Medication Dispensing in Corrections

Executive Summary:
In response to the rising healthcare demands of inmates, nursing and pharmacy labor shortage, and the inaccuracies and inefficiencies in traditional pharmacy distribution models, Talyst has developed a unique solution designed specifically for Corrections. With Talyst’s innovative InSite Remote Dispensing System, clinicians can package patient-specific multi-dose packets immediately prior to a medication pass using its easy-to-use, touch-screen interface. This remote dispensing system helps eliminate waste, save valuable staff time, and improve overall patient safety.

This document outlines key differences between Remote Dispensing and traditional pharmacy distribution models, such as:

- Centralized Automated Dispensing
- Remote Medication Cabinets
- Cart Replenishment / Replacement
- Patient-Specific Blister Cards
- Facility Stock Meds

Because InSite is the only solution on the market that enables Remote Dispensing, it is truly unique. No other system offers the same value and benefits as Talyst InSite for Corrections.

Remote Dispensing:
Remote Dispensing provides automated, on-demand packaging and labeling of medications by a nurse or clinician who is onsite at the correctional facility, but working under the authority of a remote pharmacist. While the phrase “Remote Dispensing” is often used to describe the retrieval of unit-dose medications from Medication Cabinets for STAT and first-doses, this solution is just as inefficient and labor intensive as more traditional solutions—even when it’s combined with Centralized Automated Dispensing. The InSite Remote Dispensing System is different. This innovative system is designed to package and label medications onsite and on-demand, eliminating medication waste, reducing nursing and pharmacy labor, and lowering delivery costs. Talyst’s InSite for Corrections is the only solution on the market that can provide an immediate return on investment.

Key Features / Attributes:

- Onsite, on-demand packaging/labeling of medications
- Initial and continuous dosing of patient-specific, multi-dose medications
- Operated by nursing, controlled by pharmacy
Advantages:

**Lower Total Cost of Ownership** – the reduction in operating costs (reduced medication waste, lower labor demands, and fewer deliveries) provides an immediate return on investment. Plus, Talyst’s rental payment option eliminates capital budget requirements.

**Medication Waste & Returns** – when medications are sent from the pharmacy in patient-specific packaging, any unused doses must either be destroyed or returned to the pharmacy, creating unnecessary waste and added labor. By using real-time integration between the pharmacy and inmate tracking systems, InSite will only dispense medications that will be used, dramatically reducing labor hours and eliminating waste.

**Reduced Labor** – InSite increases efficiencies and reduces labor throughout the supply chain. Nurses no longer have to hunt for the right medication, take the time to separate the pills from their blister card packaging, or deal with inmate movement and turnover. Pharmacies simply fill and deliver medications in canisters, which far less labor intensive than filling blister cards or generating unit-dose strip packaging using a Centralize Automated Dispensing System.

**STAT and First Doses** – in many situations emergency kits or facility stock medications are used to dispense STAT and first doses, which introduces a potential for errors and diversion. InSite provides secure access to medications with a complete electronic audit trail, providing a much higher level of accountability for the nursing staff and control for the pharmacy.

**Safety, Security, and Control** – because InSite dispenses on-demand, only the medications for the upcoming med pass need to be stored on the med cart. All other medications are securely stored in the Remote Dispensing System, which is located in a locked med room only accessible by authorized staff members.

**Designed for Corrections** – InSite is the only pharmacy automation system designed specifically for Corrections. It is not a modified hospital solution. InSite was designed from the ground up for nurses by nurses. InSite is simple, easy-to-use, and maps to all common nursing workflows, including cell-side administration, med window or pill lines, keep-on-person, and court or release meds.

**Vendors and Products:**

**Talyst InSite for Corrections** – Talyst is the only vendor that offers a Remote Dispensing solution to the Corrections market that provides onsite, on-demand dispensing for initial and continuous dosing of patient-specific, multi-dose medications.
Why is the Talyst InSite Remote Dispensing System Different?

