

**** 8 Deadly Mistakes To *
Avoid When Building YOUR
Your HIV Pharmacy***





Not Committed to The Process

Once you embark on creating or building your HIV Specialty Pharmacy niche, You MUST be committed to the process.

The commitment comes by investing both your time and money in creating the infrastructure for the “Best HIV Pharmacy”.

Without committing to the process 100% and not following a blueprint to make it happen, you run the risk of wasting precious time, money and resources, resulting in a mediocre product and not getting your result of the “Pharmacy Business You Always Dreamed Of.”

After pouring in the blood, sweat and tears of making it happen, it will be worth it!

This quote from Robert Conklin sums it up:

“If you make the unconditional commitment to reach your most important goals, if the strength of your decision is sufficient, you will find the way and the power to achieve your goals.”



Pharmacists and Staff NOT HIV Sensitive

HIV Sensitivity MUST begin with YOU and then be passed down to every employee, pharmacists, technicians, clerks, drivers and any other employee coming into contact with patients.

All patients **MUST** be treated with empathy and compassion. Do not discriminate between ethnic groups or social classes, every patient should be treated equally!

All patients **MUST** be treated with the same level of respect & dignity. An example would be treating Medicaid or Medicare patients with less attention, care and compassion as patients that have private insurance or who pay cash.

Confidentiality is **CRITICAL** and consultations must be provided in a private area away from other customers or staff. Ensure that You and your staff **NEVER** discuss or disclose an individuals HIV status with **ANYONE** including spouses and family members. What happens in the pharmacy Stays in the pharmacy!

Stigma still exists around HIV/AIDS and it is important for you and your staff to be culturally sensitive to all your patients.

Make sure that **YOU** or your staff **NEVER** pass judgement on others and make sure that you do not tolerate derogatory, discriminatory comments- **EVER!**

Implement a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy for any AIDS phobia, homophobia or any discrimination or intolerance towards any HIV infected patient, customer or co-worker.

HIV/AIDS is included as a disability in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and protects individuals from discrimination in employment, government services, public accommodations including service establishments such as hotels, restaurants, theaters, businesses & healthcare providers. Individual States and many cities have laws in place protecting the rights of those with HIV/AIDS.

Make sure that HIV sensitivity issues are included in your pharmacy operations manual and that ALL employees have read it, understand it, and have been trained on the issues.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu said it best:

“A person is a person because he recognizes others as persons”



Pharmacists and Staff NOT Trained

It is imperative to make sure that your entire staff is trained and guided and that they understand EXACTLY what is expected of them. You and your staff must be able to answer ALL questions and concerns that your patients and customers may have with regards to HIV related issues such as:

- ✓ What medications are covered on different Insurance plans, and co-ordinating insurance billing with multiple insurance plans, such as Medicare Part D and ADAP

- ✓ Getting the medications covered for patients on their insurance, without the patient having to hassle
- ✓ Pharmacist providing consultations on HIV medications
- ✓ Answer any and all questions related to HIV and/or medications, such as drug interactions, side effects, adherence etc.

HIV sensitivity training discussed in previous point **MUST** be included in training. The training must be ongoing so pharmacists and staff can keep up with the latest medications, treatment and information related to HIV/AIDS.

The pharmacists and staff must be trained not to just “*Fill & Bill*” but always provide consultations and education to patients regarding their HIV medications, and always ensure that the patient knows exactly what the medications are for, how to take them and that they understand the importance of adherence. Pharmacists **MUST** make interventions and provide MTM (medication therapy management) to patients.

***"It's all to do with the training: you can do a lot if you're properly trained."
- Elizabeth II, Queen of Great Britain***



Pharmacists and Staff DO NOT Advocate on the Patients Behalf

If medications are not covered by the patients insurance carrier, the pharmacist and/or technician must offer solutions for the patient.

Go the extra mile and do the leg work for the patient to solve the problem.

Be an Advocate for the patient, contact the physician and get the medication switched to something that is covered, if appropriate or work with the insurance company to get it covered for your patient so that they don't have to deal with the added stress.

