

The Value Of Oncology Trained Nurses in a Medically Integrated Pharmacy

Continuing the Cancer Care Continuum, Maximizing Cost Avoidance and Reducing Waste of Oral Oncolytic Medications

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Background

*Cost avoidance and waste reduction. NCODA defines it as “Interventions made before the drug being dispensed to the patient that preclude an unnecessary prescription from being filled and sent to a patient.”

*NIH reports that in 2012 “\$418 billion was wasted in the US due to suboptimal use of medications.”

*Medically integrated Pharmacy interventions with cost avoidance and waste tracker tool data shows: “The net cost avoidance for the MIPS was \$6,510,971.28 USD compared with \$546,082.45 USD for the external mail-order pharmacies. Among the 37 practices that reported waste, 768 events were reported, leading to a **total drug waste of \$11,275,642.16 USD**. Of that, \$8,935,612.15 USD was attributed waste from external mail-order pharmacies, whereas \$2,429,592.01 USD worth of drug waste was reported from MIPS.”

*AON pharmacy has determined that using oncology-trained nurses to perform a comprehensive clinical reassessment before refilling prescriptions dramatically reduces waste by reducing unneeded refills.

Methods

- Oncology-trained nurses review all oral oncology medications that are being shipped to patients. The nurses have access to the EMR and perform an extensive medical records review.
- Review of office notes, labs, scans, pathology, and upcoming appts.
- Complete a reassessment care plan prior to medications being shipped. If a discrepancy is found, the pharmacy nurses will hold the shipment and a clinical intervention is communicated to the provider.

Discussion

- AON pharmacy tracked waste and avoidance on the oncology nurses’ interventions to the provider.
- **Waste and Avoidance were tracked using the NCODA Cost Avoidance & Waste Tracker.**

Results

- AON Pharmacy collected data on waste and avoidance from February 2023 to September 2023. **Documenting 152 interventions saving \$1.9 million** in cost avoidance to our cancer patients and healthcare industry.

Conclusion

- At AON Pharmacy Oncology, trained nurses performing chart review and reassessments before refill being shipped out to patients reduces the amount of unnecessary fills that can be both clinical and financially significant.
- Through the cancer care continuum, we can provide high-quality care, improve clinical outcomes, and promote avoidance and waste reduction of oral oncology medications.
- **”When caring for patients who are taking oral therapies, oncology nurses and pharmacists can work together to handle drug refills, deliver patient education, and manage the entire treatment cycle—including adverse events.”**
Oncology Nursing Society

References:

- <https://www.ncoda.org/cawt/>,
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35561289/>,
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7485414/>
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