

Customer Support:

A Guide from the Medication Optimization Toolkit

Description

A guide to using communications and customer service approaches to support patients and staff who are engaged in a technology-enhanced program to optimize medication use.

Audience

Clinical and administrative staff as well as technology vendors, including:

- Nursing operations management
- Technology vendor support staff
- Project team members

Helpful Tips

- Review available support materials from technology vendors when establishing individual staff and patient support for program startup, ongoing technical support and program discharge.

1 Program Startup

How should a technology-enhanced medication optimization program support individual staff and patients at program startup?

2 Ongoing Technical Support

How should the program provide technical support to patients using technologies to optimize medication use?

3 Program Discharge

What procedures should the program follow when discharging a patient from the medication optimization program?

1 Program Startup

A successful start of a technology-enhanced medication optimization program is the first step toward patient and staff satisfaction as well as adherent and persistent adherence to program protocols. Training both staff and patients is key, so many medication optimization technology vendors offer training materials and support such as:

- Clinical staff education and training on devices, software, protocols, content and patient consent
- Patient education, user manuals and training videos

Enrolling a patient into a medication optimization program is straightforward but has many important steps. Many organizations use a checklist, such as the following, to ensure success.

- Order received from M.D.
- Input patient demographics into medication adherence and monitoring Device Database
- Input parameters into medication adherence and monitoring Device Database for the patient
- Order and Equipment New Start Checklist faxed to Inventory Manager, ensure data received
- Devices assigned by Inventory Manager and returned to RN
- Installation scheduled by RN
- Schedule surveys
- Determine if additional equipment are needed in the home
- Patient order and education information compiled by Assistant
- In the home: Set up equipment
- Access power source and phone/DSL line, if applicable
- Confirm hub station is transmitting data
- Teach use of equipment to patient
- After home visit: Complete patient documentation by RN after installation
- Add additional equipment utilized in the home on Equipment Checklist
- Notify Inventory Manager of additional equipment deployed to the patient's home

2 Ongoing Technical Support

In general, technical support services aim to help the user solve specific problems with a product—rather than providing training, customization, or other support services. Most medication adherence and monitoring technology vendors offer technical support for their products, either for free or for a fee. Technical support should be made available using multiple touch points, including support by telephone, e-mail, directly through the medication adherence or monitoring device, or via a website.

3 Program Discharge

Some medication devices, such as automated medication dispensers, are utilized by one patient, refurbished, and then sent to another patient. Many vendors provide retrieval and refurbishing support for their products. Organizations that choose to do this in-house must follow strict protocols regarding equipment handling, disinfection, and testing.

When handling used medication adherence and monitoring devices, a number of safety precautions must be heeded. For example:

- Ensure that your work area is well ventilated.
- Unplug the medication adherence and monitoring appliance before you begin.
- Follow the guidelines for hand-washing, the use of protective attire, and other guidelines recommended by Standards and Recommended Practice, “Safe Handling and Biological Decontamination of Reusable Medical Devices in Health Care Facilities and in Nonclinical Settings,” ANSI/AAMI ST35:2003.
- Follow all applicable OSHA regulations.
- Follow all instructions and safety precautions on cleaning product labels.
- Wear protective equipment (such as gloves, goggles, lab coat).