

CASE STUDY

Two Pharmacies' Needs Are Filled By One Unique Device

The “Swiss Army knife” of pharmacy prescription filling is also one of the tiniest devices. In addition, just like the famed pocketknife, this device is highly useful for different pharmacies, in different scenarios, at different times. That device is the Kirby Lester KL1Plus from Capsa Healthcare, and its versatility for filling scripts in both main street retail and hospital outpatient is what makes the KL1Plus stand out. Read how two distinctive settings – Memorial Hospital Outpatient Pharmacy (Gulfport, MS) and Mitchell’s Park Street Pharmacy (Calico Rock, AR) – found common ground and success after deploying the same automation.

Mitchell’s Park Street Pharmacy: The End of Customer Disputes

The doubting customer was an all-too-common problem at this north-central Arkansas community pharmacy. A customer accuses the pharmacy staff of a mis-dispensed quantity of medications, invariably a controlled substance and usually groundless. The problem is disruptive and time-sapping. And Mitchell’s Park Street Pharmacy business manager Steven Mitchell had enough of the arguments.

Mitchell and his spouse/pharmacist Sarah Mitchell decided to step up from manual counting to a KL1Plus device, and instantly the “he said/she said” problem vanished. The device is a combination scan-verification system and pill counter with user-tracking, and each filled prescription gets saved for up to 10 years with a complete record of who filled it, at what time, how many pills were dispensed, how many were recounted, and the back-count of the stock bottle. “You want to dispense every prescription correctly and you hate to think

our staff made an error. But you don’t want to be taken advantage of,” Steven Mitchell says. “Before we were doing the human-being double-count on a tray for all controlled substances but we were still vulnerable. We had no proof. Once word got around town that we were using a counter that tied into our computer system, we stopped getting challenged,” he says.

Memorial Hospital: Low-Cost & Low-Complexity Automation

This large regional hospital in southern Mississippi recently underwent a major expansion that included a “meds-to-beds” prescription discharge program. Additionally, the pharmacy began dispensing specialty medications and has embedded pharmacy staff within the hospital’s specialty clinics to facilitate enhanced patient care. These two programs generated labor demands for Memorial’s outpatient pharmacy team that was already at capacity filling employee and community prescrip-



Mitchell's Park Street Pharmacy



Memorial Hospital Outpatient Pharmacy

tions. Several technology improvements were installed to support the large-scale expansion. However, according to Ashlee Ladner, PharmD and manager, one of the most impactful additions was also the simplest and smallest, the Kirby Lester KL1Plus.

Before Memorial's expansion, prescription filling was completed the old-fashioned way: pharmacy technicians performed product verification by looking at the patient label and counting by 5's. The only barcode product verification was by the pharmacist during the final check. At this point, the pharmacist would catch any discrepancies due to the manual filling process and would reroute the prescription upstream for corrections. When Memorial's pharmacy techs began using the KL1Plus and bought into the machine's benefits, discrepancies became a seldom occurrence.

Like A Tiny Pharmacy Robot, But More Versatile

The KL1Plus is a four-in-one tool for filling prescriptions and managing physical inventory, but each pharmacy that uses the KL1Plus finds it uniquely valuable.

The KL1Plus quickly changes the minds of pharmacy owners and managers who earlier believed

Four Functions Prevent Rx Errors

- 1 Scan-verify right med & dose for right patient
- 2 Built-in pill counter for right quantity
- 3 Keep a record of every fill
- 4 Electronic C-II and inventory log

that "automating the pharmacy" meant investing in a large robot. That is not the case with the KL1Plus. Memorial had the daily script volume to cost-justify a fully automated robot, but the pharmacy was severely space-constrained. The countertop sized KL1Plus device was the only technology that would fit. Its footprint is about the size of a plastic counting tray and can squeeze onto even the tightest dispensing countertop.

Directly & Indirectly Saves Time

For both Memorial Hospital and Mitchell's Park Street Pharmacy, the KL1Plus was unlike any other

considered automation device because it filled so many tasks and needs. Yet Shannon Canzoneri, PharmD and Pharmacy Coordinator at Memorial Hospital, says the KL1Plus device's biggest benefit is saving time for pharmacists *and* techs. Prescription-counting speed became the technicians' favorite feature since the device is infinitely faster than tray-and-spatula. Even when the device instructs the tech to perform a double count of controlled or targeted meds, it is still faster. As for the pharmacists, having the KL1Plus was a practical addition to the workflow and optimized current processes. They use the KL1Plus to NDC-check, so they have correct medication selection before entering into the final verification step by the pharmacist.

Mitchell spoke about the ease of integration with their pharmacy management system of choice. When the pharmacy moved over to PioneerRx, interfacing was simple with the KL1Plus. The device does not allow the wrong NDC, strength, or quantity to accidentally be filled and get to pharmacist check. The KL1Plus keeps a record of every fill for 10 years and sends a confirmation to PioneerRx. In these ways, Mitchell equates having the KL1Plus onsite as "like being a member of the staff; it's that valuable."

How The KL1Plus Works

The KL1Plus adapts to any pharmacy's workflow; that is part of its widespread appeal in pharmacies small or large, urban or rural. Having stated this, usage generally follows this model regardless of the setting:

- 1 The KL1Plus interfaces with the pharmacy management software.
- 2 After scripts are adjudicated, the technician uses the KL1Plus to fill orders.
- 3 The technician scans the prescription label, then scans the product stock bottle.

If there is a positive match, the KL1Plus prompts the technician to proceed with the fill. If there is a mismatch, the KL1Plus flags the discrepancy.

- 4 The technician pours the correct quantity through the optic sensors.
- 5 Unit-of-use medications (e.g., ointments, boxed meds) are scan-verified and the total package size is verified.
- 6 Each fill is saved up to 10 years; Rx history is retrievable quickly.
- 7 The KL1Plus is utilized for inventory counting and creates a log of all full and partial stock bottles.
- 8 Also available: The KL1Plus can be used as an electronic C-II log for inputting controlled meds upon receipt from the wholesaler.

Helpful Links

Watch KL1Plus video:

<https://youtu.be/vbXm9LpsCKY>

Read more about Memorial Hospital's Outpatient Pharmacy:

<https://www.capsahealthcare.com/kl1plus-in-hospital-outpatient-memorial/>

Read more about Mitchell's Park Street Pharmacy:

<https://www.capsahealthcare.com/best-thing-about-kl1plus-it-keeps-a-record/>