

Recovering health

How Riverside Health System found additional hard dollars while regaining valuable pharmacy staff time to support strategic hospital initiatives

eRecovery™ Solutions

Hospitals and health systems are challenged with supporting a growing population of underinsured patients.

Patient Assistance Programs (PAPs) exist to help these underserved populations; they enable qualifying patients access to medication at little to no cost. Some organizations choose to navigate the PAP process in house, which can be challenging and put a strain on valuable hospital resources.

Riverside Health System, an award winning, non-profit integrated health delivery network with five acute care hospitals and over 100 locations based in Newport News, Virginia, was one such health system facing this issue. Although Riverside was effectively performing drug recovery in house, its leaders were looking for a way to optimize its self-managed Patient Assistance Program. Cardinal Health eRecovery™ Solutions enabled Riverside to enhance and expand upon the opportunities that were already being executed within the organization by providing a more efficient staffing model, compliant PAP process knowledge and bigger bottom-line results.

And the results are significant.

Challenges

Despite the fact that Riverside was successfully operating their in-house program, they still had the following opportunities for improvement:

Over five Riverside staff members dedicated to the Patient Assistance Program

Managing compliance to drug manufacturer processes

Missed recovery opportunities

Cardinal Health eRecovery™ Solutions helped Riverside:

1st
YEAR > **\$27,000** per month,
on average

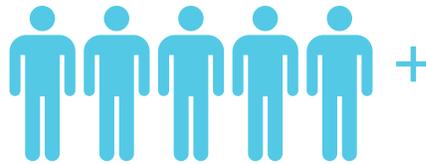
The solution

After assessing Riverside's current situation, the Cardinal Health team provided onsite management with a specialized, dedicated, trained resource to identify and recover more opportunities. The eRecovery™ Solutions team took over managing Riverside's PAP and within the first 90 days, the hospital system received \$245,903 of replacement medications.

Five additional medications were identified as eligible for PAP recovery. Cardinal Health was able to retrospectively recover dollars for those drugs for the previous six months, which accounted for \$59,602 of the total funds recovered.

Redeployed valuable resources

The hospital system previously had three financial advisors, several pharmacy technicians and a pharmacist all working to complete the PAP process. The administrative work that clinical staff spent time on was not being spent where they could bring the most value which is focusing on patient care. The newly dedicated eRecovery™ Solutions employee allowed for hospital employees in both clinical and non-clinical roles to focus on strategic initiatives and value-added responsibilities within the hospital.



Riverside Health System PAP staff



eRecovery™ Solutions dedicated employee

"The time I used to spend in validation of all documentation monthly is now being used for more in-depth analysis of department inventory and resources. I am now able to devote more time in updating our chemotherapy plans and following up on new guidelines. With the rapid pace of new drugs and new protocols added to the guidelines, spending time on those has an effect on a greater number of patients."

Cheryl Heard, B.S. Pharm, BCOP
Pharmacy Manager
Riverside Health System

Cheryl Heard, B.S. Pharm, BCOP, pharmacy manager at Riverside, is now able to focus on initiatives with a greater clinical impact.

Increased compliance and reduced audit risk

The absence of a centralized and secure documentation system meant documents were often stored on individual computers, which posed a risk in the event of a drug manufacturer audit. The eRecovery™ Solutions process helped Riverside implement a method of streamlining communication and document organization across their various sites, including maintaining relevant PAP records on a secure and centralized network. The Cardinal Health experts were able to share knowledge of PAP rules and regulations, enabling the communication of best practices across Riverside's entire health system. Riverside Health System's System Director of Pharmacy, Cindy Williams, B.S. Pharm, FASHP, indicated that "they now have an effective set of best practices" such as rules for understanding the timing of billing the patient, which wasn't being done consistently in the past.

Financial impact

After just nine months, the eRecovery™ Solutions onsite team member was able to identify, apply, track and reconcile all aspects of Riverside's PAP process, resulting in the recovery of more than \$600,000 in free drugs for eligible patients. This was an increase of \$127,000 in drug expense over the 2013 program that the eRecovery™ Solutions team identified.

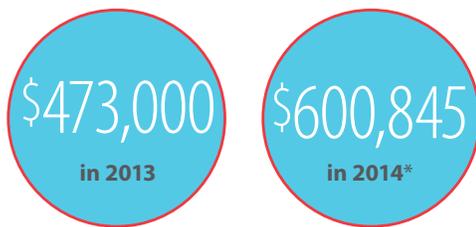
On average, the new team member has been capturing approximately 40 percent more each month than the self-managed team was able to in the past. Considering the cost of the staffing previously focused on PAP, in addition to the missed recovery opportunities, partnering with Cardinal Health for this program has resulted in a significantly positive return on investment.

Patient Assistance Program financial results

Monthly average drug recovery



Gross recovery



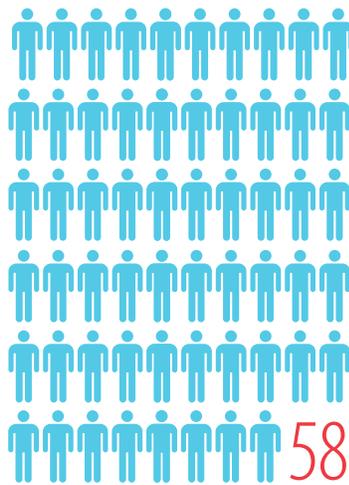
*In only nine months of 2014

Retrospectively gathered funds

\$59,602 \$

from drugs not applied for previously over six months

Number of patients who received assistance in 2014:



The Bottom Line

Cardinal Health helped improve the process for recovering the cost of eligible drugs from manufacturer Patient Assistance Programs at significantly higher rates than what Riverside was previously capturing on its own.

This has enabled Riverside to:

Redeploy staff to greater margin-enhancing initiatives in line with the health system's strategy for the future

Ensure the health system is compliant in receiving free medications

Realize a 27 percent increase in hard dollars that were returned to the health system's bottom line, reducing their overall drug spend

In addition to these results, Riverside was able to help positively impact patient lives through compliance with medications necessary to keep them healthy and reduce the probability of being readmitted to the hospital.



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