

Clinical Drug Information

Hospital Enhances Communication, Efficiency with Wolters Kluwer Custom Formulary Database



CLIENT PROFILE: ST. JOSEPH HOSPITAL

St. Joseph Hospital, one of the largest hospitals in Orange County, California, strives to provide the best possible patient care.

But a few years ago, the very resources its clinicians trusted to help inform their treatment decisions were proving more cumbersome than helpful.

St. Joseph Hospital used to manage a variety of internal drug information resources to communicate hospital policies to staff, explains clinical pharmacy specialist

Peter Hosseinpour, PharmD. These included an IV guideline list, a formulary spreadsheet that was updated annually, and a restriction criteria document accessible only to pharmacists. Certain clinician groups had limited access to these documents, which had to be maintained by staff and referenced separately. Additionally, these documents did not relate to or integrate with the hospital's electronic drug reference solution.

In 2009, the hospital switched to Lexicomp® Online, the flagship hospital drug reference offering from Wolters Kluwer Clinical Drug

Information. Along with clear, concise and clinically relevant Lexicomp drug information, St. Joseph Hospital also implemented FORMULINK, a customizable, hospital-specific formulary management database that integrates with Lexicomp Online drug content.

With FORMULINK, "we were able to consolidate all of those documents into one," Hosseinpour says. "The biggest benefit I've seen is that everyone now knows where to go to access the information they need."

MAKING THE SWITCH

"Pharmacists know and trust Lexicomp," says Hosseinpour, who has been with St. Joseph Hospital since 2006 and sits on its P&T committee. "As a pharmacist, Lexicomp is the natural place to go, because you've been using it since pharmacy school."

Prior to 2009, St. Joseph Hospital used a different, more research-focused electronic drug reference, but clinicians frequently experienced difficulty finding the drug information they needed, Hosseinpour notes. "When you're a frontline pharmacist, your customer is probably waiting on the line for an answer. The benefit of Lexicomp Online is you can pull up the information you want quickly and find the answer."

Aside from ease of use and clinical focus, the primary reason St. Joseph Hospital chose the Lexicomp application was FORMULINK. Through

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this custom formulary database service, Wolters Kluwer Clinical Drug Information helps institutions create their own easily searchable online formulary and then integrates those hospital-specific policies and drug lists with trusted Lexicomp drug information.

Hosseinpour says that Lexicomp Online with FORMULINK addressed his two main concerns: It would allow for efficient formulary management “so you don’t have to print out 80 pages to use the formulary,” and it allowed St. Joseph Hospital to incorporate its hospital-specific IV guidelines.

“It’s one-stop shopping: basic drug information; IV guidelines which we customized to match our old guide; we added all our restriction criteria into the drug monographs; and we have our formulary,” Hosseinpour explains. “That’s four birds with one stone.”

With Lexicomp Online as a consolidated, easily searchable drug and clinical information offering, a variety of clinicians are taking greater advantage of valuable resources, he adds.

“In the old days, they either didn’t look it up or struggled looking it up,” Hosseinpour says. “Now, we’ve attached Web links (to hospital policies) to monographs. Pharmacists don’t have to struggle to look these things up. Nurses are no longer using multiple different resources. It helps with data transfer and communication of knowledge.”

BUILDING A HOSPITAL-SPECIFIC DATABASE

Hosseinpour is the manager of St. Joseph Hospital’s formulary database, responsible for creating and maintaining all the custom

fields, monographs and policies the hospital wants included in its individualized database. He is able to update and edit the formulary himself thanks to the Lexicomp Information Management System, or LIMS. Initially, he worked with a dedicated Wolters Kluwer Clinical Drug Information production manager to build the hospital’s custom database and to train on how to most effectively use the LIMS editor tool.

“Once you figure it out, it’s pretty straightforward,” he says. “I’ve even been able to create drug monographs for medications that aren’t in the Lexicomp database, like certain probiotics we stock. LIMS lets me build my own, so the pharmacists can know what the restrictions are. It’s very customizable.”

St. Joseph Hospital can select which Lexicomp Online drug monograph fields it wants “shared” in its custom database, allowing clinicians to not only easily view which drugs are available on the hospital’s formulary, but also to view key data on dosing, precautions, administration and more without disrupting workflow.

The production manager maintains ongoing contact with Hosseinpour to offer assistance and new insights and to answer any questions that may come up as he updates the formulary. “She’s been a great help and resource to me,” he says.

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St. Joseph Hospital, one of the largest and busiest hospitals in Orange County, California, is a values-based Catholic healthcare provider founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange. With 2,800 employees and a 1,000-member medical staff, St. Joseph Hospital is one of 15 healthcare ministries within St. Joseph Health, the 10th largest not-for-profit health system in the United States with a mission based on four core values of Dignity, Service, Excellence and Justice. www.sjo.org