

PHARMACIUM DISPENSARY CORNER #5

A LAST IMPRESSION THAT LASTS



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A few issues ago we emphasised the importance of a creating a great first impression. While that absolutely holds true, it is equally important not to underestimate the lasting impression the final touch point with your customer can have.

Focusing on the key steps of the dispensary workflow and customer experience, the final interaction with the prescription customer occurs at the 'script out' area of the dispensary. It is at this point of the prescription customer's journey that we have one of the most important opportunities to make that last impression count.

Whether your script out counter is a dedicated standalone component of the dispensary or part of a more multipurpose script in/out setup, a few critical elements add weight to the significance of this part of the dispensary:

- Script handover.
- Conversation.
- Semi-private consult space.
- Scheduled medicine proximity to support effortless conversation

and recommendation process by the pharmacist.

As we have discussed in previous issues, for this workspace to be most effective and allow your staff to provide those 'last impressions that truly last', the first step is review and alignment of all required components. Put simply, we need the right resources in the right place doing the right things, for this to work.

Script handover

This part of the workflow should have the greatest pharmacist availability. Not only is this important from a best-practice and improved-safety perspective, as it allows for the final verification of the script, but also, perhaps most importantly, it provides opportunity for direct contact between the customer and pharmacist.

Appearing 'present' in the moment and available to the customer adds tremendous value to the conversation, even if only brief, and is most likely to engage the customer. This is in contrast to the 'feeling' that you are overseeing the script handover from

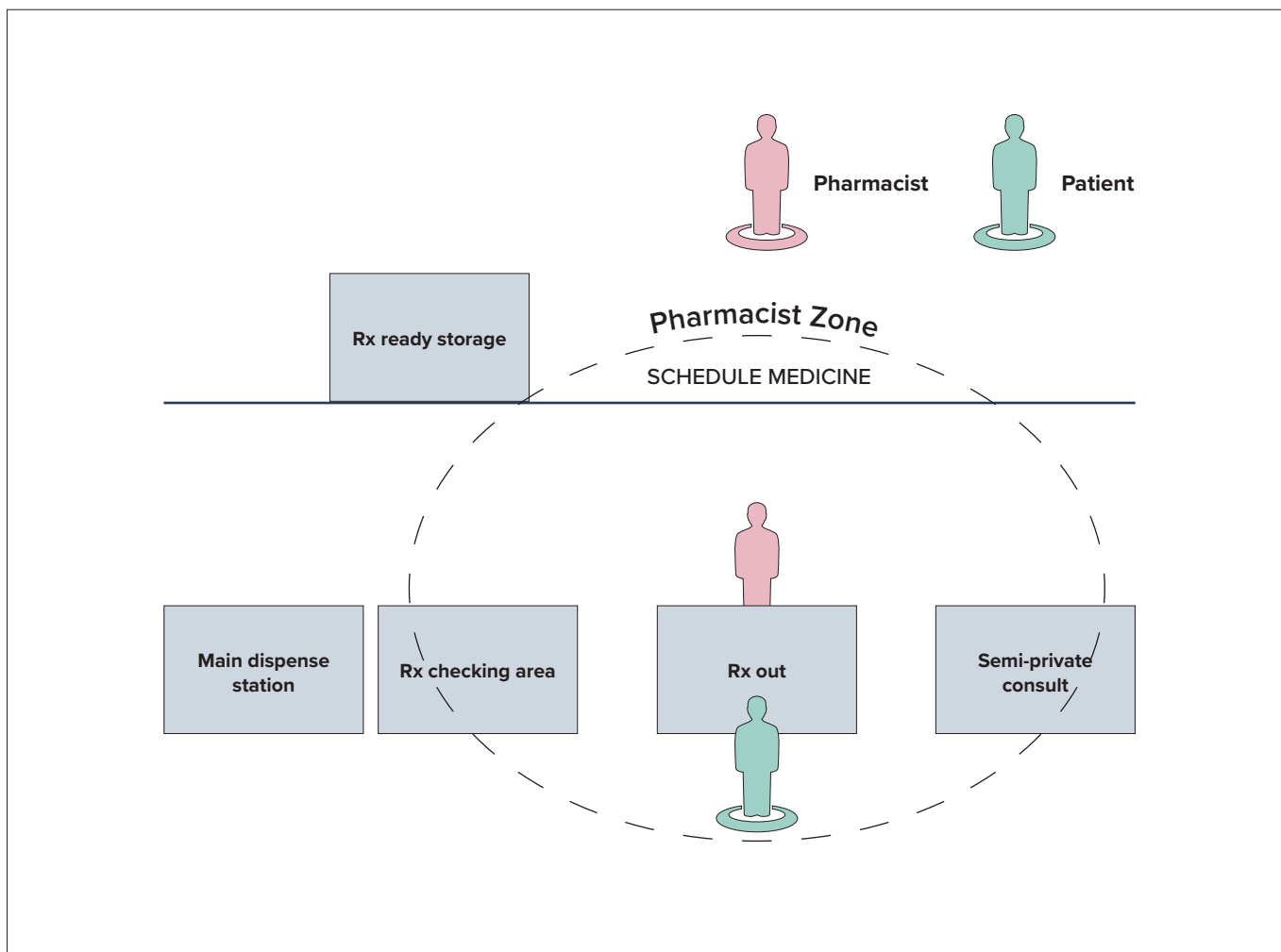
behind a raised, hidden dispensary as you clamber up a step ladder, reach that extra box on the top shelf, wave to the customer with a label stuck to the back of your hand, and say, "Yes, still five repeats on that one, Mrs Jones". Sound familiar? It happens. We've all done it, or seen it.

