Role of Delivery Methods on Specialty Pharmacy Related Operational Outcomes

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Background

- Health-System Specialty Pharmacies (HSSPs) play a critical role in ensuring timely access to medications; however, multiple issues may result in unexpected delays in delivery. We sought to describe the frequency of delivery-related problems encountered by an HSSP and potential for delays in treatment.

Objectives

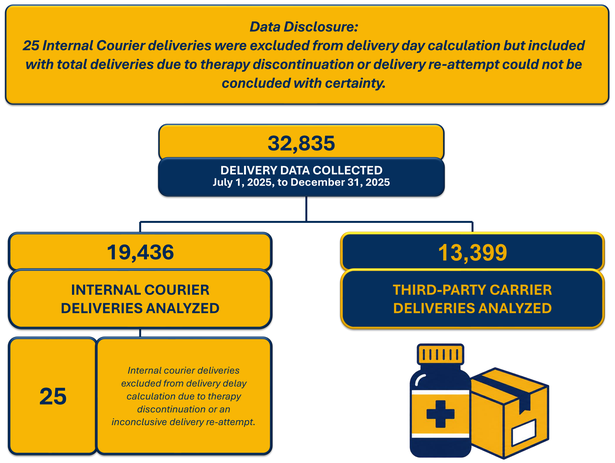
- We sought to describe the frequency of delivery-related problems encountered by an HSSP.

Methods

- We conducted a retrospective review of deliveries completed by a large academic medical center-owned specialty pharmacy from 7/1/2025 to 12/31/2025.

- Data collected included delivery success rates, missed-delivery incidents, carrier type (internal courier vs. third-party carriers), and whether a signature was required for proof of delivery. A delayed delivery was defined as one that was not received by the patient until at least one calendar day after the promised date.

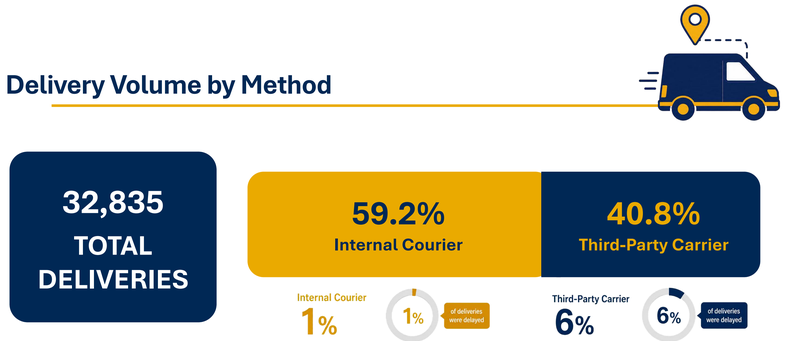
Data Disclosure:
25 Internal Courier deliveries were excluded from delivery day calculation but included with total deliveries due to therapy discontinuation or delivery re-attempt could not be concluded with certainty.



Results

- Of 32,835 deliveries made during the study period, 19,436 (59.2%) were delivered via internal courier and 13,399 (40.8%) were performed by a third-party carrier. Overall, 1% of courier deliveries and 6% of third-party deliveries were delayed.

Delivery Volume by Method



System owned internal courier accounts for the larger share of deliveries.

Delay Summary by Method (Days)

Delivery Method	Mean Delay	Median	SD	Range
Internal Courier	4.8	3	4.3	1–58
Third-Party Carrier	1.6	1	1.3	1–13

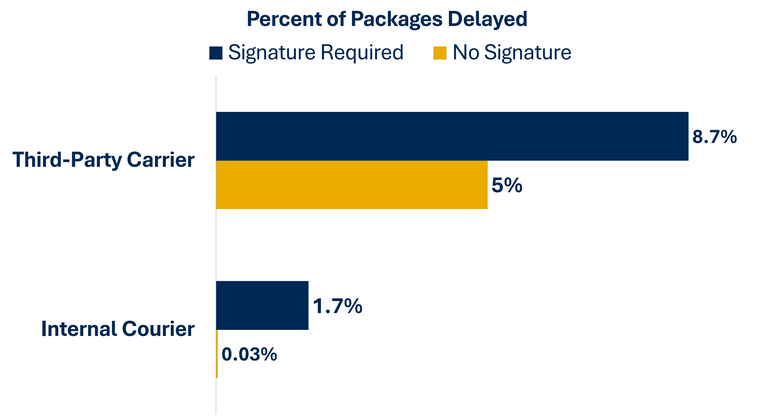
Mean, median, standard deviation and observed range

Mean Days Delayed

Results Cont.

- A signature requirement increased rates of delay from 0.03% to 1.7% for internal courier packages and from 5.0% to 8.7% within the third-party carrier group. The mean length of delay was 1.6 days (median 1, SD 1.3, range 1-13) and 4.8 days (median 3, SD 4.2, range 1-58) within third-party and courier deliveries, respectively.

Impact of Signature Requirement



Signature required is associated with longer delays across both methods.

Conclusions

- The results of this descriptive pilot study suggest that delivery method and signature requirements may affect delivery success, patient access, and continuity of therapy within an HSSP, however, further understanding to build on this pilot study is needed.

References

1. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9416318/
2. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9377589/

Disclosure: Authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.