharmacy Network's preferred patient communications and medication synchronization provider.

"We are excited to announce our new strategic partnership with Arete Pharmacy Network, and we look forward to working with its member pharmacies to improve the health of the communities they serve," PrescribeWellness president and CEO Al Babbington said.

Growing caregiver market seeks medication management solutions

By DAVID SALAZAR

AARP's Project Catalyst — an initiative aimed at sparking healthcare innovation focused on people ages 50 years and older — in a report from April projects that by 2020, 117 million Americans will need some sort of caregiving assistance. At that point, the size of the market for the 45 million unpaid and 5 million paid caregivers is estimated to reach \$72 billion, with RAND estimating opportunity costs around caregivers to be \$522 billion every year, based on income unpaid caregivers lose in time spent on eldercare.

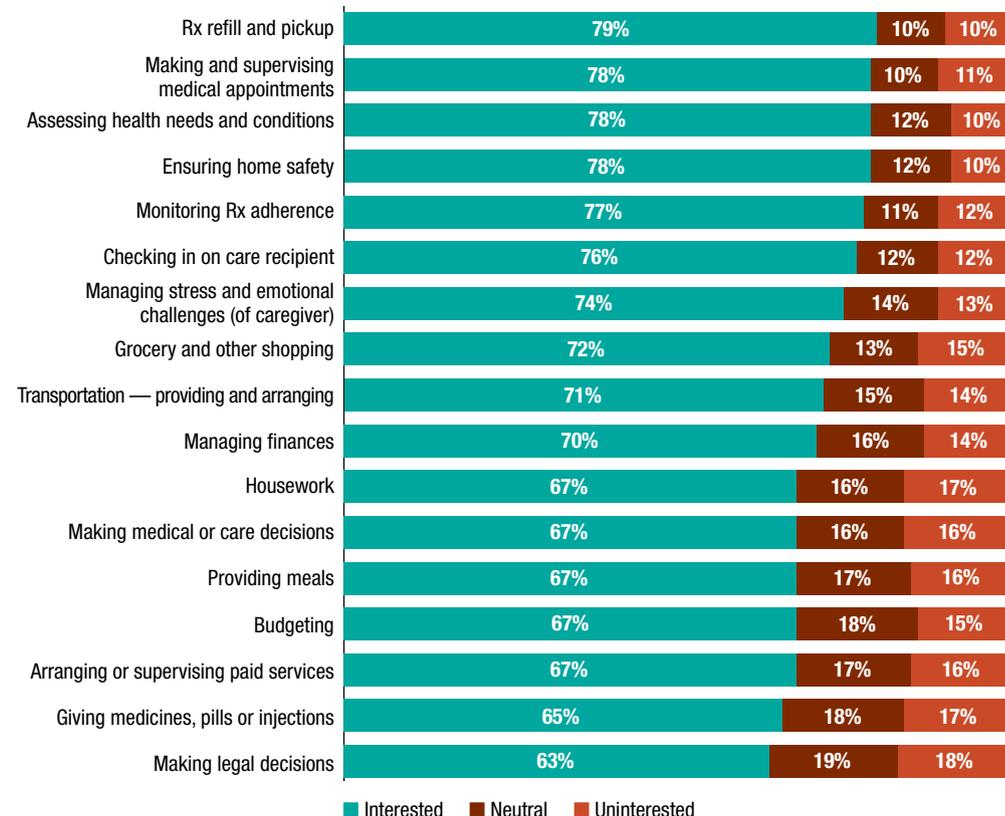
The report, "Caregivers & Technology: What they Want and Need," saw Project Catalyst and HITLAB conducting a representative survey panel, as well as ethnographic observations and interviews, to get a better sense of who makes up the caregiver market, what their challenges are and where technology might be able to ease their burden by meeting their needs. And with 92% of the caregivers surveyed considered tech literate, the report noted that there is a strong desire for solutions to help with caregiving.

"While many caregivers (43%) currently [are] using technology less than weekly to provide care, a large share of them want to use technology, especially when asked about technological solutions for specific activities they perform," the report said. "On the near horizon, we see vast opportunity for technology innovators to create solutions that help alleviate the stress and workload of unpaid family caregivers."

Among a caregiver's workload are duties ranging from grocery shopping (87%) and housework (82%) to feeding (44%) and bathing (42%). From a pharmacy perspective, some 30% are in charge of dressing a patient's wounds, and 74% of the caregivers surveyed said they administer medication — including pills and injections — to the person in their care. As a result, the study found high interest in solutions that could ease tasks around medication management.

Overall, 71% of caregivers said they were interested in using technology to support their caregiving activities, and prime among their interest is tech that aids in prescription refills

INTEREST IN TECHNOLOGY, BY TASK



Source: "Caregivers and Technology: What They Want & Need," AARP Project Catalyst, April 2016.

and pickup — something in which more than three-quarters of caregivers said they were interested. Similarly, more than three-quarters are interested in technology that would help them monitor medication adherence, and approximately two-thirds are interested in solutions that would assist in giving patients medicines, pills and injections. Medication management was the most common challenge that caregivers noted in interviews.

