

## Advocating for better patient care

Who hasn't engaged with a pharmacist when filling a prescription? While a common experience for patients, it doesn't capture the role a pharmacist plays behind the scenes. We talked with 2 Optum<sup>®</sup> Home Delivery pharmacists about how they support a patient's health needs beyond filling prescriptions.

### Driving enhanced patient care

Today's pharmacists increasingly need to address critical prescription care needs beyond the pharmacy counter. Our pharmacists enjoy key advantages in their patient care delivery roles including: more time to engage patients, the ability to review patients' clinical history, and access to support program resources for patients.

### Adherence advocacy

One way our pharmacists help positively impact patient health and clinical outcomes is through Optum adherence outreach programs.

### Medicare Advantage patients at risk

When requested by patients, this program helps Medicare Advantage members get their medications transferred to Optum Home Delivery. Program pharmacist Dianne Buel, RPh, helps patients with this change to make it easier to follow their medication routine and boost adherence.

"Pharmacists really make an effort for the patient," explained Buel. "It's not just sending a fax to the pharmacy requesting transfers."

This "white-glove" approach handles all the set up and processing to ensure vital medications get delivered to the patient's home.

### Prescription pick-up support

Another Optum pilot program focuses on helping patients who haven't picked up their medication after a few days of the prescription fill. Jenny Gee, RPh, is one of the program pharmacists who calls patients to understand and address barriers to picking up their medication. Issues can range

### Meet our pharmacists



**Dianne Buel, RPh**

Home Delivery  
Growth  
Operations  
Pharmacist

With 33 years of experience, Buel embraces her role as an advocate for patients. She enjoys helping patients to ensure they get their medication with minimal delays.

"We are given the time needed to talk with the patients and discover any special needs or requirements that they may have. We are truly invested in outcomes."



**Jenny Gee, RPh**

Home Delivery  
Growth  
Operations  
Pharmacist

Gee's interest in pharmacy stems from a desire to help people. With over 20 years of experience, her background in environmental toxicology also fuels her passion for the field.

"I loved interacting with people and wanted to help. I have gained an appreciation for the power of medication when dispensed correctly."

from limited physical mobility to lack of help getting to a pharmacy.

Overall, these adherence programs allow pharmacists to close a vital pharmacy care gap. They are able to go that next step in helping to remove barriers that keep patients from taking medication as prescribed.

## Effective partnership

Pharmacists know that the best care results from health professionals working together to serve patients. Teamwork is central to how Optum pharmacists view their jobs in health care. It's about reaching out to providers when needed to support the patient.

"I feel like I can work together with the providers to achieve the best outcomes for the patients," Buel said.

She pays special attention to medication dosages when a patient's prescription is being transferred. When needed, Buel checks the patient's history and verifies the medication dosage with the provider. This proactive outreach results in a timely prescription adjustment for the patient before the order is shipped.

Driving better outcomes for patients also framed Gee's view of pharmacy care partnership. She sees her role as just one piece of a larger health care landscape with many parts working in collaboration.

"We all work together as a team to take care our patients," Gee said.

## Enhancing care delivery

Whether it's removing barriers to prescription access or lending an extra hand of support, pharmacists are often on the frontlines of patient care delivery. They're in a position to make a difference for patients. Buel says helping

patients get set up with home delivery for their prescriptions can have a huge impact.

"With transportation no longer being an obstacle, patients now have their medication when they need it." Buel said. "Compliance and adherence are better, which ultimately leads to healthier patients and less hospital and ER visits."

Gee's role allows her to engage with patients where they are. That can sometimes entail addressing medication affordability. She offers guidance on asking doctors to recommend less costly medication alternatives, making patients aware of prescription discount coupons, or having them check out drug manufacturer copay cards for savings.

## Other ways pharmacists help enhance care:

- Ensure medication gets dispensed accurately
- Check for prescription drug interactions
- Verify patient medication allergies to prevent adverse drug reactions
- Help avoid disruptions in patient therapy

## Working stronger together

While the role of today's pharmacists has expanded, their core commitment to patient care remains the same. They work in partnership with providers as part of each patient's health care team to close care gaps, advance medication adherence and help patients get the support they need.

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