

New strip packaging offers options, accountability

With the automated Parata Pass 500 machine, efficiency and accountability are on the forefront for both pharmacies and facilities.

DeGoler Care Midwest added a Parata machine in November 2012 and now serves eight facilities in strip packaging.

The machine contains 500 of the pharmacy's most commonly used drugs, which it fills dose by dose into individual medication packets connected into a long rolled strip for each patient.

As DeGoler pharmacists and technicians refer to it, "the robot" has significantly reduced the manpower hours required to fill prescriptions.

"Facilities that aren't on the robot can take a handful of employees up to a week to fill, check and prepare for cycle delivery," said Meghan Watson, pharmacist in charge. "With the robot, two of us can prep and fill a cycle in a couple of hours."

What's more, Watson said some cycle turnover deliveries can take multiple technicians upwards of three hours to complete. With Parata cycles, however, facility employees can simply place each patient's roll in a tray, and turnover is complete.

That newfound efficiency has allowed for a large-scale change in philosophies at Care Midwest.

Glenn Harte, president, said the Parata machine affects all aspects of day-to-day operations,



Photo by Tara McCoy

Pharmacist Robb Rosenbaum refills the Parata packaging machine, which has significantly increased the efficiency of cycle fills at Care Midwest.

For more information:

If you'd like to learn more about the possibility of switching to strip packaging or want to see the process in action, call marketing director Chris Kueter at 913-967-9505.

from demand-fill daily orders to cycles.

"We've been able to work so much more efficiently for the facilities that use the robot," Harte said, "which decreases the workload placed on our other technicians that we've been able to add new facilities and continue our growth as a pharmacy."

The strip packaging consists of clear, sealed plastic bags attached at perforated edges. Cy-

cles can be anywhere from three days to a month long, though Watson said most facilities have found a week-long cycle to be the best choice.

The strips are torn off by time slot only when it is time to dispense. For example, Resident A would have a bag containing their 8 a.m. medications for June 1, followed by a bags containing their noon and evening medications, respectively, for the same day. After bedtime drugs were dispensed, the next package on the strip would contain 8 a.m. medications for June 2, and so on.

Each patient's medications arrive in a separate strip, conveniently rolled and placed in the med cart for easy access.

— By Tara McCoy



Glenn Harte

From the desk of CEO Harte

We at DeGoler Care Midwest would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your business. We appreciate your commitment to your patients, and we look forward to continuing to serve you in the best capacity available.

In addition, I hope you have time to review our first issue of the *DeGoler Dispatch*.

In our continuing efforts to improve our communication, we have developed this tool in order to provide you with insight into our operation as well as useful day-to-day knowledge to help facilitate your operations.

Thank you again, and enjoy!

— By Glenn Harte

You're invited!

What: DeGoler Care Midwest open house and wine tasting

When: May 23, 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Where: 111 Oak Street, Bonner Springs, Kan., 66012

Why: See where and how the magic happens, mingle with pharmacists and technicians.

Perks: Drinks, light snacks



Photo by Tara McCoy

DeGoler technician Karen LaHue fills a prescription, as she's done at three incarnations of the long-term care pharmacy.

Long-term location carries on area history

When Glenn Harte bought DeGoler Pharmacy in 2001, he became the first person outside the DeGoler family to run the store since its founding in 1928.

Harte took over for Jim DeGoler, who had been in business since 1956 after inheriting the business from his father.

Generations of Wyandotte County citizens have been customers of DeGoler stores, which now include five retail locations, plus the long-term Care Midwest pharmacy in Bonner Springs.

Those retail stores boast free delivery from Kansas City, Kan., to Tonganoxie.

Harte opened Care Midwest in 2007, when his long-term business had grown too large to operate behind the counter of another location. In the fall of 2012, Care Midwest moved from 78th and State in Kansas City to downtown Bonner Springs.

Alongside an enriched and remodeled pharmacy floor, the new location features three stories with separate business office space, owner offices, and a full kitchen and rooftop patio.

— By Tara McCoy

Electronic records put power in nurse's hands

Binders full of paper medical records are a thing of the past in some DeGoler facilities these days. So are month-end charting, faxing re-orders and counting narcotics by hand.

Tech-savvy nursing and assisted living facilities can now

use Accu-flo's electronic MAR system to do all of the above, with customized preferences for each facility.

"Nurses can save so much time using Accu-flo," pharmacist in charge Meghan Watson said.

Accu-flo consists of a touch-screen laptop that sits on the med cart that automatically indicates dosing time, charts on the MAR when drugs are given and tracks how many pills remain. Facilities can also send auto-

mated refill requests to DeGoler without pulling a reorder sticker or sending a paper fax.

"You'll never again have to pull yellow sheets and check in

each month's new records," Watson said, emphasizing that the pharmacy system communi-

cates with Accu-flo in real time. "Each new order fully updates the MARs, and they turn over automatically each month. No more waiting on the pharmacy."

The system even associates residents' photos to their records, further emphasizing accuracy in dispensing.

"This really allows allows facility staff to focus solely on quality resident care," said Chris Kueter, DeGoler marketing director.

— By Tara McCoy



Care Midwest Meet & Greet

Meghan Watson, pharmacist

Title: Pharmacy manager

Age: 26

Hometown: Overland Park

Education: University of Kansas School of Pharmacy

Job description: Oversee all daily operations, verify prescription entry and filling, work as a liason with nurses, medication aides and doctors.

Special interests: warfarin dosing, diabetes management

Favorite thing about job: "Having the opportunity to work in a hybrid setting where nurses, doctors and pharmacists all work together to help meet the needs of patients."



Least favorite thing about job: "When the phone or fax service fails, and when the fax machine gets one of its famous paper jams."

If she could be any drug, she'd be: "Docusate, because my daily function is simply to keep everything moving, or Zoloft, because my goal is always to keep people happy."

Helpful Hints

Tip #1 — Be sure to order refills on controlled substances when you have a couple of days' supply left of the drug. This allows ample time for doctors to respond to refill authorization requests without any delays detrimental to the patient.

Tip #2 — Always include a face sheet and insurance cards when faxing a new admission, and it's best to follow up with a call so we know exactly what you need from us.

Tip #3 — If DeGoler provides your medical records, try to pull your yellow sheets by the 20th of each month.

Tip #4 — If you use DeGoler emergency kits, always be prepared to return an opened kit upon delivery of a new one, and be sure to fill out the usage sheets inside.

Going Generic

The following drugs have recently released generic equivalents:

- Diovan (brand) is now valsartan.
- Uroxatral (brand) is now alfuzosin.
- Evoxac (brand) is now cevimeline.
- Stalevo (brand) is now a combination of carbidopa/levodopa/entacapone.
- Opana (brand) is now extended-release oxymorphone.

The following drugs are expected to release generic equivalents later this year:

- Evista
- Cymbalta

Contact Us

Pharmacy: 913-596-0159
 Pharmacy fax: 913-596-0155
 Billing: 913-596-2447
 Billing fax: 913-299-8101
 Consultant — Kim Davis:
 kdavis@degoler.com
 Marketing Director — Chris Kueter: 913-967-9505
 or ckueter@degoler.com
 Newsletter production
 — Tara McCoy:
 tmccoy@degoler.com