The survey found that only about 11.3% of caregivers were already using technology to manage prescription refills, and 7.9% were using technology to facilitate delivery, though when asked, two-thirds said they were likely to use current technology. The largest barrier respondents identified was lack of awareness, but they also highlighted that aside from a lack

of time to find and set up these solutions, there also is a lack of interoperability with pharmacies and a general fragmentation of solutions.

The report suggested a tech solution that meets multiple needs at once as a way to address these barriers, as caregivers are more willing to pay for a potentially more costly solution to multiple problems than a cheaper one that performs a single function. It also suggested that there is a "need for a trusted, authoritative and curated source that caregivers can use to identify apps or other digital tools that are recommended for their caregiving activities."

The goal of innovators, the report said, should be finding solutions to address practical needs of caregivers who are being challenged daily with the tasks of caregiving, and who want dependable solutions.

Q&A

Improving adherence

Mark Rinker,
Synergy Medical

For almost 10 years, Synergy Medical has been providing proven and reliable technology for blister card automation, which now is used daily for 145,000 lives. Since the first installation in January 2008, there have been hundreds of SynMed installations in retail drug stores, long-term care institutions and pharmacy chains that have centralized their blister card production service (central fill operations). SynMed clients are found throughout Canada, the United States and Europe. Drug Store News recently caught up with Mark Rinker, senior director of sales, North America, to discuss the changing retail pharmacy environment, and Synergy Medical's place within it.

DSN: What are some of the changes you are seeing in the U.S. retail pharmacy environment?

Mark Rinker: From Synergy Medical's perspective, we see a gradual and steady shift toward multi-dose blister packaging for patients with complicated medication regimens. This trend has been in place for several years now, and I wouldn't say it's a paradigm shift, but it is how a paradigm shift develops — gradually, then suddenly.

Looking more broadly, I think everyone is aware that the cost of medication nonadherence is astronomical. Certainly, the most recent trends in U.S. retail pharmacy are responses to quality of care measures that affect their revenue, namely reimbursement and plan inclusions.

DSN: How does adherence packaging fit in to this picture?

Rinker: Adherence packaging is a logical way to organize a patient's

medication. The packaging allows the patient to access all of their medication by day and dose-administration time. One time pass will have all of their medication, as opposed to manipulating a series of vials. It is simply much easier for the patient.

We see adherence packaging as a natural extension to medication synchronization; it is the final step to closing the patient adherence loop. It is one step to organize their medication so renewals are all at once; it's another step to help ensure the patient takes their medication as prescribed once they are home.

DSN: Why are blister packs the preferred choice for medication adherence?

Rinker: Blister packaging is a low-tech, low-cost and highly effective method to drive medication adherence. There have been a number of clinical trials that have drawn the same conclusion. Widely cited is the FAME study, which showed patients were 97% adherent with multi-dose blister packaging versus 61% with vials. It's important to note that the patients with multi-dose packaging had their underlying



SynMed automation for solid, oral medications in blister packs

ing condition statistically under better control. This is a clear link that packaging drives outcomes.

DSN: What sets Synergy Medical apart, as far as automating blister card production?

Rinker: If you look at our company, we are 52 people who are laser focused on blister card automation; it's all we do. We are vertically oriented, meaning we design, engineer, manufacture, service and support the SynMed System.

To view the full Q&A, visit DrugStoreNews.com/Article/Improving-Adherence-QA-Synergy-Medicals-Mark-Rinker.

Owen Mumford redesigns Unifine Pentips, Pentips Plus packaging

By DAVID SALAZAR

Owen Mumford is giving the packaging for its Unifine Pentips and Unifine Pentips Plus product lines a refresh. The new packaging features a clean, modern design aesthetic that includes bold pops of color implemented to highlight each product's unique device specifications. It also is designed to offer flexible merchandising options to maximize shelf space, allowing the cartons to be stacked facing forward or with the top lid facing outward.

"Better serving the needs of pharmacists is a priority with our redesign," Owen Mumford marketing director Casey Pflieger said. "We know that time is a critical factor in pharma-

cies, and anything we can do to improve speed and efficiency is appreciated. By enlarging our pen needle specifications, pharmacy staff can identify the right product at a glance, making pen needle fulfillment faster and easier."

The company said that it's also working to make an impression on patients with the new packaging, which features enhanced product benefit call-outs, including a pen needle compatibility guide specifying which injection pens the pen needles have been tested against. Design also was used to convey product usage. Unifine Pentips Plus packaging now prominently depicts a pen needle in use, approaching the device's removal chamber. By showcasing the product in use, the company



Owen Mumford's Unifine Pentips and Pentips Plus lines

said it hopes to better convey the device's functionality and uniqueness.

The new cartons began shipping in November, with the expectation that they will be fully phased in by January.