# Caring for Patients One Penny at a Time

To stay competitive, community pharmacies need to increase their financial, clinical and workflow performance—and strengthen customer relationships. Stephen Clement, founder and owner of Copper Bend Pharmacy, a community pharmacy located in Belleville, Illinois, (20 miles east of St. Louis, Missouri), knows this well.

The pharmacy has remained in its professional office park location since 1984—one block away from a national pharmacy chain location—and serves a demographically diverse community of young, middle-aged and older citizens, including military and indigent patient populations.

Focusing on the patient, not on the dollars, makes Copper Bend Pharmacy unique. While revenue keeps the doors open, it's critical that a community pharmacy attract and maintain patients. Listening to the patient, sympathy, empathy, humor, and engagement in the lives of his customers are cornerstones of Copper Bend's mission, notes Stephen. Staff members know most customers by name. Two pharmacy technicians and support from a student rotation program allow Stephen to personally perform up to 185 drug consultations per day.
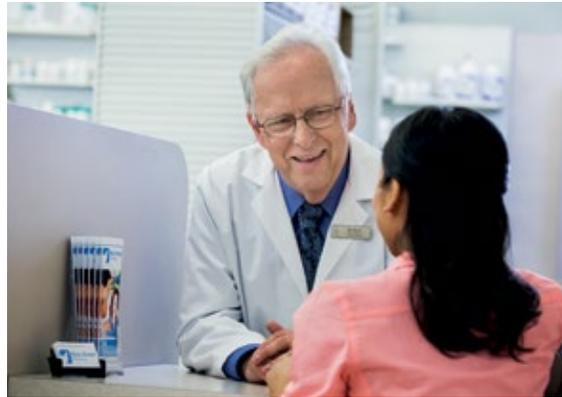
While each consultation may last 30 seconds to six minutes, providing this service distinguishes Copper Bend from its competition. He and his staff have become part of their customers' lives; clients come in just to say hello when they need a lift.

While Copper Bend revenues rely on ongoing refills from regular customers, handling ongoing insurance issues handicaps Stephen's patient-centered approach. Given constantly changing payer reimbursement requirements, he continues to look for the best solutions to meet this challenge. To that end, Copper Bend Pharmacy has participated in RelayHealth's RelayRx™ Reimbursement Performance program since August 2011. The program's automated Average Wholesale Pricing (AWP) highlights claims that were paid using lower, outdated AWP's.

RelayRx™ Reimbursement Performance also provides information on Usual and Customary Pricing for his area, assists with prescription recalls, look alike/sound alike dispensing issues, and flags improper dosages based on the patient's age. The service also catches inaccurate prescriber DEA numbers to reduce audit risk. In total, Reimbursement Performance helped Copper Bend recover $2000 in just one month.

"Copper Bend Pharmacy uses every available lifeboat to stay afloat. Using RelayHealth is like having a friend looking over your shoulder who helps us save pennies, then dollars, and ultimately stay in business to care for our patients. "

— Stephen Clement
  Founder and Owner,
  Copper Bend Pharmacy

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