Conversation

For the script out counter to be conducive to quality conversations, the pharmacist being positioned there is not only beneficial, but also allows the conversation to flow effortlessly. For example, if you have to dart out the back to rummage for a demo Spiriva device to show a customer how to use it, then dart back to borrow a free PC to print some further information, then sprint to the other end of the dispensary to grab that BioCeuticals product they requested, then the flow of the conversation can hardly be seamless from the customer's perspective.

Semi-private consult space

While many pharmacy designs and fit-outs these days do include a consult



room, where space and scale permit, a semi-private consult space can also be quite useful. Providing this intermediate private space for interaction with the customer allows some conversations to be taken a bit further, away from the action at the direct scripts out counter, while not necessarily reaching the level of a fully private consult room discussion. Where a customer conversation may require a little more time or attention, moving to an adjacent consult space frees up the direct script out counter and avoids the perception of a long wait or too much congestion at this counter, which can be off-putting to other customers.

Scheduled medicine

As we touched on in the 'conversation' piece above, positioning the appropriate scheduled medicine in close proximity to the script out area supports a seamless conversation with the customer about options available either for items proactively recommended by the pharmacist or requested by the customer. Often referred to as the 'power wall', this area of the pharmacy provides a great opportunity to increase

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sales as part of these pharmacist led conversations. Hence, location and layout are integral to the proven benefits this can bring. The diagram illustrates the key elements and proximity to the pharmacist zone at script out that enable better conversations and experience for the customer.

So, in creating an effective script out area, the key considerations include:

- Ensuring the pharmacist can be easily positioned there. This may mean that the script checking point is also in close proximity, allowing transition from one step to the next.
- Location of and accessibility to the ready prepared scripts. Are these in close proximity to the script handover counter? Can the returning customer scripts be found efficiently? Can the customer see the pile of script

baskets waiting. Are these tidy or messy? What does their appearance say to the customer?

- In busy pharmacies, ensure sufficient space between stations for customer comfort and privacy. Consider the functionality and design of the counter itself: where will signed scripts be filed?
- Where are demo devices located for counselling?
- Is there a PC at the counter for cross checking customer history, etc? If not, where will this be undertaken if required?

The script out area of the dispensary is host to a number of functions and, as one of the final close touch points that customers have with your staff and business, it's important to give it care and consideration from a design, service and customer experience point of view. Therefore, we conclude this Dispensary Corner article with the wisdom of author, speaker and global customer service/experience expert Shep Hyken: "First impressions are important, but the last impression we leave with the customer will leave the most lasting impression."