

Quality is the cornerstone of Medco By Mail. Our sophisticated dispensing operations and computer capabilities are designed to ensure that each prescription order is filled accurately and efficiently. Medco's systems for quality control, performance monitoring, and accuracy verification are unique in the industry. Together, they ensure the highest levels of quality and service to our clients and their members.

Quality Standards in Medco By Mail Operations

In the mail-order pharmacies, quality process activities as well as customer satisfaction are driven by performance measurement within four key areas: Compliance, Quality, Service and Cost. Each of our pharmacies adheres specifically to the requirements of the state where it is located. In addition, Medco and each of its mail-order pharmacies are fully accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and as such are diligent in adhering to all applicable standards of that organization. Highlights of the quality processes employed within our pharmacies are provided below:

- a) Guaranteeing turnaround of medication to the patient;
- b) Following the highest professional standards and dispensing practices;
- c) Dispensing FDA-approved brand name and bio-equivalent generic drugs;
- d) Adhering to dispensing standards, such as:
 - Processing all prescriptions (protocol and non-protocol) within an average of two business days;
 - Dispensing only the quantity prescribed by the licensed practitioner and as permitted by the plan design;
 - Preventing dispensing of refills without the original prescription;
 - Following the prescriber's intent (e.g., not increasing the days' supply to meet plan maximums).
- e) Adhering to drug standards, such as:
 - Keeping look-a-like and sound-a-like drugs and different potencies of the same drug in separate locations;
 - Maintaining rigid drug inventory control so that stock is rotated on a continual basis;
 - Preventing medications from being dispensed within six months of expiration date;
 - Ensuring that substituted generic drugs are bio- and therapeutically- equivalent and consistent with the prescription.

- f) Following quality assurance and patient safety procedures, such as:
- Confirming drug and patient eligibility;
 - Ensuring that prescriptions are not being refilled too soon;
 - Ensuring that the prescribed quantity is not more than the recommended daily dose (maximum daily dose);
 - Ensuring that duplicate prescriptions or therapies are not dispensed (duplicate therapy-concomitant therapy);
 - Identifying and resolving drug to patient age alerts; and
 - Identifying and resolving drug to drug and drug to patient allergy interactions (idiosyncrasy review).

Each mail-order pharmacy has a Director of Pharmacy Practice who is a registered pharmacist. It is the Director of Pharmacy Practice who is responsible for all dispensing-related activities. Additional registered pharmacists supervise every activity in the dispensing process, including maintenance of dispensing records. All prescriptions are checked by registered pharmacists who are licensed in the state in which they practice.

Corrective Action Teams

Each pharmacy has a corrective action process improvement team which focuses on achieving the highest level of performance in order to improve upon the four key performance measurements.

Medco Employee Involvement

Medco promotes employee involvement through a formal recognition program and employee suggestion programs like the Opportunity for Improvement Program. Employees who excel in quality, efficiency, and attitude are given awards such as Employee of the Month, Quality Winner Award, Patient Guardianship Winner, Cost Savings Winner, Chief's Award, Quality Champion Award, and Perfect Attendance Award, to name a few of the awards granted by Medco's mail-order pharmacies.

Correcting Errors

Medco has a three-step procedure in place to address the appropriate actions to take in the unlikely event a dispensing nonconformance (error) occurs as well as steps to engage pharmacy staff involved to prevent future occurrences. Patients are encouraged to contact Medco's Customer Service Department if they believe a prescription was dispensed inaccurately. First, the patient will be connected with a registered pharmacist who will ask the patient a series of questions to ascertain the details. If a dispensing nonconformance is determined, the pharmacist will instruct the patient on the most appropriate action steps.

The primary concern to the pharmacist at the time of the call is for the patient to have an accurate and sufficient supply of the correct medication so as not to delay new or continuing

therapy. The second step in our procedure is for the pharmacist to expedite re-dispensing of the prescription and, if necessary, send the prescription by overnight mail to the patient. To further ensure that there is no interruption in therapy, the patient may be instructed on how to obtain a local supply at a retail pharmacy at no cost.

In addition to ensuring that the patient's needs have been satisfied, the pharmacist will begin step three of the process by reporting the event. The pharmacist will request the patient to return the medication to Medco for internal inspection. A written report of the event will be forwarded to the Director of Pharmacy Practice, Vice President of Professional Practice and Medco's Legal Department. The transaction in question will be reviewed, including analysis of the physician's original prescription and system generated documentation.

If the dispensing nonconformance involved a Medco process, the facility Director of Pharmacy Practice will review the event with areas involved to determine methods to prevent recurrence. Most recently, Medco has partnered with the Institute for Safe Medication Practices and recruited a Director of Medication Safety to further refine Medco's mission of improving medication use.