



KEY POINT SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

A Veteran's Administration (VA) pharmacy tested the implications of using an open pharmacy system.

DESIGN IMPLICATIONS

The development of open pharmacies should be encouraged.

Outpatient Pharmacy Redesign to Improve Work Flow, Waiting Time, and Patient Satisfaction

Pierce, R., Rogers, E., Sharp, M., M. Musulin, M.
1990 | American Journal of Hospital Pharmacy
Volume 47, Issue 2, Pages 351-356

Key Concepts/Context

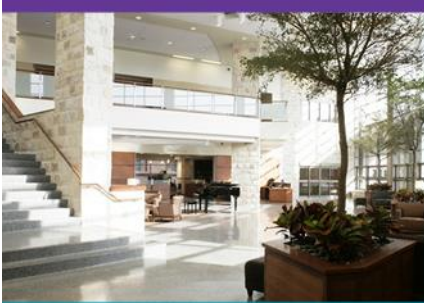
The open pharmacy approach tested increased the efficiency of the pharmacy operation, reduced patient waiting time, and increased patient and pharmacist satisfaction with their experiences at the pharmacy.

Methods

A VA pharmacy changed the physical layout of its pharmacy so that one or more pharmacists (depending on service level) were stationed outside of the dispensing area in a computer-equipped consultation booth to speak with patients about their prescriptions, enter prescription information into the dispensing system via the computer, etc., before the prescription entered the dispensing area that has been redesigned to resemble a conveyer belt along which the prescription passed as it was filled before being picked up by patients at the opposite end of the dispensing area from the pharmacist consultation booth. Data on workload and waiting times were collected via pharmacy records and observations done with stopwatches, interviews were conducted with pharmacists (number of interviews not provided), and 100 interviews were conducted with randomly selected patients.

Findings

After changes were made to the physical environment, patients spent less time waiting in line (down from 1 hour to 30 minutes), patients were more satisfied with the new system, and staff were more satisfied with the new system.



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Limitations

Data were collected at only one site, and many details of the data gathering process were not provided.