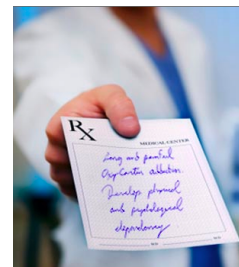


E-prescribing Overview

E-prescribing has been described as the solution to improved patient safety and reducing sky-rocketing medication costs. It is estimated that approximately 7,000 deaths occur each year in the United States due to medication errors. These errors are predominately due to handwriting illegibility, wrong dosing, missed drug-drug or drug-allergy reactions. With approximately 3 billion prescriptions written annually, which constitutes one of the largest paper-based processes in the United States, the writing of prescriptions can be streamlined and efficient by using an e-prescribing system.



What Is E-prescribing?

E-prescribing is simply an electronic way to generate prescriptions through an automated data-entry process utilizing e-prescribing software and a transmission network which links to participating pharmacies.

- 1. Improved patient safety and overall quality of care.** Illegibility from handwritten prescriptions is eliminated, decreasing the risk of medication errors and decreasing liability risks.
- 2. Warning and Alert systems are provided at the point of prescribing.** It has been documented that medication errors are often the result of inadequate access to current drug reference information. E-prescribing systems can provide an overall medication management process through drug utilization review (DUR) programs. DUR programs perform checks against the patient's current medications for drug-drug interactions, drug-allergy interactions, diagnoses, body weight, age, drug appropriateness, correct dosing; contraindications, adverse reactions, duplicate therapy alert, etc. and alerts the provider if interactions are found.
- 3. Access to patient's prescription history.** Knowing the patient's prescription history at the time of prescribing can serve as an alert to drug inappropriateness.
- 4. Improves formulary adherence.** By checking with healthcare formularies at point-of-care, generic substitutions and generic first-line therapy choices are encouraged thus reducing patient costs.

5. Reduces or eliminates phone calls and call-backs to pharmacies. Physician offices receive over 150 million call-backs from pharmacies with questions, clarifications and refill requests. According to a HIMSS article on e-prescribing under [Topics and Tools](#) at their website, almost 30 percent of the 3 billion prescriptions written annually require a call backs. This equals 900 million prescription-related telephone calls annually¹. Medco® Health Solutions, Inc. conducted a survey of Boston area physicians and 88 percent of those surveyed said they, or their staff, spend almost one-third of their time responding to phone calls from pharmacies regarding prescriptions. Medco reported that one practitioner in the survey indicated that in a time study of his four physician practice, the average phone call between a pharmacist and practitioner lasted eight minutes and was costing his practice more than \$200 per week in wasted staff time². These call-backs interrupt office flow and reduce productivity related to chart-pulls, re-filing charts, follow-up calls, faxing prescriptions etc.

6. Eliminates faxes to pharmacies.

7. Streamlines the refill's requests and authorization processes. Refill authorization from the pharmacy can be a completely automated process and refills can usually be generated in one click. The pharmacist generates a refill request/authorization that is delivered through the network to the provider's system, the provider then reviews the request, approves or denies the refill and the pharmacy system is immediately updated.

8. Increases patient compliance. It is estimated that 20% of paper-based prescription orders go unfilled by the patient. E-prescribing systems expedite the filling of prescriptions at the pharmacy.

9. Increases patient convenience by reducing patient trips to the pharmacy and reducing wait times.

10. Offers true provider mobility. Access the Internet to write or authorize prescriptions anytime from anywhere.

11. Improves reporting ability. Query reporting may be performed which would be impossible with a paper prescription system. Common examples of such reporting would be: finding all patients who have had a particular medication prescribed to them during a drug recall, the frequency of medication prescribed by certain providers, etc.

What Your Practice Needs To Do To Get Started E-prescribing

Send an email to emr@doctorsaccess.com and tell us you are ready.

