

Case Study



Shore Memorial Hospital

Anesthesia-Rx Improves Medication Management and Streamlines Workflow

At a Glance

Shore Memorial Hospital
Somers Point, NJ

Shore Memorial Hospital was a beta test site for Anesthesia-Rx in early 2009. The hospital has plans to implement additional Anesthesia-Rx carts in 2010.

Solution Spotlight

– Anesthesia-Rx™

Other Automation Solutions

- AcuDose-Rx®
- Data Station™
- Fulfill-Rxsm
- High Availability Server
- Horizon MedComm-Rx™
- MedCarousel®
- NarcStation™
- Packaging Solutions
- ROBOT-Rx®

Results

- Improved regulatory compliance
- Streamlined inventory management
- Reduced pharmacy workload
- Improved charge capture
- Reduced restocking time
- More efficient controlled substance utilization and waste verification
- Reduced risk of medication errors

Overview

When pharmacy leaders at Shore Memorial Hospital installed two Anesthesia-Rx™ medication dispensing carts as a beta program, they didn't expect that the Anesthesiology Team would ask for more in the first week.

But that was the reaction received by Pharmacy Director Barbara Giacomelli, Pharm.D., who leads the Anesthesia-Rx initiative at the 296-bed hospital located in Somers Point, NJ.

"Mainly, the Anesthesiology Team requires quick and easy access to drugs in any situation," she said. "With Anesthesia-Rx, everything is in one place. They simply open a drawer and touch the screen to get the meds they need. And all actions on the system are documented electronically, which reduces paperwork."

"Anesthesia-Rx gives our pharmacy more control over the meds and narcotics that are being dispensed in the operating room (O.R.)," continued Giacomelli. "I can now see what is being dispensed, when, and by whom."

Shore Memorial has nine surgical and two endoscopy suites, and a staff of 20 anesthesiologists and certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNA). One O.R. and one endoscopy suite are now equipped with Anesthesia-Rx. The

other nine contain traditional anesthesia carts. The anesthesiologists and CRNAs obtain their needed medications from an AcuDose-Rx® main cabinet and a secure controlled substance cabinet.

Since the hospital is using two different solutions, it's easy to compare the processes and recognize the benefits of each approach.

"The biggest benefits that we are seeing are improved workflow and drug utilization accountability," said Giacomelli. "In the pharmacy, we have reduced the workload (checking, charging, and restocking) of our pharmacists and techs, documentation is much easier to manage, and because we have more control over our high-alert drugs and controlled substances, we've improved regulatory compliance."

Challenges

Previously, Shore Memorial used a completely manual process to manage medications during procedures. This was extremely time consuming, increased the potential for narcotic diversion, and resulted in inventory management issues for anesthesiology.

In 2005, the hospital began using an AcuDose-Rx main cabinet and tower to store "kits" (prepared by the pharmacy) of medications commonly used by the Anesthesiology Team. In addition, the

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Pharmacy Director
Shore Memorial Hospital

anesthesiologist or CRNA makes a separate trip to the cabinet after each case to prepare for the next. Each kit has a manual charge form. The patient is charged based on use and also during the replenishment of the kit.

For narcotics, each anesthesiologist or CRNA is assigned a lock box stored inside of the AcuDose-Rx cabinet. The narcotics are returned to the pharmacy at the end of each day for reconciliation.

According to Giacomelli, the AcuDose-Rx cabinets are a major improvement from the manual process, and they have been a great addition to the hospital's workflow. Anesthesia-Rx adds mobility to the hospital's workflow, and introduces many other benefits.

Answers

The successful use of AcuDose-Rx cabinets in the O.R. made it easier for the Anesthesiology Team to try Anesthesia-Rx, and quickly accept it, according to Giacomelli. Both the pharmacy and anesthesiology departments instantly noticed the positive impact.

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Anesthesia-Rx reduced the workload for pharmacy, streamlined the inventory management process, improved charge capture, enabled easier management of documentation and reduced the risk of medication errors.

The pharmacy technicians no longer have to prepare kits for the two surgical suites with Anesthesia-Rx, which is saving 15 minutes a day. This savings will increase significantly when all operating rooms and endoscopy suites are equipped with Anesthesia-Rx. They restock the carts only once per day, and the anesthesiologists and CRNAs have everything they need in one place.

In addition, controlled substance utilization and waste verification is more efficient. The pharmacy is able to monitor the electronic documentation of all activities performed on the carts.

“Anesthesia-Rx is easy to use, and our anesthesiologists and CRNAs appreciate the benefits it offers,” added Giacomelli. “And, being a beta test site, our Anesthesiology Team has a lot of feedback and sees that McKesson is very receptive and responsive, and that's very important to us.”

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