Talyst has spent the last 3 years working very closely with Correctional facilities and pharmacies to develop software and make proprietary hardware modifications to support Remote Dispensing in a Correctional setting.

These modifications are essential for safely and securely operating an automated dispensing system in a Correctional facility under the remote supervision of the pharmacy. Other automated dispensing systems simply cannot be used in this manner. Here is why:

- **Secure Access to Medications** – because traditional automated dispensing systems were designed to be operated in the pharmacy, most allow open, and often unauthorized, access to the medications. Only InSite can provide the secure access to medications that is required for Remote Dispensing.
- **Accuracy Over Speed** – traditional systems are required to dispense a high volume of medications and were therefore designed for speed over accuracy. Because these systems are intended to be operated in the controlled environment of the pharmacy, dispensing errors are acceptable. InSite was designed to guarantee accuracy of dispensing, making it the only system suitable for Remote Dispensing.
- **Medication Replenishment** – most automated dispensing systems require canisters to be placed in specific locations for each medication. InSite’s Intelligent Canister Recognition System allows canisters to be placed in any location, eliminating dispensing errors and making replenishment quick and easy, which is required for Remote Dispensing.
- **Remote Management** – InSite is the only solution that provides the necessary software and tools to track and monitor remote inventory and dispensing systems. Other systems were not designed to be remotely managed, and therefore cannot be effectively operated for Remote Dispensing.

Centralized Automated Dispensing:

Prior to Remote Dispensing, the last big advance in pharmacy automation was centralized automated dispensing, a technology that has been used in hospital pharmacies for over 10 years. In fact, Talyst holds 50% of the market share in centralized hospital pharmacy automation with over 300 customers, including large institutions such as Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic. However, centralized automated dispensing does not work in the Corrections market. While some efficiency is gained at the pharmacy, especially when compared to filling traditional blister cards, this method does not effectively address a number of critical issues at the correctional facility: time to first dose, inmate turnover, medication waste, etc. Oftentimes, centralized automated dispensing is combined with remote medication cabinets or a Cart replenishment model (see below). However, these processes can be extremely labor intensive for both the pharmacy and nursing staff, making the entire process just as inefficient and ineffective as more traditional pharmacy distribution models.
**Key Features / Attributes:**

- Centralized packaging/labeling of medications at the pharmacy
- Patient-specific cycle fills – generally 7, 15, and/or 30-day supplies
- Unit-dose repackaging for restocking remote medication cabinets

**Advantages:**

- Reduces pharmacy labor compared to traditional blister card filling
- Patient-specific, multi-dose packaging reduces nursing labor

**Disadvantages:**

- Doesn’t reduce medication waste or returns
- Doesn’t address inmate movement and turnover
- Labor intensive
- Complex, batch-oriented
- Inaccurate and error prone

**Vendors and Products:**

Several vendors offer solutions for centralized automated dispensing, including Talyst. The following is a list of products that are available on the market today:

- Talyst AutoPack
- Parata PacMed
- TCGRx ATP-Series
- ABC AutoMed
- Omnicell Barcode Packager

**Can a traditional automated dispensing system be used for Remote Dispensing?**

No. Traditional automated dispensing systems were designed to be operated by pharmacy technicians in the controlled environment of the central pharmacy. These systems are too complex, inaccurate, and unsecure to be operated by nursing staff outside of the pharmacy. InSite is the only system available on the market that was designed specifically to be used in a Correctional facility under the remote supervision of the pharmacy.

**Remote Medication Cabinets**

Medication cabinets can be used at correctional facilities for dispensing STAT and first doses. Cabinets store unit-dose medications that are pre-packaged at and replenished by the pharmacy. These systems can be used for continuous dosing, but because they are so labor intensive using them as such is impractical. Therefore, ongoing doses must be fulfilled via another distribution model, such as blister cards, centralized automated dispensing, and/or cart replenishment.
Medication cabinets can be combined with InSite, but provide little value other than storing non-oral solids and slow-moving medications. While medication cabinets provide value by securely storing first and STAT doses, they do not reduce labor or waste like the InSite Remote Dispensing System.

