‘One-and-Done’ Consumers: Changing Behavior for a Consistent Commitment to Better Health Practices

Background: The High Cost of Medication Non-Adherence

Studies have shown that **20% to 30% of all prescriptions are never picked up by the patients who need them**.¹ That represents a huge burden in time and cost. Let’s say that your pharmacy fills an estimated 1 million prescription a month and 20% of those are never picked up. That leaves 200,000 prescriptions that are abandoned. With the cost of each prescription around $10 to fill, that is a loss of $2 million dollars a month.

Not only is medication non-adherence expensive for healthcare organizations, but skyrocketing costs can be passed on to patients in the form of higher copayments. The result is a vicious cycle, in which increased financial pressures can negatively impact the motivation of patients to adhere with their treatment regimens².

The Challenge: Engaging “One-and-Done” Consumers

Retail pharmacies are on the front lines of patient interaction and care, and it often falls to pharmacists to be advocates and educators for their consumers when it comes to encouraging medication adherence. Pharmacies have processes in place to identify consumers who have already filled an initial prescription or completed one immunization, but have not returned to pick up their second refill or complete their immunization series. These usually involve simple, automated reminder calls or texts that are easy to ignore.

There are several reasons people may become “one-and-done” consumers instead of refilling their prescriptions, replenishing medical supplies, or adhering to their treatment regimens — from legitimate changes in their care plans or transferring scripts to another pharmacy, to thornier issues such as fear of side effects, prohibitive costs, or a decision to abandon treatment the consumer made without proper medical advice.

It is in the best interest of retail chains to convert “one-and-done” consumers into adherent patients for several reasons:

- To enhance health outcomes for consumers
- To improve second fill/second immunization rates
- To help consumers commit to better long-term self-management
- To limit return-to-stock occurrences

¹https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22964778
²https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3934668/
**The Solution: Emmi® Patient Engagement Programs**

Pharmacies can potentially address non-adherence by implementing patient engagement programming that goes beyond basic call notifications and text reminders, leveraging behavioral and educational science techniques to more actively engage consumers in their own health and encourage medication adherence.

Emmi patient engagement solutions from Wolters Kluwer Health combine rigorously reviewed content and cutting-edge technology to help foster positive behavior change in patients.

For retail pharmacies, Emmi can provide a program to address the troubling issue of “one-and-done” consumers: Using interactive voice response (IVR) technology, call campaigns adapt to the individual responses of consumers to explain the importance of preventive care and drive people to take action. Each campaign includes an automated IVR call focused on key behaviors — screenings, immunizations, medication adherence, preventive appointments, and more.

Depending on the needs of the pharmacy, campaigns targeted to “one-and-done” consumers may include elements of the following:

- Encouragement and positive reinforcement for those who are already planning to refill prescriptions or complete recommended healthcare actions
- Offers of assistance for those who have questions about medications or treatments
- Non-judgmental queries to determine why consumers may not be planning to refill their prescriptions
- Information on how they might overcome some typical obstacles, such as cost, side effects, or lack of understanding about the treatment’s efficacy
- Direct transfers to scheduling or refill lines (if the pharmacy desires)
- Information on self-management of conditions

The campaigns collect data on the results of the IVR calls so the pharmacy may analyze the responses and trends to inform future outreach and business decisions. This reporting feature will also help pharmacies track response so they know how many consumers receiving the campaigns have chosen to adhere to recommended treatment.

For more information on Emmi programs for retail pharmacy, visit [https://www.emmisolutions.com/who-we-help/retail-pharmacies/](https://www.emmisolutions.com/who-we-help/retail-pharmacies/)