

HealthCall®

CASE STUDY: JAYHAWK PHARMACY SERVICES

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SUCCESSFULLY REDUCES COPD READMISSIONS AND
DRAMATICALLY IMPROVES PATIENT ADHERENCE

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As a kid, Mike Conlin bought cherry cokes and egg salad sandwiches at Jayhawk Pharmacy, founded in 1949. Years later he bought it from the original owner—the same druggist who'd administered advice and medications and seen him through his childhood illnesses. Conlin's goal was to create that same caring atmosphere where customers were patients, friends and neighbors—and were treated as individuals.

“When I bought the pharmacy, the former owner said to me, just take care of the patient and your life will be good,” Conlin said.

The passing of the Affordable Care Act presented Conlin with a new opportunity to not only provide better care for patients, but to also assist hospitals in reducing hospital readmissions.

THE CHALLENGE: Finding a Proactive, Systematic Program to Help COPD Patients

When Conlin expanded the business to include a durable medical equipment division, he found there was a gap in care with the COPD patient population. After being discharged from the hospital, they filled their prescriptions and received their oxygen. Then, they were pretty much on their own.

Jayhawk staff responded to patient questions and periodically contacted oxygen patients to see if they had an adequate amount of oxygen, but there was no defined, proactive approach to providing care to this patient population. And no one person was responsible.

Patients sometimes didn't understand why they needed the equipment or how to use it properly. As a result they weren't motivated to take care of themselves. Many of them were readmitted to the hospital.

Jayhawk receives referrals from both local hospitals—Stormont-Vail Healthcare and Sisters of Charity—and Conlin wanted to help them lower their 30-day readmissions to avoid penalties. If he could do that, it would ultimately strengthen his relationship with them and increase business.

Conlin also became very interested in efficiencies associated with discharge, noting that it could take up to 10 phone calls or faxes back-and-forth between the hospital and Jayhawk to complete an order for one piece of equipment. “It's really crazy when you think about it,” he said. “Calling and ordering a pizza is far simpler than ordering a piece of equipment to fulfill a medical need.”

What he needed was a proactive system, tailored specifically for the COPD patient population, that could help Jayhawk accomplish this.

THE SOLUTION: Implementing the HealthCall-HME™ Platform

Conlin began asking colleagues about different healthcare communication platforms. He investigated several, but ultimately chose the HealthCall-HME™ clinical platform, with the PersonalTouch™ COPD care plan.

HealthCall's cloud-based care coordination program can be configured for disease management, post-discharge monitoring of patients and long-term tracking of patients.

HealthCall-HME is designed specifically to allow home medical companies to communicate efficiently and effectively with patients after discharge from the hospital. And results are tracked, making it possible for companies like Jayhawk to differentiate themselves from the competition and prove their value to hospitals.

"I saw HealthCall as a great opportunity for us to prevent hospital readmissions," Conlin said. "It has so many touchpoints to give positive reinforcement and help with patients' overall compliance and medication and oxygen therapy, and that fit our business model."

Conlin was also "smitten" by the HealthCall platform's ability to dialogue with Epic, the software system used by Stormont-Vail. Although not part of his initial offering to the hospital, he envisioned having the hospital load the information directly into the HealthCall platform in the future. The efficiencies would be more cost-effective for everyone, and could potentially decrease a patient's hospital stay by nearly half-a-day. "I saw that as one more 'wow' that I could offer the hospitals," Conlin said.

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Mike Conlin,
President and CEO
Jayhawk Pharmacy Services

Cheryl London, BSN, RN, BC and director of clinical operations at HealthCall, LLC, helped customize the HealthCall program for Jayhawk's specific needs. She also provided training during the implementation process in November 2013.

"Once we figured out the cadence of the program, it was very easy and really straightforward," Conlin said.

Putting Jayhawk's 360° Care Program in practice

A year-and-a half later Jayhawk now manages approximately 300 patients. New patients are monitored within a 30-day post-discharge care plan and are then transitioned to a less-intensive wellness program. And, even though Jayhawk is managing more patients and providing them with a higher level of care, everything's managed by one person.

"I think one of the smartest things I did was give Chance Clark the ownership and responsibility for our 360° Patient Care Program," Conlin said. "We really didn't have any systematic approach to managing our oxygen patients. This is much more proactive on our part."

