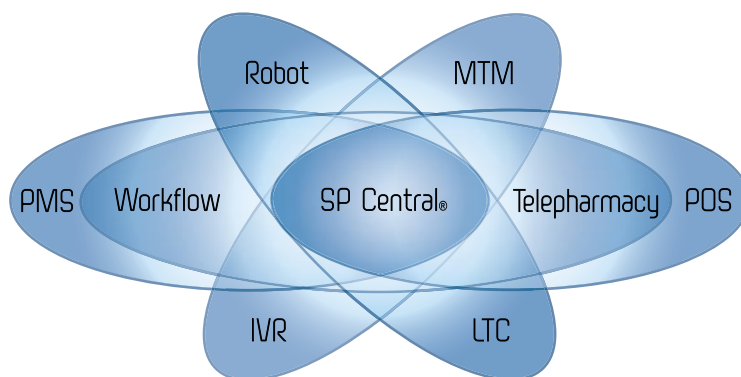


ScriptPro[®]

Technology Evaluation Guide

*Volume IV:
Telepharmacy Systems*



ScriptPro[®] Perfect Integration.

Dear Colleague,

Community pharmacies are the best value proposition in our nation's healthcare system. They provide medications and related information and support, so patients can manage medical conditions themselves, or with help from their loved ones, in the community setting.


However, this "best value" is threatened by an acute shortage of pharmacists. Many communities have already lost their local pharmacy, and many more will experience this in the coming years.

ScriptPro's Telepharmacy System is an extension of its proven pharmacy management platform. It allows pharmacists to provide services across a wide area through a reliable, systematic approach that ensures safety and efficiency in varied configurations.

ScriptPro offers this *Technology Evaluation Guide, Volume IV: Telepharmacy Systems*, to help pharmacy executives evaluate this new technology. The service and support pharmacy operators need and should expect from technology providers are also addressed.

We hope you will find this *Guide* helpful in making informed decisions as you evaluate and implement telepharmacy systems, so you can make the maximum contribution to the needs of patients in your area.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Coughlin
President and CEO
ScriptPro

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Telepharmacy— Expanding Pharmacy Services

This *Technology Evaluation Guide, Volume IV: Telepharmacy Systems*, is intended to serve as an executive reference for evaluating telepharmacy systems as they are used in various pharmacy settings.

Telepharmacy creates new opportunities for reaching underserved patient populations and expanding the capabilities of pharmacists. Whether in a small town whose pharmacy has closed, or a large hospital complex sprawling across many city blocks, telepharmacy can leverage pharmacist time and expertise in providing pharmacy services to patients. Your telepharmacy system can open doors to patient service, safety, and operational efficiency. We hope this *Guide* will help you make informed decisions as you implement telepharmacy in your operations. ■

Dispensing Safety and Accuracy

Here is a list of important safety and accuracy questions to consider in evaluating a telepharmacy system. ■

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
1. If packaged drug products are dispensed from a secure storage cabinet at the remote site, will the system:				
a) Allow the use of original manufacturer unit-of-use packs, when available, without the requirement of special secondary packaging or relabeling which can introduce errors?	✓			
b) Control who is allowed to enter packages into the cabinet and provide detailed records of refilling processes?	✓			
c) Enforce scanning of manufacturer barcodes to positively identify each package as it is entered into the cabinet and as it is removed from the cabinet and labeled for dispensing to the patient?	✓			
d) Prevent access to other drugs in the cabinet during refilling?	✓			
2. Will the system capture and retain date/time stamped electronic images of the prescription order, drug product, and prescription label for each item dispensed to a patient?	✓			
3. Will the system ensure that the electronic images are viewed and verified by a pharmacist prior to dispensing to the patient?	✓			
4. Does the system provide a drug image for comparison against images of the products to be dispensed?	✓			
5. Does the system document who filled, verified, and dispensed the prescription to the patient?	✓			
6. Does the system track lot numbers and expiration dates?	✓			
7. Can pharmacists oversee remote filling and inventory control processes in real-time using a video link?	✓			

Dispensing Safety and Accuracy (continued)

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
8. Are auxiliary warnings automatically printed on the label?	✓			
9. Can the system print auxiliary warnings in languages that are appropriate for the patient population?	✓			
10. Does the system print an image and description of the drug on the label to allow patients to self-verify their prescriptions?	✓			
11. Does the system collate and batch a patient's medication order to ensure that the patient gets all of his/her prescriptions?	✓			
12. Does the system provide a video link to allow real-time pharmacist-to-patient counseling with privacy?	✓			
13. Can the verifying pharmacist enter a comment to ensure that appropriate counseling is provided for specific drugs, patients, and prescriptions?	✓			
14. Does the system document receipt of counseling by the patient?	✓			
15. Does the system provide access to a patient's medication profile, including previous dispense dates, to support analysis and counseling for medication persistence and compliance?	✓			

Telepharmacy Filling Process

Consider these important questions when evaluating whether a telepharmacy system will meet your needs today and also in the future as your business expands. ■

