

3 Key Takeaways from Building a Fulfilment Centre

Prepared for:



Presented by:

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Mint Health + Drugs
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Disclosures

Presenter Disclosure

- Presenter's Name: **Choi Chung**
- I have the Relationships with commercial interests:
 - Advisory Board/Speakers Bureau – **None**
 - Funding (Grants/Honoraria) : **None**
 - Research/Clinical Trials: **None**
 - Speaker/Consulting Fees: **None**
 - Other:
 - Partner/Manager - **Mint Health + Drugs**
- Speaking Fees for current program:
 - I have received no speaker's fee for this learning activity

Commercial Support Disclosure

- This program has received no financial or in-kind support from any commercial or other organization

Learning Objectives

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After completing this session, you will be able to:

- Identify the key components of a pharmacy fulfilment centre
- Describe the different challenges that are involved with fulfilment centres
- Recognize the various integral role of pharmacy technicians in fulfilment centres and how this can be applied to other practice settings and in advocating for the profession

Biography

Choi Chung, Partner

Mint Health + Drugs

- 16 locations across 13 different communities in Alberta
- Each location is distinct from one another and carries their own specialties to support the community we're within

Core Values

- **M - Motivate** - We believe in an intrinsic motivation to improve. To strive to be the best version of ourselves, not because we have to, but because we desire to.
- **I - Innovate** - Innovating best practices. There's always a right way to do something. Learn it first, then make it better.
- **N - Nurture** - Nurturing our communities. Take care of those around you, whether they are your friends, family, neighbours, co-workers or even a stranger
- **T - Teach, Share** - Improving ourselves and those around us through lifelong teaching, sharing and learning

Mint Health + Drugs: CMP

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Mint Health + Drugs: CMP Fulfilment Centre

(Community Members Pharmacy)

Choi Chung, Partner

Mint Health + Drugs: CMP



- Extensive experience in working with **marginalized populations** struggling with **mental health and addictions** and established **strategic partnerships** with various **non-profit agencies** supporting this sector
- Converted **Mint Health + Drugs: CMP** from a more typical community practice into a fulfilment centre to meet the needs of the community
- Founded **nurse-led mental health and addictions outreach team** to support high-risk marginalized individuals maintain compliance to therapies such as antipsychotics, HIV/HCV treatment and opioid dependency therapy
- Recognized with the Future of Pharmacy APEX Award - 2020

Education: University of Alberta, Bachelor of Sciences in Pharmacy 2017



How did this all start?



Mint Health + Drugs: CMP (Community Members Pharmacy)

- Specialize in supporting the marginalized population sector struggling with **complex mental health** and **addictions**
- Largest pharmacy operation within the Mint organization with a diverse staffing structure that includes pharmacists, assistants, nurses, and **9 registered pharmacy technicians** each with a passion to serve
- Individuals residing/accessing services within programs such as:
 - Transitional Housing
 - Permanent Supportive Housing
 - Youth Housing
 - Women's Emergency Shelters
 - Medical Detox Facilities
 - Inner-city Palliative Care
 - Emergency Shelters
 - COVID-19 Isolation Facilities (Previous)

Community Partnerships

- Work in partnership with non-profits, private organizations and government



THE EDMONTON MIDWIFERY
COOPERATIVE



What is a Pharmacy Fulfilment Centre?

Pharmacy Fulfilment Centre

- Caters to providing pharmacy services to **facilities, programs, and nursing homes** and is designed to **efficiently and effectively** fulfill the medication needs of these establishments
- The primary goal is to **streamline the medication supply chain** and ensure that medications are **readily available, accurately dispensed, and promptly delivered** to the intended recipients within these facilities