HealthCall's best-practice COPD care plan sends Clark a daily task list detailing the patients that should be contacted that day and the specific questions to ask and education points to cover. According to Clark, the educational component and regular follow-ups have made a big

difference for this patient population. “A lot of people weren’t changing out their tubing regularly,” he said. “Now, it’s much more frequent.”

We now know that replacing tubing on a regular basis decreases the chance of infection, which can send patients back in the hospital.

Patients enjoy having one point-of-contact and developing a personal relationship with Clark, who visits their homes and shows them how to set up and use the equipment.

“We’ve also noticed a decrease of unplanned phone calls to other staff here at Jayhawk because of the better education we’re now providing with the HealthCall program,” Clark said.

During a regular follow-up call, one patient informed Clark that he was experiencing headaches and didn’t think the oxygen was working the way it was supposed to. Clark knew the patient would likely quit using oxygen if the issue wasn’t resolved, so he alerted the patient’s doctor to the situation. The doctor asked the patient to come in for a face-to-face visit, during which the problem—the oxygen was bleeding into the patient’s CPAP—was resolved. And the patient continued his oxygen therapy.

“The task manager is one of the keys to HealthCall’s care coordination programs,” London said. “We develop these based on best practices and they can be individualized for each patient, which our clients and their patients appreciate.”

RESULTS: Lower Readmission Rates; Higher Adherence Rates

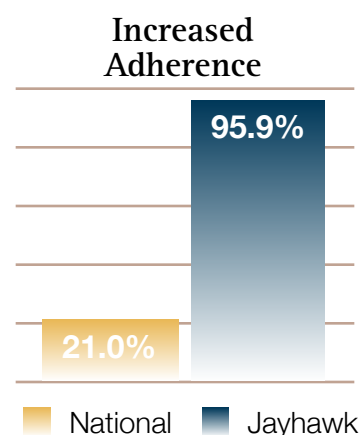
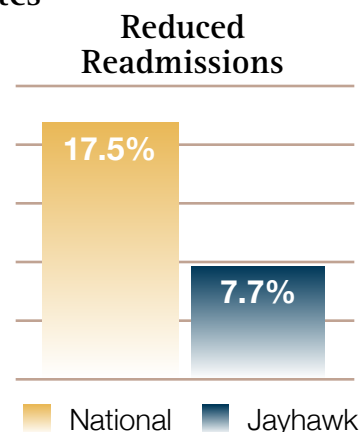
The outcomes Jayhawk has achieved using HealthCall’s platform are outstanding. The 30-day readmission rate for COPD patients managed by Jayhawk is 7.7% compared to the national average of 17.5% – outperforming the national benchmark by 56%.

Perhaps even more impressive is Jayhawk’s adherence rate of 95.9% (based on medications, treatments and assessments) versus the national average of 21 percent. Conlin attributes this superb result to Jayhawk’s frequent contact with COPD patients. “I don’t think people are used to being truly cared for when it comes to medical equipment,” he said. “Especially not with oxygen.”

Conlin sees patient compliance as the main benefit of working with the HealthCall platform. “It’s healthy for the patients and the outcomes we can offer are tangible to physicians,” he said.

Jayhawk is already planning to add HealthCall’s heart failure care plan as its next component.

“Jayhawk’s success with the COPD program has allowed them to see the benefits HealthCall can provide for their other patient populations,” London said. “With very little additional work they can quickly add the heart failure program and expand their offerings to their community.”



ABOUT JAYHAWK PHARMACY AND PATIENT SUPPLY

Originally founded in 1949, Jayhawk Pharmacy Services in Topeka, Kansas is one company with four divisions—Jayhawk Pharmacy and Patient Supply, Jayhawk Custom Prescription Center, Jayhawk Patient Supply and Age at Home. The company also has an outreach facility in Selina, Kansas.

ABOUT HEALTHCALL, LLC

HealthCall cloud-based solutions consistently demonstrate a significant reduction in hospital readmissions and improved clinical outcomes in chronic disease management, post-acute care, community paramedicine and population health management. The company's patented patient engagement technologies provide more timely and relevant health information between providers and patients. Using standard Web browsers, smartphones and tablets, healthcare professionals can quickly create care coordination networks linking hospitals, home health, hospice, home medical equipment (HME) providers, clinics and emergency medical services (EMS). For more than 10 years and millions of patients, HealthCall has been improving the clinical and financial efficacy of clients nationwide. Visit HealthCall.com for more information.

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