

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC: DME SUPPLIERS AND THEIR STORIES

Special Guest Speaker:
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Greatest Challenges During Covid-19 Pandemic – Procure Inc.

- Our greatest challenge was taking on so many new challenges at the same time
 - Staff Safety
 - Patient Safety
 - Stay at Home Orders
 - Rapid Customer Changes
 - Rapid Policy Changes
 - Staying Educated

How Processes Were Adapted to Meet Challenges – Procare Inc.

- Swift and Immediate Policy Changes:
 - Non-essential GO HOME
 - COVID screening questions
 - Social distancing
 - Delivery Changes
 - Masks & PPE
 - Infection Control
 - Constant Communication

Long Term Goals or Practices Being Adopted – Procure Inc.

- PPE minimums
- Contingency Planning in Emergency Preparedness plans
- Our policy changes will be in place for the foreseeable future

What We Learned From the Pandemic- Procare Inc.

- Trust your team(s)
- Know your customers
- Communication
- Widened our focus to see big picture
- Continual contingency plans
- Watch for red flags and complacency

Greatest Challenges During Covid-19 Pandemic

- Keeping stores Covid-free/time involved in cleaning
- Information constantly changing and dealing with multiple government agencies
- Too many things happening all at once
- Patients/customers not aware of Covid emergency or understanding changes in process
- Educating staff about Covid-19
- Working remotely
- Lack of PPE/hand sanitizer/disinfectant

How We Adapted to Meet Challenges

- Social Distance
- Screening Protocols
- Remote Staff Training and Telecommute no essential staff
- Patient Instructions
- Increased Infection Control Awareness

Promoting Social Distancing

- Limited lobby to 2 customers/patients
- Used bedside table to block door; added doorbell; locked door
- Patient wait in vehicles for curbside delivery; added ability to text on way or arrived
- Shower curtain hung from ceiling to separate register area from register
- Plexiglass barriers at register
- Staff signs patient in vs patient signing in
- No hugs or handshakes
- Limited staff in office and/or had staff telecommuting
- No sharing of food between staff and keep distance in break areas

Promoting Social Distancing

- Limited staff in office and/or had staff telecommuting
- No sharing of food between staff and keep distance in break areas
- Pharmacy and DME staff working alternating schedules to limit staff present
- Warehouse staff and office staff staying separated and using text, email, intercom to communicate
- High risk employees or those with high risk family members working from home

Screen Protocols

- Taking temperature of staff daily
- Taking patient temperatures as necessary
- Patients given screening survey at each encounter
- Frequent communication with facilities/discharge planners
- Staff with potential exposure tested
- Assume every patient has virus or been exposed

Staff Training

- More frequent training/meetings
- Daily or weekly virtual huddles and training
- Frequent text, email and direct message to update on changes
- Updated policies and training to changes

Patient Instruction

- Demonstrate equipment for patient/caregiver from outside through window
- Patient does return demo in window
- Uses FaceTime, Zoom or other virtual method
- Set up permanent virtual “fitting room” for O&P instruction and demo
- More frequent phone instruction and follow up with patients
- Equipment instruction posted to website or hard copy

Infection Control

- Disinfecting counters, surfaces, point of service, etc., on a schedule throughout day and/or between every patient
- Has special song that comes on at top of hour and everyone stops to disinfect (employees take turns choosing song)
- Staff wearing gloves at register and at patient encounters
- Staff wearing masks and patients asked to wear masks
- Gives patient new pen for signing paperwork and they keep
- No signatures gathered/contactless delivery

Infection Control

- Equipment returned from Covid-19 positive patients red bagged and kept separate
- Deliveries to Covid-19 + patients coded on paperwork for drivers
- Full PPE or Hazmat suit used
- Delivery vehicles/steering wheel cleaned 2x's daily
- Drivers delivering to home use Lysol on bottom of shoes
- One designated vehicle for all Covid pick-ups
- Using drive through; payment is put in plastic cup and staff has gloves
- Created written Infection Control plan and policies to include Covid-19

Practices Being Adopted Long-Term

- Social Distancing
- Sanitizing/Infection Control
- Continued Training
- Working Together

Social Distancing

- Will promote social distancing during cold/flu season; seems to help
- Will continue workplace changes such as no communal food

Infection Control

- Will stay vigilant keeping counters and work areas sanitized more frequently during day
- Will continue to be vigilant about using PPE
- Sanitation stations at front of store
- Keeping plexiglass shields

More Training/Policy Review

- More frequent training and meetings has been beneficial for employees and will continue
- Easier to revise policies while fresh in mind and will keep updated instead of having to do all at once

Working Together as a Team

- Even though it was hard we realized that we could work together and come up with solutions to big problems – will keep doing that!

What We Learned From the Pandemic (Austin at Hi-School Pharmacy)

- “We need each other...little connections with genuine interest in the other person make a big difference. I’ll always remember that.”
- “I believe unity will come out of this. It’ll be nice to be on the other side of the pandemic one day and look at my patients knowing we got through this together.”
- “Our patients have done a great job being a part of the solution as well. Most of our patients wear a mask and social distance on their own volition. We’ve worked together to make the best of a bad situation.”

What We Learned From the Pandemic

- “Hope people learn to appreciate whatever they have. I see people gardening where you never saw before. Appreciate elders more. In the long run it will be a better world”
(Ana at Horowitz-Supremo Pharmacy & Surgical Supplies)

Be More Prepared for the Next Emergency

- Quality Improvement Plan and Meetings
- Update affected policies and procedures
- Update Infection Control Plan
- Update Emergency Plan
- Schedule On-Going Employee Training
- Maintain sufficient stock of PPE/disinfectants

Kindness Pandemic Examples

Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.

- Delivery techs delivering fresh fruits, vegetables, rice and beans with supplies
- Staff made masks for patients and staff
- Repackaged bulk masks individually for patients and gave at no charge
- Teamed with local distillery to make hand sanitizer and provide to staff and patients

Huge Thank You to Presenter Karen Rausch of Procure Incorporated!



Special Thanks to Exemplary Providers and Contributors today





We appreciate you being here!

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