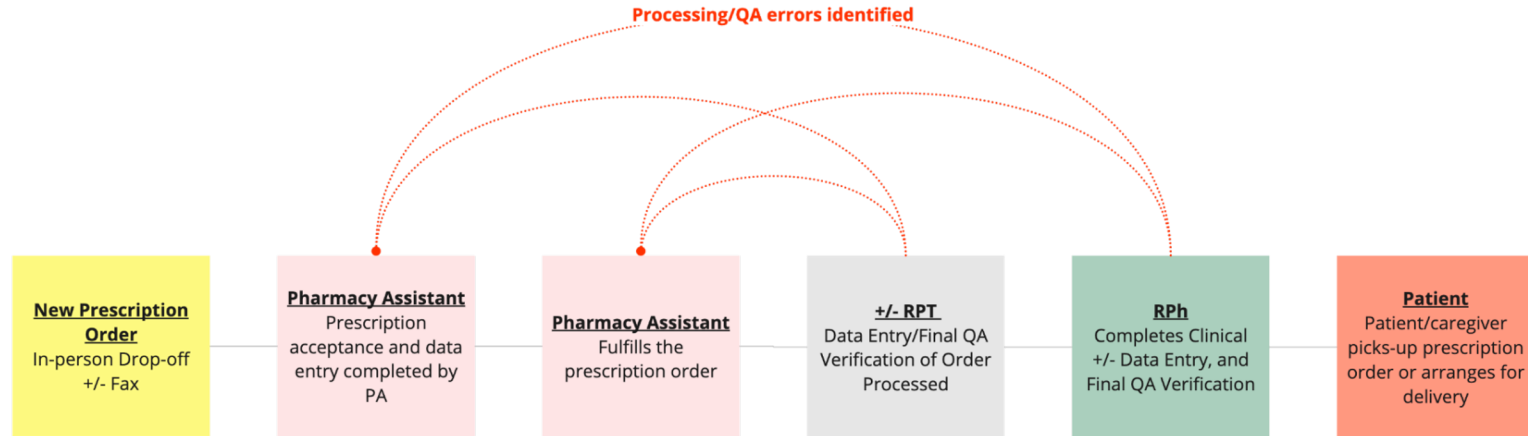
Key Components

- **Prescription Processing:** Prescription orders **directly from HCPs** involved in the care of patients residing within the facilities it serves.
- **Staffing Structure:** Often involves a **larger staffing model** compared to traditional community settings
- **Dispensing and Packaging:** Unit-dose **automated packaging machines** are often utilized to enhance efficiency.
- **Quality Assurance:** Processes for verifying **accuracy and compliance** with regulatory requirements
- **Delivery and Distribution:** Coordination of timely and secure **delivery** of medications to the facilities
- **Electronic Systems and Integration:** **Advanced electronic systems** and electronic health record **integration** to streamline communication and flow of health information
- **Specialized Services:** Clinical pharmacist **outreach support, nursing services, and staff education** and training.

	Traditional Community Practice	Fulfilment Centre
Staffing Structure	+/- RPT	+++ RPT
Scope of Practice (RPT)	<i>Often Limited</i>	Full-Scope
Workflow	Starts with PA Ends with RPh	Starts with RPh Ends with RPT/PA
Primary Source of Prescription Orders	Patient Drop-off	Fax/PrescribeIT
Primary Source of New Patients	Patient Self-Referral	Facility Referrals (Admissions)
Electronic Systems Integration	-	Yes
Packaging Method	Manual	Automated
Delivery and Logistics	+/-	+++

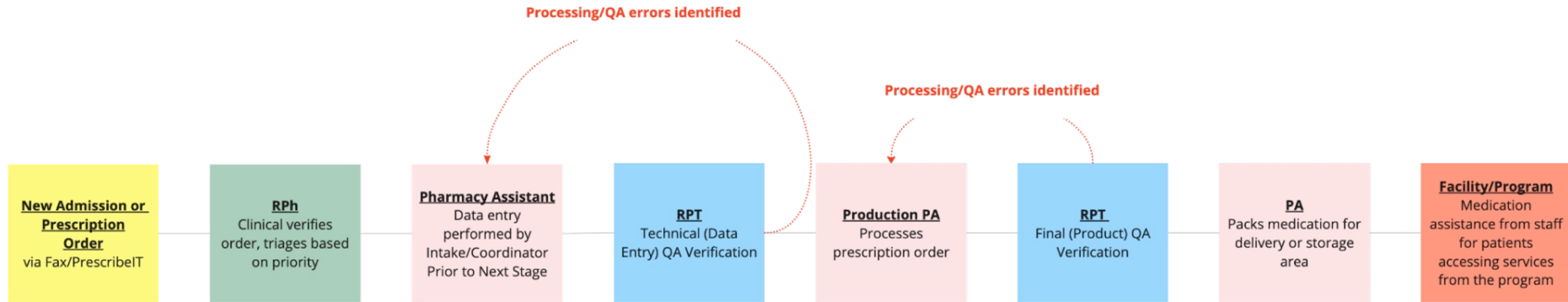
Traditional Community Pharmacy Workflow

Prescription processing typically involves **1 to 2** different members of the pharmacy team



Mint Health + Drugs: CMP Fulfilment Centre Workflow

Prescription processing involve several (up to 5-6) different members of the pharmacy team



**What type of practice is
this analogous to?**

Pharmacy Fulfilment Centre

- Caters to providing pharmacy services to facilities, programs, and nursing homes and is designed to **efficiently and effectively** fulfill the medication needs of these establishments
- The primary goal is to **streamline the medication supply chain** and ensure that medications are **readily available, accurately dispensed, and promptly delivered** to the intended recipients within these facilities

Analogous to a **hospital practice** within a **community setting**

	Traditional Community Practice	Fulfilment Centre	Hospital
Staffing Structure	+/- RPT	+++ RPT	+++ RPT
Scope of Practice (RPT)	Often Limited	Full-Scope	Full-Scope
Workflow	Starts with PA Ends with RPh	Starts with RPh Ends with RPT/PA	Starts with RPh Ends with RPT
Primary Source of Prescription Orders	Patient Drop-off	Fax/PrescribeIT	EMR
Primary Source of New Patients	Patient Self-Referral	Facility Referrals (Admissions)	Hospital Admissions
Electronic Systems Integration	-	Yes	Yes
Packaging Method	Manual	Automation	Automation
Delivery and Logistics	+/-	+++	-

