Transforming the pharmacy into a strategic asset

Improving health outcomes and patient safety

Mariners Hospital
Success snapshot
A Critical Access Hospital is gaining local and national recognition by setting new quality standards. A key component of the hospital’s success is improving health outcomes and patient safety through the integration of pharmacy services.

**The customer:**
Mariners Hospital, a Critical Access Hospital in the Florida Keys

**The challenge:**
Providing quality care with limited resources

**The solution:**
Strategic pharmacy leadership resources

**The benefits:**
Optimal antibiotic therapy
Improved patient outcomes
Pharmacy viewed as "strategic" asset

**Key learnings:**
A culture of quality is required for sustainable improvements
Close collaboration with a trusted partner yields superior results

Mariners Hospital has received 5 awards for excellence in 2 years.
"Medications are the most frequently used intervention to improve patient’s health and one of the most preventable harms to hospitalized patients. This makes medication safety one of our top priorities."

Candy Fincke, Vice-President, Mariners Hospital

**In a class of its own**

How does a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital in the Florida Keys gain local and national recognition for patient safety and medical quality? By building a hospital-wide culture of safety. Mariners Hospital has a relentless pursuit of perfection when it comes to improving health outcomes and patient safety through the integration of pharmacy services.

Mariners' pharmacy is managed entirely by Cardinal Health. With a relationship that spans 30 years, Mariners' pharmacy is viewed by the hospital as a strategic asset that positively impacts patient outcomes and drives results aligned with the hospital's overall goals.

**Setting a higher bar**

Many small rural hospitals have limited hours of onsite pharmacist coverage. Some have a pharmacist on site for two hours or less per week.

- **1 in 3** rural hospitals have a pharmacist on site less than 40 hours a week.
- **1 in 5** of the nation’s smallest hospitals is able to have a pharmacist review orders within 24 hours.
- **1 in 7** Medicare beneficiaries who is hospitalized is harmed.

The most frequent problems are related to medication.

**Best practices**

- Evidence-based practices
- A culture of safety
- Multi-disciplinary team

**Committed to medication safety**

At Mariners, pharmacy plays a critical role in patient safety. The pharmacy team is involved from the minute patients are admitted to the time they are discharged. Throughout the hospital, pharmacy provides an “extra set of trained eyes” to help reduce infections, improve patient safety and deliver high quality care.

Cardinal Health manages all aspects of the hospital's pharmacy operations including:

- Pharmacy operations
- Staffing
- Finances and cost control
- Quality
- Governmental and regulatory compliance
- Purchasing

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1 HRSA, Prevalence of Evidence-Based Safe Medication Practices in Small Rural Hospitals, April 2008
2 Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Inspector General
Our shared vision

- Preeminent health care provider
- Evidence-based clinical services
- Focus on patient safety
- Superior clinical outcomes
- Compassionately provided
- Efficient use of every dollar

A wealth of resources

One of the biggest benefits of outsourcing pharmacy management for Mariners is ready access to the many resources of Cardinal Health. Mariners frequently uses these resources, especially for regulatory compliance and survey preparation. And Mariners has recently experienced plenty of surveys.

As a Critical Access Hospital, they receive a higher reimbursement rate for Medicare patients. This higher rate results in a higher number of surveys from local, state and federal government agencies.

Mariners counts on Cardinal Health to handle them all.

Improving procedures to prevent medication-related problems

Pharmacy safety measures
- All high-alert medications are segregated and have warning stickers
- Gloves are dispensed with all hazardous medications
- Pharmacy bin labels adhere to ISMP recommendations
- Pharmacy prepares and dispenses chemotherapy

Evidence-based clinical services
- All contrast media orders reviewed by pharmacist
- Chemotherapy infusions prepared and dispensed by pharmacy
- All ED physician orders are double-checked by pharmacist
- All Culture & Sensitivity results reviewed by pharmacy to promote optimal antibiotic therapy
- All compound IV pharmaceuticals are prepared by pharmacy to maintain sterility for IVs

Mariners’ pharmacy and radiology staff received a prestigious National Safety Award for developing a procedure to identify patients at high risk for developing Contrast-Induced Nephropathy (CIN), which can be brought on by contrast administered prior to a CT scan.
Three years in the life of an exceptional hospital

Although Mariners has only been a Critical Access hospital since 2010, the hospital has been recognized many times—both locally and nationally—for its commitment to practices that promote safety and quality.

Mariners' pharmacy is far more involved in clinical activities than most hospital pharmacies—including many larger acute care facilities.
Cardinal Health is extremely proud of its relationship with Mariners Hospital, a relationship that spans 30 years. Together, we continue to:

- Adopt evidence-based safe medication practices
- Enhance patient safety by providing procedures to prevent medication errors
- Rapidly implement industry-recommended best practices
- Provide the highest level of quality care for the lowest possible cost

Because we believe that...

When a hospital pharmacy is leveraged to its full potential, it can become a key driver for achieving the organization's strategic agenda.

The Four F Framework

**Find meaningful growth**
- New business
- Reimbursement optimization
- Government funding
- Cost savings

**Fix inefficiencies**
- Operational efficiency
- Supply chain optimization
- Remove operational obstacles and waste, optimize spend and apply Lean strategies

**Fulfill quality care mission**
- Quality care
- Clinical outcomes
- Continuity of care
- Patient safety
- Deliver on the vision of quality care to every patient through core measures, utilization, clinical outcomes, physician alignment, minimize length of stay and patient satisfaction

**Follow the patient**
- Population health management
- Readmission management
- Patient outcomes and hospital compliance starts at pre-admission and continues post-discharge

cardinalhealth.com

Cardinal Health
7000 Cardinal Place
Dublin, Ohio 43017
877-300-9180