



Amber Specialty Pharmacy

Nominated by Jesse Smith, Director of Marketing, Amber Specialty Pharmacy

Innovation in the Field of Specialty Pharmacy

Last year we introduced three key initiatives that advanced efficiencies and addressed debilitating treatment barriers.

Next-Level Infusion Service Integration: To save offices time and ease the burdens of payer-mandated specialty pharmacy requirements, we partnered with WeInfuse (a software provider for infusion centers), to enable quick prescription submissions via an eOrder button. We also created a dedicated support team with direct communication lines and implemented a near-real-time triage flow. Over 265 offices are using this, resulting in 1,240+ new referrals, 500+ refill requests, and 900+ prescriptions filled.

Seamless Care Amid Change Healthcare Cyber Attack: While other pharmacies were turning patients away, we leveraged our parent company's retail platform and Enterprise to manually secure payable claims and verify eligibility, ensuring our patients were not impacted. We were manually processing 100s of claims each day using this method. After 15 days we transitioned to Relay Health, fully restoring our processing capabilities.

Expedited Delivery Pilot Program: We launched this for faster medication delivery to transplant facilities within 30 mins of our Dallas pharmacy location. We're using dedicated company delivery cars to reduce delivery times by 1 hour compared to traditional methods. If this continues to be of value to offices, we will expand this free service to transplant centers surrounding all our pharmacy locations.

Quality/Performance Improvement Initiatives

We successfully enhanced service speed and expanded our adherence programs to better assist patients.

Improvement in Call Rates: Patients wanted quicker assistance, so we successfully improved our speed of answer from 44 sec to 31 sec and reduced abandoned calls by 58%.

ACHC Distinction in Oncology: Only a select <10% of ACHC-accredited pharmacies achieve this. We increased clinical outreach to cancer patients from quarterly to monthly assessment calls, ensuring adherence and addressing treatment barriers. Since Feb 2023, we performed 2770+ assessments.

Vitality Transplant Adherence Program: We established a 6-month program to provide monthly structured guidance for transplant patients/caregivers through various channels. Benefits include: wellness supplies (i.e. blood pressure monitor & pill box), personalized diet plans and adherence tools. With 2,500+ patients enrolled, PDC scores among transplant patients increased from 90.78% to 91.31% in 8 months.

Expansion of Machine Learning Adherence Program: Our program, initially piloted with transplant patients in 2019, assesses 100s of data elements to identify at-risk patients for non-adherence. Now, we intervene before non-adherence arises. Last year, during Phase II's



expansion into additional therapies, we identified 896 at-risk patients, leading to 300 interventions.

Improvements on PDC scores for at-risk patients in Phase II:

- Oncology: 0.76 to 0.81
- Tardive Dyskinesia: 0.8 to 0.84
- Transplant: 0.83 to 0.85

Patient Satisfaction

To increase patient satisfaction, we implemented tech advancements to make managing medications more convenient. Patients now have access to alternative communication and refill methods.

Recent Tech Advancements:

- 1) We incorporated TigerConnect into our communication methods, allowing us to offer 2-way texting and virtual calls to patients. With this platform, we're conducting medication counseling virtually and can show patients their medications in real-time (offered pre-transplant, post-transplant, or post-discharge).
- 2) We created "quick connection" cards with a QR code for patients to easily add our pharmacy as a contact, ensuring they don't miss vital medication updates by mistaking us for spam. 350+ patients have added us to their phone contacts.
- 3) We recently introduced text refill reminders, enabling patients to refill prescriptions via text without calling in. We're averaging 340 refills per week through this service.

Recent Patient Testimonials:

"Amber [Specialty Pharmacy] has provided us with thoughtful and prompt service. Overnight shipment option is an A+! And, I like the text services reminder which reminds me to contact Amber [Specialty] Pharmacy for medication refills. I am a RN and a busy mother of 4, Amber [Specialty] Pharmacy has brought me a piece of mind and one less thing to worry about."

"It's been over 10 years that I have used Amber [Specialty] Pharmacy and have never experienced any issues. Thank you and all your staff."

Cost Management

As daily living expenses soar, ensuring medication affordability is more critical than ever. We're continuously pursuing new and unique methods to reduce our patients' out-of-pocket expenses.

Copay Assistance: Our grant and funding specialists monitor for new funding sources and assistance programs. Last year, our efforts saved \$10.9 million in copay assistance. For one manufacturer, we achieved a 100% member enrollment rate in copay assistance programs, with an average plan savings of approx. \$950 per prescription, totaling around \$7000



annually per patient for this plan. On top of copay assistance, we secured an additional \$6.7 million in grant funding for patients, totaling \$17.6 million in financial assistance for 2023.

New Transplant Foundation Partnerships: To help patients concentrate on their recovery without added financial stress, we partnered with two transplant foundations: the Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) and Help Hope Live. Both offer financial assistance for transplant expenses to patients through crowdfunding and other charitable donations. As a partner, we're able to bill medications directly to these organizations.

Strategic Drug Pricing Negotiations: Last year we identified \$8.5 million in savings. One example is through a generic changeover, which brought in a savings of \$852,000. This lower cost was passed on to patients and payers, highlighting our commitment to cost-effective solutions that benefit all stakeholders.

Community Involvement

Advocating for patients and contributing to our communities is ingrained in our company culture. While supporting longstanding initiatives, each year we explore new foundations and causes to align with. Recent initiatives include:

LLS Light the Night: We support the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and sponsor the annual "Light the Night" event, where we join hands with the community to raise awareness and funds for blood cancer research. At the latest event, we encouraged attendees to recognize their friends and family members affected by decorating rocks with paint at our booth, providing a meaningful way to honor their loved ones.

MS Walk: Each year we sponsor and participate in the annual National Multiple Sclerosis Society "MS Walk" to support and raise funds for those affected by MS. We had 24 employees and their families from our Omaha location participate in the latest walk.

Rally for Life: Last year we were a sponsor at the Donate Life "Rally for Life" event. This is particularly meaningful to us, as our origins are deeply tied to the transplant community.

Organized Blood Drives: Every year we organize quarterly blood drives at our headquarters location. We partner with the American Red Cross, encouraging employees to donate blood and save lives. Since 2018, we've held 22 drives with 200+ employee donors, resulting in 375 units total collected over the years.

Last year we had:

- 4 blood drives
- 70 employee donors
- 6 first-time donors
- 50 units collected

Additional Information

Many pharmacies today require patients and providers to conform to their processes, often resulting in long wait times and inadequate assistance. This can negatively affect patients'



health, particularly those with complex conditions who need fast and convenient service when questions arise. Providers are also facing frustration as they attempt to coordinate care with rigid pharmacies, finding it difficult to get their patients on therapy. At Amber Specialty Pharmacy, we're making a concerted effort to counter-act that trend by creating patient-first services.

This past year we launched numerous projects aimed at enhancing convenience and service speed - two key aspects our patients and provider partners expressed they desired from a pharmacy. These improvements were made possible through significant technological advancements and strategic new partnerships, which were outlined in our submission responses.

Patients also need new ways to take control of their health, so we're integrating ideas that not only increase adherence, but empower patients. We accomplished this by expanding our machine learning adherence program and introducing our Vitality Transplant Adherence program.

Our commitment to exploring innovative, personalized solutions for our patients has always set us apart. This year we're very proud to achieve new heights in offering what we feel are life-changing services and care.