**What are the unique challenges
associated with fulfilment
centres?**

Key Challenges of a Fulfilment Centre

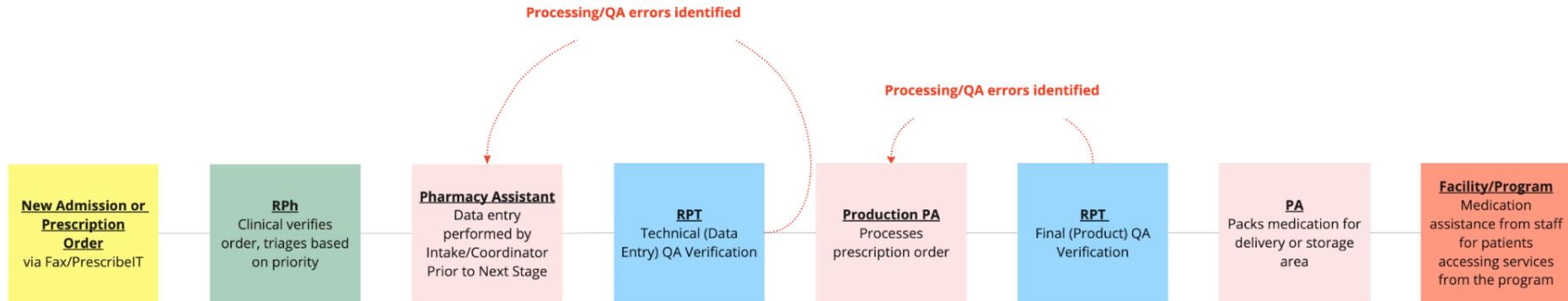
- **Prescription Processing:** Supportive living programs often associated with more **complex health needs** leading to a greater number of medication changes, hospitalizations, etc.
- **Staffing Structure:** The greater the number of staff, the **greater the odds** of any one of them experiencing personal life challenges, and/or interpersonal conflicts with colleagues
- **Dispensing and Packaging:** **Technical difficulties** associated with unit dose packaging machines
- **Quality Assurance:** Increased number of prescriptions processed **statistically increases** the occurrence of an **incident or near-miss**
- **Delivery and Distribution:** Delivery and logistics (e.g. **pick-up times, courier provider hours of operation**, etc.) must be accounted for in assessing the priority and urgency of prescription orders
- **Electronic Systems and Integration:** The integration of systems streamline communication and the flow of health information when they are **functioning optimally**
- **Specialized Services:** Often involve more **complex and sophisticated systems and processes** requiring extensive training, which creates a **challenging onboarding** experience for new hires
- **Operational Changes:** Consistent **review and revision of the workflow** as operational needs change

**What is the role of a
pharmacy technician in a
fulfilment centre?**

Let's Revisit the Fulfilment Centre Workflow

Primary technician roles highlighted in **BLUE**

- Technical (Data Entry) QA Verification
- Final (Product) QA Verification



**What does this really
entail?**

Let's Revisit the Key Components of a Fulfilment Centre

Dispensing and Packaging: Unit-dose packaging machines are often utilized to enhance efficiency.



RPT - **Operating/overseeing support staff** involved in operating unit-dose packaging machines

Quality Assurance: Processes for verifying accuracy and compliance with regulatory requirements



RPT - **QA verification** of prescriptions and **compliance** to regulatory/third-party requirements are met

Delivery and Distribution: Coordination of timely and secure delivery of medications to the facilities



RPT - Oversees and ensures **compliance** to established **turnaround times/deadlines**

Electronic Systems and Integration: Advanced electronic systems and electronic health record integration to streamline communication and flow of health information



RPT - Understanding of intricacies involved in the **integration of systems** and **facilitates** accordingly

Specialized Services: Clinical pharmacist outreach support, nursing services, and staff education and training.



Let's Revisit the Key Challenges of a Fulfilment Centre

Dispensing and Packaging: Technical difficulties associated with unit dose packaging machines



RPT - Oversees the **execution of contingency plans** for such circumstances

Quality Assurance: Increased number of prescriptions processed statistically increases the occurrence of an incident or near-miss



RPT - Participation in **operational changes** as part of **risk mitigation**

Delivery and Distribution: Accounting for pick-up times, courier provider hours of operation, etc.



RPT - Participation in operational changes to enhance **efficiency**

Electronic Systems and Integration: Technical difficulties associated with integration of electronic systems



RPT - Understanding of **intricacies** involved in the **integration of systems** and facilitates accordingly

Specialized Services: Complex and sophisticated systems and processes requiring extensive training



RPT - Participation in **specialized services** and **training** for **specialized services**

**What is the current state
of practice for *most* RPTs?**

Current State of Practice

- