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Case Study

By Collie Forrester, RPh, MHA

Designing a New Pharmacy Complex to **Facilitate Workflow and Comply with USP <797>**

FLORIDA HOSPITAL WATERMAN, LOCATED IN TAVARES – ABOUT 30 miles northwest of Orlando – is a 204-bed hospital serving a rapidly growing community. In the spring of 2004, it became clear to pharmacy leadership that our physical plant could no longer accommodate the demands of our increased patient census. In addition, our footprint would not allow us to construct a cleanroom that would both meet USP <797> standards and facilitate our compounding workflow.

Upon examining several alternatives for addressing our space issues, we decided to relocate our pharmacy to another area of the Florida Hospital Waterman complex. After researching pharmacy design companies, in May 2004, we selected R.C. Smith Company as our pharmacy design consultants and casework providers. Paul Giles, our R.C. Smith representative, aided us in evaluating several options and determining the optimal location for our new pharmacy – the medical office building attached to the hospital, where we would have few space constraints. With the guidance of R.C. Smith's benchmark data on space allocation and workflow efficiency (collected via their work with other hospital pharmacies), we found we would be able to design a brand new pharmacy that would facilitate our workflow and medication management systems, as well as meet our hospital's future needs. By working with R.C. Smith and reviewing their data on the relationship between patient census and pharmacy square footage, we determined our



space requirements based on our current bed size, and on our projections for our future capacity. Together we outlined our practice limitations and our objectives to remove the barriers that were, at the time, preventing us from improving our workflow and complying with <797> standards. After fine-tuning the proposal based on all of this information, we presented our plans to the president's



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council and corporate finance committee, who ultimately approved the budget for the new pharmacy.

Facilitating Pharmacy Workflow

R.C. Smith worked collaboratively with us, providing us with drawings for our review and making changes according to our feedback. In this manner, we arrived at a final design that accommodated pharmacy operations, as well as our hospital's medication management system. For instance, among other customizations, R.C. Smith designed order-entry stations to accommodate our dual-screen medication order management system, and unique workstations for our clinical support technician, lead technician, and pharmacy buyer. The pharmacy design also accommodates our automated equipment for controlled substance storage. Furthermore, Florida Hospital Waterman plans to conduct investigational drug studies in the near future, and R.C. Smith was able to design cabinets for the adequate storage and control of investigational drugs.

The new pharmacy also includes a break room, reception area, and conference room, each designed to meet our specific needs. In particular, we have found our new staff lockers and staff mail slots to be quite useful, not to mention aesthetically pleasing; these built-in features are constructed of the same materials as our pharmacy casework, giving the pharmacy a unified look.

Cleanroom Design

Using the specifications set forth by USP <797>, R.C. Smith also designed our cleanroom. We held weekly meetings with our architect, our engineer, the facilities staff, and the pharmacy staff, as well as our R.C. Smith representative, Paul Giles. Although the Florida Hospital Waterman staff was well aware of the requirements of <797>, R.C. Smith was very active in providing total guidance for the design and construction of the cleanroom. The end result is a cleanroom that has been certified to meet <797> standards and the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration's standards as well.



Looking to the Future

Our pharmacy is now well equipped to serve our rapidly growing community. In fact, the sixth floor of our hospital is designated to house an additional 60 beds in the near term. Working in our larger, more efficiently designed pharmacy, we will be able to meet the potential increase in demand for pharmacy services.

We believe R.C. Smith did an outstanding job in designing our new pharmacy complex, and the quality of their workmanship and materials is excellent. Recognizing the company's ability to design a functional pharmacy within the limits of our allotted space and budget, hospital administration is pleased with the workflow design and quality of the casework. All told, in working with R.C. Smith, we accomplished our objectives and exceeded our expectations for our new pharmacy complex. ■

Collie Forrester, RPh, MHA, is the director of pharmacy at Florida Hospital Waterman, a post he has held since 2003. The recipient of a BS in pharmacy and a master's degree in health care administration, he has 35 years' experience as a pharmacy director.



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