**Key Features / Attributes:**

- Secure storage of STAT and First Dose medications

**Advantages:**

- More controlled and secure than traditional emergency kits

**Disadvantages:**

- Labor intensive
- Doesn’t reduce medication waste or returns

**Vendors and Products:**

- AmerisourceBergen MedSelect
- Cardinal Pyxis
- MedDispense

**Patient-Specific Blister Cards**

Patient-specific blister cards are the most common method for distributing pharmaceuticals in the Corrections market. Medications are packaged and labeled on 7, 15, and/or 30-day cycles by a central pharmacy, which is often a third-party contract pharmacy. This distribution model is labor intensive and extremely inefficient and wasteful. Any time a prescription is discontinued, the remaining medications in the blister card must be destroyed or returned to the pharmacy. It is also common for medications not to arrive within 48 hours and, when they do, the inmate has been moved or released. Furthermore, blister cards must be stored on a med cart, which can be difficult to maneuver within a correctional facility and, due to the large quantity of medication stored on the cart, are considered to be a security risk. Talyst developed the InSite Remote Dispensing System specifically to address the waste and inefficiencies cause by using patient-specific blister cards for pharmacy distribution in Corrections.

**Key Features / Attributes:**

- Patient-specific blister cards packaged at the pharmacy and delivered to the corrections facility

**Advantages:**

- Less labor intensive that cart replenishment
- More controlled and safer than facility stock medications

**Disadvantages:**
• Creates medication waste and returns
• Inefficient and labor intensive
• Large volume of meds creates security risk

Cart Replenishment / Replacement
Cart replenishment is the traditional pharmacy distribution model used in hospitals. Medication carts are replenished with unit-dose medications by the pharmacy on a daily basis and delivered to the nursing stations. This model has been adopted in some correctional environments and can work well when the pharmacy is located at the correctional facility. However, this process can be extremely labor intensive, especially for large inmate populations. In addition, the model does not work well for pharmacy that service multiple remote correctional facilities. And, because of the large volume of medications stored on them, the med carts are considered a security risk. Even when combined with centralized automated dispensing, cart replenishment is extremely labor intensive and is not viable for large and/or remote inmate populations.

Key Features / Attributes:
• Carts replenished by pharmacy and delivered to nursing

Advantages:
• Eliminates medication waste and returns

Disadvantages:
• Extremely labor intensive
• Not viable for large and/or remote inmate populations.

Facility Stock Medications
It is common for correctional facilities to receive stock medications, either in bottles or blister cards, directly from a wholesaler or from a licensed re-packager. Some third-party contract pharmacies provide these services to correctional facilities. Depending on the specific state regulations, correctional facilities receiving stock medications must be licensed as a pharmacy. While this process does not create waste or require returns, it is extremely labor intensive and has a high potential for dispensing errors. Nurses can spend hours preparing medications for the med pass and, because there are no safety checks, dispensing errors are common. With InSite Remote Dispensing, nurses can prepare medications in 25% of the time without a single dispensing error.

Key Features / Attributes:
• Stock medications delivered directly to the correctional facilities
• Nurses prep medications prior to the med pass

**Advantages:**

• Does not create waste or require returns

**Disadvantages:**

• Extremely labor intensive
• High potential for dispensing errors

**Conclusion: Why Talyst InSite is Different**

InSite for Corrections is the only solution on the market that was designed specifically for Remote Dispensing in a correctional environment. Talyst’s proprietary software and hardware systems provide the necessary security and accuracy that is required to operate an automated dispensing system outside of a pharmacy. InSite is the only solution that provides the following unique features:

• On site, on-demand dispensing of medications
• Initial and continuous dosing of patient-specific, multi-dose medications
• Operated by nursing, controlled by the pharmacy
• Secure access to medications
• Guaranteed accuracy
• Fail-safe medication replenishment
• Remote inventory and systems management

No other solution can offer the reliability, security, and simplicity of the InSite Remote Dispensing System. No other system can provide true Remote Dispensing to the Corrections market.

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