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*The industry leader in pharmacy point-of-sale innovation*

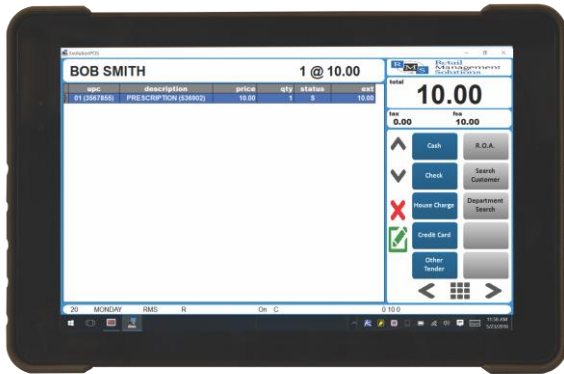
# Outpatient Pharmacies

What to look for when purchasing  
Point-of-Sale: 5 Must-Have Features

## Introduction

The Point of Sale system a hospital or health system chooses for their outpatient pharmacies can play an important role in helping meet organizational objectives for improving patient adherence and increasing overall revenues. Here are 5 things you should consider when searching for a new POS system for your outpatient pharmacies.

### 1. Mobile Register Technology



A mobile POS register can be useful to an outpatient pharmacy in many ways:

- for patient bedside discharge
- on the pharmacy sales-floor
- for a drive up window
- for prescription pickup at curbside, or
- as a secondary register in a busy pharmacy when lines start forming.

A mobile register is critical to a good bedside discharge program. Mobile registers have much the same feature set as the POS register in the outpatient pharmacy. They can scan prescriptions and OTC products, accept most methods of payment, including credit cards, checks, and cash. They also have the ability to document counseling notes, capture electronic signatures, print receipts and update the pharmacy system when the prescriptions are sold.

Thus, a mobile register is a necessary technology that will help you to grow your bedside discharge program, to improve patient adherence, and reduce your readmission rates. *This in turn can help you avoid Medicare penalties and improve not only the patient experience, but also patient outcomes.* It is estimated that in 2016 the majority of US hospitals will face penalties of up to 3% of their Medicare reimbursements due to high readmission rates within 30 days of discharge. (<http://www.modernhealthcare.com/article/20150803/NEWS/150809981>)

### 2. Point to Point Encryption, EMV, and Tokenization for Credit Cards

Point to Point Encryption (P2PE) is a new technology offered by some credit card processors that protects your customer's sensitive credit card information. With P2PE, the moment a credit card is swiped or put into a chip card reader, the card data is encrypted by the hardware device and sent directly to the credit card processor where it is decrypted for the first time. The processor then approves or disapproves the transaction and sends the approval or decline message back to the POS system. The benefit of implementing P2PE is that even if your network or systems were breached, there would be no usable credit card information available to the hackers.



Many card processors now are also offering EMV (Europay/MasterCard/Visa) chip card technology which makes it virtually impossible to fraudulently duplicate a credit card. Retailers that accept these EMV cards benefit from the shift in the liability for credit card fraud away from themselves as the merchant and onto the credit card processor.

For outpatient pharmacies that have a strong mail order business, point-of-sale can offer the ability to store credit card numbers utilizing a cloud based solution, which minimizes the merchant's liability since they aren't storing credit card data locally. This feature is often referred to as tokenization. This allows the pharmacy to charge a patient's credit card even though the card is not physically present.

These 3 technologies not only reduce credit card liability to the merchant, but also enhance their offerings to their patients and improve customer service.

### 3. Payroll Deduction

While most outpatient pharmacies fill a good amount of patient discharge prescriptions, there's another avenue to increase revenue – employee prescriptions.



Hospital employees have prescriptions to fill too, and why not encourage them to use the outpatient pharmacy? Significant savings can be realized by controlling costs, especially for self-insured hospitals, (<http://www.thehonestapothecary.com/2015/11/10/5-reasons-hospitals-need-an-outpatient-pharmacy/>) and a good way to encourage employees to use the outpatient pharmacy is to offer Payroll Deduction. With Payroll Deduction, employees can pay for their prescriptions at the Point of Sale, and the dollar amount of that transaction can be automatically deducted from the employee's paycheck. The employee can be easily identified in the POS system by name, employee number, or by scanning an employee badge at the time of the sale. These transactions

are then sent to the hospital accounting system for payroll deduction. In turn, the POS solution is updated regularly on current employees to minimize fraud or mistakes.

Having employee prescriptions filled in your outpatient pharmacy not only can reduce costs for the health system, but it will also increase revenues for the pharmacy while providing an employee benefit for the convenience of local prescription pickup.

### 4. Overall Flexibility

Flexibility is critical when looking for a POS system that is not just an “add-on item” to your pharmacy system provider or wholesaler. Having a POS system that can interface to many different pharmacy systems means that if you ever change your pharmacy system, you won't have to change your POS, too. Or, if you change your drug wholesaler, a flexible POS system should be able to get price updates and send orders to most drug wholesalers. Finally, being able to work with many different credit card providers increases the chance that the outpatient pharmacy point-of-sale can use the same credit card processor as the rest of the organization. Thus, a flexible POS system will save you and your employee's time, reduce expenses, and minimize training costs associated with a system change.



## 5. Centralized Management for Multiple Pharmacies

If your organization has multiple pharmacies, then a program that offers centralized management of products, pricing, and reporting provides even greater efficiencies and opportunities to reduce expenses. Adding and updating products centrally means that new products will be available for sale in all locations at the same time, and that product descriptions will be the same to make reporting more accurate. Likewise, price updates can be applied to all the pharmacies at the same time, maintaining the appropriate pricing profile for all locations and ensuring that margins and revenues are maximized. If you offer charge accounts to patients, then they can use the same account no matter what pharmacy they shop at, and statements can be mailed (or emailed) centrally. Employees that work in multiple pharmacies can use the same password, and management can add or terminate employees centrally, safeguarding sensitive information.



Additionally, centralized management of all locations allows real-time information to be accessed by managers and decision makers. Daily sales and inventory movement reports will allow you to make more informed decisions about what products are selling and which ones need to be discontinued or transferred to a different location where sales are more brisk. Or, use that information to create promotions and send them out centrally to all of your locations.

### In Summary

All POS systems are not created equal, and choosing the right POS system for your outpatient pharmacy will result not only in improved patient adherence, but also increased efficiency, enhanced revenues, and happier patients and employees.

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