

Case Study



Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital

Medication dispensing cabinets improve accountability, productivity and patient safety

At a Glance

Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital
Yakima, WA

Like many other hospitals, Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, a 225 bed acute care facility, has diversified its services based on need and national healthcare trends. Today, Memorial is home to many Centers of Excellence, and the pharmacy provides drug distribution and clinical services to over 437 total acute care and long-term care beds.

Solution Spotlight

- AcuDose-Rx®

Other Automation Solutions

- ROBOT-Rx®
- Bar-code medication administration

Results

- Realized a 13 percent reduction in floor stock inventory
- Reduced restocking trips to cabinets from two trips/day to one
- Experience virtually no downtime with “Service Now” program
- Implemented cabinets in two off-site long-term care facilities and a second cath lab

Overview

Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital uses the most advanced technology to provide the community with the safest and most comprehensive medical and surgical care.

Dennis Hoover, Service Line Administrator (formerly the Director of Pharmacy and Cardiovascular Services) at Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, led a patient safety initiative to implement technology that would make the greatest impact in the way they provide quality patient care.

“As we began to diversify our services, it was critical for us to expand our automation footprint. And it was also important that we chose solutions that had the flexibility to be used in a variety of patient care environments,” commented Hoover. “That’s one of the many reasons we went with McKesson’s AcuDose-Rx medication dispensing cabinets.”

In addition to using AcuDose-Rx for PRNs and controlled substances, the hospital uses McKesson’s ROBOT-Rx dispensing system for scheduled medications, resulting in a hybrid drug distribution system. These automation solutions are integrated with Pharmacy and Medication Administration Check from Siemens for bar-code medication administration (BCMA).

Initially, Memorial implemented five AcuDose-Rx cabinets in the main medical/surgical areas and, over time, has increased to 33 cabinets on six different campus sites in the Yakima area. Currently, Memorial is dispensing more than 15,000 doses per week from AcuDose-Rx.

Why AcuDose-Rx

“Since we’ve implemented our cabinets, medication ordering system and BCMA, the pharmacy receives very few phone calls from nurses. They have virtually everything they need on their units, and the systems automatically send messages to the pharmacy if anything is needed, thus preventing phone calls,” added Hoover.

Hoover further explained that through the years Memorial has established effective processes and implemented best practices that have resulted in Joint Commission Compliance, reduced inventory, improved charge capture, and enhanced patient safety. Some of those best practices include:

- **Standardized stock of medications.** Each cabinet has a standardized stock of medications on the nursing unit—a benefit for both nursing and pharmacy. The system accurately tracks the inventory levels so the nurses no longer have to do manual inventory counts at the end of

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Dennis Hoover

Service Line Administrator
Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital

each shift. Memorial has realized approximately a 13 percent reduction in floor stock inventory.

- **Utilizing locked pockets and scanning upon dispense.** Bar-coded medications and controlled substances are stored in individually locked pockets. And nurses are required to scan the bar code on each medication before administration, ensuring that they are dispensing the correct drug for their patient.
- **Electronic charting of medications.** The dispensing and wasting of medications occur simultaneously. Nurses are required to document waste of controlled substances within one minute of dispensing from an AcuDose-Rx cabinet (a witness electronic co-signature is also required). The Director of Pharmacy is able to compare the time the medication is dispensed to the time it is administered to reveal any variances and take action if necessary.
- **Scanning when restocking.** The technician uses the bar-code scanner when restocking to ensure the right medications are stocked in the correct pockets. And they only have to make one trip a day, rather than two.
- **Using Open Matrix Drawers to increase capacity.** Memorial uses two open matrix drawers in each cabinet to stock low risk, non-controlled medications.
- **Utilizing custom and standard reports to monitor cabinet activity.** The pharmacy uses both standard and custom reports to track inventory, medication usage activity, and monitor diversion.

Having cabinets on the nursing units has been so successful that Memorial has implemented them in two off-site long-term care facilities, and a second cardiac cath lab. In the near future, they will be implementing AcuDose-Rx in their Hospice House, which is located approximately one mile from the main hospital.

With 33 AcuDose-Rx cabinets at Memorial, it's extremely important that the hospital receives immediate attention for maintenance and service requests.

Hoover explained, "The help desk is available 24/7 and do a great job trouble shooting. One key thing that has been a vital part of our ongoing maintenance and service of AcuDose-Rx is the 'Service Now' program. McKesson's Field Service Engineers trained our Bio-Med Department so we could do our own service on the cabinets. The team is dispatched from the help desk, and we have virtually no downtime as a result of having technical support on site."

According to Hoover, AcuDose-Rx saves nurses' time per shift, greatly enhances the accountability of medications, allows for accurate billing, improves workflow, and improves patient safety.

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