

Challenge

In order to expand its capabilities and work toward its goal of becoming a lifelong wellness resource in the community, North Shore-LIJ Health founded the Vivo Health brand. Along with a wide array of other wellness services offered by Vivo Health, the health system wanted to implement a pharmacy in its flagship facility, North Shore University Hospital.

Solution

After an extensive strategic planning and RFP process, Vivo Health selected AmerisourceBergen as their consulting partner for the design and implementation of the innovative enterprise pharmacy services strategy. AmerisourceBergen made design and technology recommendations, analyzed the financial implications of the initiative, made capital and staffing projections, and proposed the patient care model.

Result

The pharmacy at North Shore University Hospital provides both patients and employees with a convenient option for filling prescriptions, while generating increased revenue and cost savings for the health system. The initiative is one component of the health system's overall strategy to become a lifelong wellness resource in the region.

North Shore-LIJ Health System selects AmerisourceBergen's® Enterprise Pharmacy Solution for pilot enterprise pharmacy program

Health system looks to improve community wellness, reduce costs, and increase revenue with an innovative pharmacy strategy.

Situation

North Shore-LIJ Health System is the nation's third largest non-profit, secular healthcare system with more than 4,800 beds and 14 hospitals. The health system also includes long-term care facilities, centers for progressive care, home health agencies, and employs more than 7,000 world-class physicians and 9,000-plus nurses and other healthcare professionals. Serving more than 5.2 million people in Long Island, Queens, and Staten Island, New York, it is the largest healthcare provider in the region and is continually looking for ways to improve its services and build healthy communities.

Challenge

Already a leader in traditional acute-care services, North Shore-LIJ had a vision to expand its capabilities with a comprehensive wellness initiative. Their objective? To form lifelong relationships with members of the community and dispel the notion that a hospital's only role is to serve the sick or injured. North Shore-LIJ wanted to be seen as a lifelong support system and resource for wellness and health in the community.

To spearhead this initiative, North Shore-LIJ founded its "life care" brand, Vivo Health. Ultimately, the brand will feature a wide range of wellness-based services including a website with healthcare information and e-commerce, integrated fitness and wellness centers, a credit card with rewards for healthy choices, and much more.

As a critical component of the Vivo Health initiative, North Shore-LIJ wanted to build an enterprise pharmacy strategy within its hospitals. The health system recognized that several factors were contributing to a growing need for home healthcare products. First, the region was undergoing a significant population shift. According to a census projection, the population of those 55 and older in the region would increase by more than 25 percent by 2018. Other trends, including shorter hospital stays, advances in technology, and increased patient self-sufficiency suggested that an enterprise pharmacy services strategy would reduce healthcare costs and provide a new revenue source for the health system.

Solution

The health system's North Shore University Hospital in Manhasset, New York, was selected as the site of the first, Vivo Health Pharmacy. With a clear vision in mind, North Shore-LIJ issued an RFP seeking a partner with comprehensive pharmacy experience to develop the enterprise pharmacy strategy and execute the implementation.

After reviewing proposals from at least seven prospective partners, which ran the gamut from drug distributors to retail chains and independent consultants, Vivo Health selected AmerisourceBergen as their consulting partner on the project.

“At North Shore-LIJ, we want to nullify the notion that a patient is ever ‘discharged’ from our care. Our goal is that our health system be seen as a life-care provider, and the enterprise pharmacy strategy is one more step toward that goal.”

**– Richard Bennett,
Managing Director
of Business Development**

For more information about these and other Market Growth Solutions, contact AmerisourceBergen at 877-892-1254, email solutions@amerisourcebergen.com, or visit our website at AmerisourceBergenDrug.com.

The Result

The 1,100 square-foot pharmacy, opened in November 2009, is equipped with a wide array of over-the-counter medications, lactation products, vitamins and supplements, and of course, prescription medications dispensed by pharmacy staff. The pharmacy will feature a kiosk where customers can access VivoHealth.com to order medications and supplies from the site's 10,000+ product inventory. In addition, the pharmacy is equipped with a consultation room for patient-focused medication therapy management and immunization administration.

While the pharmacy is open to the public, its target patients are hospital inpatients, who are able to have their first prescriptions filled as they are discharged, and outpatients who receive a prescription while under the care of a North Shore-LIJ physician.

“Studies suggest that the average patient is discharged from a hospital with five to seven prescriptions,” says Richard Bennett, Managing Director of Business Development. “But the inconvenience of having to drive to a pharmacy after just leaving a hospital often deters patients from getting the prescription filled. Somewhere between 20 and 30 percent of prescriptions go unfilled, which puts the patient’s health at risk. With a pharmacy right in the hospital, our healthcare providers have better means of ensuring that patients continue their course of treatment, and they can better monitor for medication compliance issues.”

With the convenience of an in-house, operation, Vivo Health Pharmacy strives to be the last point of care for patients as they leave the hospital. In addition, the pharmacy is open to North Shore-LIJ employees and their dependents, offering significant cost savings to the health system’s employee prescription benefits program.

North Shore-LIJ expects a high return on their enterprise pharmacy investment, as over-the-counter products typically realize profit margins of 30 to 40 percent, while home healthcare products are generally sold at a 50 percent gross profit. Within five years, the health system plans to open multiple pharmacies under the Vivo Health brand.

However, the biggest reward for the health system has been realizing its objective of becoming a community resource for lifelong wellness care. “At North Shore-LIJ, we want to nullify the notion that a patient is ever ‘discharged’ from our care. Our goal is that our health system be seen as a life-care provider, and the enterprise pharmacy strategy is one more step toward that goal”, says Richard Bennett, Managing Director of Business Development.

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