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
1. Can you capture and view as many inspection images as needed of the drug product, hard copy prescription, label, and any other pertinent documents, instructions, or items?	✓			
2. Can additional images be captured at any point in the process, even after the prescription has been verified?	✓			
3. Does the equipment support close-up and enlargement zoom features for capturing and viewing the images?	✓			
4. Will the video link allow technician and pharmacist interaction at all times?	✓			
5. Can the telepharmacy operate in a controlled manner with or without specialized storage cabinets, robots, or other types of product handling automation?	✓			
6. Will the system provide the option of securing the drug stock behind locked doors?	✓			
7. Can the system queue up prescriptions to be verified by the pharmacist on a batch basis at convenient times?	✓			
8. Can the pharmacist access the remote system at all times without local involvement to oversee operations and verify and review prescriptions and other transactions?	✓			
9. Can pharmacists at any location or in a central facility support multiple remote locations through flexible call routing procedures?	✓			
10. Can the system be configured to support a range of potential telepharmacy scenarios, such as a remote medical clinic or a remote prescription pickup location?	✓			
11. Can inspection calls be placed on hold if more than one site calls in at the same time?	✓			
12. Will an on-hold inspection call ring back to remind the pharmacist to complete the call?	✓			
13. Can inspection calls roll to other pharmacists if the primary pharmacist is unavailable?	✓			

Prescription Tracking and Filling

Look for these important tracking and filling features when evaluating a telepharmacy system. ■

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
1. Can an electronic version of the hard copy prescription be viewed or printed at any time?	✓			
2. Can you view the prescription status at any time in the process, including after it has been verified or batched to a storage location?	✓			
3. Will the system allow you to dispense controlled substances?	✓			
4. Will the system handle inventory and filling for supplies and compounded items that do not have standard drug identification numbers (NDCs)?	✓			
5. Can system reports show details of counseling and dispensing events, including operator initials and comments, counseling call duration, and patient signatures?	✓			
6. Are reports available to track drug utilization, average time for process steps, volumes per day and hour, and staff utilization and productivity?	✓			
7. Can the system report the number of prescriptions processed by technicians and pharmacists for each day and hour?	✓			
8. Can the system report “near misses” – i.e. cases where errors, such as wrong drug selection, occur and are prevented by system controls?	✓			
9. Are the telepharmacy, workflow, and robotic dispensing systems integrated on the same software platform without the need for an interface?	✓			



Service and Support

Telepharmacy systems become an integral part of the pharmacy operation and must be dependable. These service and support questions should be addressed. ■

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
1. Is the system manufactured, sold, installed, and supported by the same company? Note: If multiple vendors are involved, each should be checked out and responsibilities should be clearly defined.	✓			
2. Does the vendor provide a call center for problem resolution 24X7, including holidays and weekends?	✓			
3. Is the vendor's service and support all-inclusive, "bumper-to-bumper" coverage for a fixed monthly payment? Note: Per-incident service charges may lead to unpredictable operating costs.	✓			
4. Are software upgrades, including maintenance of the software interface to other systems, included in the fixed monthly support payment?	✓			
5. Are drug information updates performed automatically by the vendor?	✓			
6. Are software updates automatically downloaded to the system by the vendor?	✓			
7. Are software interface changes implemented directly by the vendor? Note: Manual software upgrades and interface changes may not be reliably implemented by pharmacy staff. Failure to maintain software may cause errors or disable the telepharmacy system.	✓			
8. Can the vendor provide references to show a consistently high level of support to a large and diverse customer base including institutions, chain pharmacies, and independents?	✓			

Implementation

A telepharmacy implementation should be carefully planned. Installation should be performed efficiently to minimize disruption of pharmacy operations. Implementation is not complete until all users are trained and using the system safely and productively. ■

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
1. Will the system vendor assist you in presenting your proposed telepharmacy plans to the Board of Pharmacy for approval?	✓			
2. Can the vendor provide a Board of Pharmacy telepharmacy application template and suggested Telepharmacy Policies and Procedures pertinent to your state?	✓			
3. Will the vendor assume full project management responsibility for implementation planning and execution?	✓			
4. Does the vendor perform on-site workflow and software interface testing as part of the implementation planning process?	✓			
5. Can the vendor demonstrate a working software interface prior to delivery of the system?	✓			
6. Will vendor personnel remain on-site until all users are trained?	✓			
7. Does the vendor offer weekend training?	✓			

Software Interface

A telepharmacy system receives its dispensing instructions from the pharmacy management system via an interface. ■

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
1. Will the system vendor take total responsibility for implementing the initial software interface? Note: If support is required from the pharmacy management system vendor, this should be arranged in advance.	✓			
2. Will the system vendor take total responsibility for maintaining the software interface? Note: If not, continuing support will be required from the pharmacy management system vendor.	✓			
3. Can the system vendor maintain the software interface via remote access?	✓			
4. Are all software interface changes included in the fixed monthly support payment?	✓			
5. Can you verify that the system is currently interfacing successfully with your pharmacy management system in other pharmacies?	✓			

Company Orientation

A telepharmacy system is only as good as the company that stands behind it. Technology decisions have a long-term impact on your pharmacy, so choose a solid company with a good track record. ■

Key Questions	ScriptPro			
1. Is telepharmacy, integrated with pharmacy automation and workflow management, the system vendor's core competency?	✓			
2. Is the telepharmacy system purchase independent of drug supply contracts? Note: Pharmacy technology decisions are long-term commitments. Drug supply contracts may be changed in response to current prices, terms, and service levels.	✓			
3. Does the vendor have a record of standing behind its equipment with continuing support and upgrades?	✓			
4. Does the vendor encourage corporate and site visits to help prospective users evaluate the products and the company they will be partnering with?	✓			

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