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## Pharmacist Utilizes Automation in His LTC Business

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As the population ages, pharmacists are looking for safe and efficient methods of providing health care, particularly to elderly patients and other residents in long-term care (LTC) facilities. One of the obstacles many face is providing LTC facilities with a high volume of prescriptions while still filling prescriptions and counseling patients in their pharmacies.

For Jack Loveland, RPh, the owner of Beacon Pharmacy in New Britain, Connecticut, the solution was using ScriptPro's SP Central Workflow Management System and SP 200 Robotic Dispensing System to automate the prescription-filling process. SP 200 fills up to 150 prescriptions per hour and prints and applies labels, leaving bottles uncapped for final inspection using on-screen drug image verification. It contains 200 cells that dispense drugs directly into vials to prevent cross-contamination. SP Central coordinates the entire pharmacy flow, identifying and batching prescriptions for each patient to help ensure proper medication delivery and using bar-code scanning controls to verify accuracy. It also allows the pharmacist to find out who has filled and verified each prescription, how many prescriptions have been filled each hour, and where every prescription is located in the pharmacy.

By filling 85% of Loveland's LTC prescriptions, the SP 200 has allowed Loveland to increase his LTC business while still attending to his regular patients. According to Loveland, the system fills most of his LTC prescriptions one hour before his pharmacy opens. "If they aren't finished when we open for business, it's not a problem because long-term care prescriptions fill at a lower priority than walk-in customers."

SP 200's labeling feature makes the system a good fit for filling LTC prescriptions, Loveland explained. "The prescription label is complete with the lot number, expiration date, auxiliary warnings, and a line drawing of the tablet or capsule—exactly what the long-term care facility is looking for."

According to Loveland, SP Central's tracking features and accuracy have helped him a great deal. "SP Central provides the accuracy we were looking for when filling long-term care prescriptions," he said. "SP Central is 100% accurate for filling the right drug—but also the impeccable prescription tracking it offers has greatly improved our workflow. We don't lose prescriptions anymore."

Loveland recalled a recent incident involving a group home that needed a prescription for a certain patient. Loveland searched for the patient in SP Central and found that the patient's prescription had been filled and delivered. The patient, who had transferred to a new facility, had not received the medication because the facility did not notify Loveland of the patient's new location. "In the past, I would never have been able to track down what happened with this prescription."

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SP Central's tracking features are also appealing to potential LTC customers. When Loveland calls on group homes, he brings an SP Central brochure with him. He gives potential customers a demonstration of the system in his pharmacy. "Once they see all the tracking capabilities of our system, and the filling accuracy it provides, they immediately give me their business," he said.

To comment on this article, contact [editor@uspharmacist.com](mailto:editor@uspharmacist.com).

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