Never have pharmacists, technicians or clerks go out to a patient and say: "it's not covered, call your insurance company" or "It's not covered call your doctor to switch the medication", or even worse, "It's not covered, here's the prescription, go back to your doctor"

This practice will overwhelm the patient who will oftentimes want to just bag the whole deal as it is too much for them to deal with!

If the patient just quits, and doesn't take the prescriptions that the physician has prescribed for them, this can greatly impede their medical care and overall outcomes.

The staff should also be aware of local AIDS Service Organizations and HIV

related services that are available in the community, so that they can make appropriate referrals when necessary.

“In a world full of people who couldn't care less, be someone who couldn't care more.: -Author Unknown



HIV Antiretroviral Medications Are NOT Always in Stock

It is absolutely imperative that in order to have a successful HIV Pharmacy Business, you **MUST** always have a adequate stock of HIV antiretroviral medications and other related medications needed by your patients.

Adherence to antiretroviral therapy is critical and it's a sad day when the pharmacy promotes the non-adherence for the patient because the medication was not in stock.

The pharmacist is one of the **MOST** important if not **THE** most important member of the patients healthcare team. Drug therapy is at the bullseye of treatment strategies for HIV patients, and therefore the care that is provided by the pharmacist & pharmacy staff has a direct impact on positive outcomes for the patient.

Keep ALL antiretrovirals in STOCK!!

No Meds= Non Adherence= Drug Resistance= Treatment Failure, Make sure this equation is NOT part of your HIV Pharmacy Business



NOT Working to Acquire the BEST Wholesaler Deal and Terms

Work to acquire the BEST deal and terms from your wholesaler. All the major wholesalers “drool” over the thought of getting HIV Pharmacies as customers due to the massive amount of drugs ordered and the high dollar value of the account (millions of dollars annually).

Work the “Wholesaler Playing Field” and obtain the BEST deal for your pharmacy.

It is also a good idea to see if your pharmacy will qualify for a contract with a Specialty Pharmacy group such as Armada Health Care where you will have the benefit of specialty pharmacy contracts that will enhance your bottom line.

Do research on the possibility of partnering with a Pharmacy GPO (Group Purchasing Organization) that can increase your purchasing leverage. Multiple pharmacies purchasing as a group are more powerful and able to purchase drugs at better rates and terms than just your pharmacy alone.



No HIV Marketing Plan

When building your HIV Pharmacy Business you **MUST** take the time and create an HIV Pharmacy Marketing Plan that will become the blueprint and cornerstone of your businesses success. The plan will become a document that you must modify, enhance and change over time as needed.

Trying to build your HIV Pharmacy without a solid, written marketing plan will have you spinning your wheels in no time and shooting from the hip and grasping at straws. You will be unable to maximize your business and create the business of your dreams.

Once you have created your marketing plan you have a blueprint to get your business ramped up and moving in the right direction.

“Every well built house started in the form of a definite purpose plus a definite plan in the nature of a set of blueprints.” - Napoleon Hill



NO HIV Operations Manual & Systems in Place

It is Mission critical to have an HIV Pharmacy Operations Manual for your pharmacy in place that contains all the policies and procedures. This manual becomes your Human Resource blueprint that contains everything that your employees need to know about the operation of your pharmacy and what is expected of them as your employees.

Included in the manual must be all company policies and procedures, all employee job descriptions, dress code, vacation policy etc. The manual contains everything that is expected of your staff.

Once you have the Operations Manual completed, every employee **MUST** read it and sign that they have read and understand the document. When updates and addendums are made to the Operations Manual, you must inform your staff and have them sign and acknowledge that they have read and understand the new updates and addendums.

Every single time that you hire new employees, make sure they review the Operations Manual and that they understand what is expected of them as your employee, and they acknowledge and sign that they understand.

By having an HIV Pharmacy operations Manual in place you will have all your employees on the same page, with everyone understanding your vision for the business, and what is expected of them. This removes any doubt in your mind or that of your employees.

A good HIV Pharmacy Operations Manual will allow you to build an amazing, efficient pharmacy that your employees are happy to be a part of and that your patients and customers love to be part of!

