

## **Bridging the Gap Between Medication Adherence & Technology**

Ever calculated how much profit is lost due to unfilled prescription orders? It is projected that revenue loss for non-adherence is estimated to be [\\$564 billion](#). Medication non-adherence is one of the most serious problems in healthcare, posing a heavy financial impact.

For pharmacies, keeping patients in compliance is important to their well-being and the pharmacy's bottom line. If patients do not take their medications properly, the ramifications can be disastrous, leading to poor health, worsening of disease states, and increased hospitalizations. Technology-based tools run the gambit in their ability to help improve medication adherence while encouraging patients to stick to their prescriptions and complete abandoned refill orders.



Here are four technology solutions all pharmacies should consider when it comes to improving medication adherence:

### **Interactive Voice Response (IVR)**

Did you know that nearly [one third](#) of all prescriptions never get filled? This puts the high prescription volume that pharmacies must maintain in order to remain profitable at risk. If your pharmacy is closed on Sundays or during holidays, that is no problem with an IVR. Pharmacies that are equipped with an IVR give their patients 24/7 access to their pharmacy and at any time of the day or night patients can submit refill requests. Having around-the-clock access to a pharmacy helps boost medication adherence and compliance with patients which is a key challenge for pharmacists.

### **Mobile Refill Apps**

Mobile refill apps are the compatible link between patients and their pharmacy. Patients can easily refill their prescriptions, check the status of their order, see confirmation of pickup time, view the pharmacy's address and locate their contact information. One feature that is popular is the integration of barcode scanning technology. Patients can simply scan the barcode on their prescription bottle and watch as their refill request is sent to their local pharmacy. Refills get posted directly to the pharmacy's software vendor queue, so the pharmacy staff never has to worry about missing a request and patients can have a peace of mind knowing their prescription is waiting for them at the counter. Having immediate access to their pharmacy at their fingertips helps enhance patient outcomes and improves experience.

## Outbound Notifications

Calling/texting/emailing provides the ability for pharmacies to place automated outbound communications to patients to deliver HIPAA compliant messages that enhance patient convenience, patient compliance and pharmacy profitability. These notifications boost a customer's loyalty by reminding customers to pick-up their prescriptions, whether refills or new; and save staff time in restocking prescriptions and reducing staff intensive tasks. By prompting a patient to pick-up their requested prescription on-time, the pharmacy maximizes the annual number of prescription sales and as a bonus improves patient compliance.

## Adherence Packaging

Whether it's something as simple as customizable medication blister cards or as advanced as in-pharmacy semi-automatic medication strip packaging – providing pre-sorted medications to customers in easy-to-access packaging is a proven game-changer in medication adherence. In fact, [studies](#) show that adherence packaging has demonstrated statistically significant and relevant positive results for adherence and clinical outcomes. Plus, the medication pack provides a physical printed reminder and an opportunity for consumers to see whether a dose for a certain day has been taken or not.

## Closing Thoughts

Independent pharmacies are leaders in building and maintaining customer relationships. Technology alone won't solve adherence but engaging and communicating with patients is key. Whether your pharmacy uses smart-packaging, mobile technology, pharmaceutical databases/reporting, or any other tech-based tool, when combined with a strong customer service approach, you are increasing your customer's chance at experiencing positive clinical effects through better medication adherence.

Not sure where to start? Through our partnership with Aspire Health Pharmacy Services, Keystone has all the solutions to help your pharmacy succeed and improve medication adherence with your patients. To learn more about our services and discounted flu offerings, connect with your Keystone Sales Rep via phone 215-464-9892 or email [info@kpparx.com](mailto:info@kpparx.com).

1. <https://pharmengage.com/estimated-annual-pharmaceutical-revenue-loss-due-to-medication-non-adherence/>
2. <https://www.aafp.org/news/health-of-the-public/20140428nonadherencestudy.html>
3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4234982/>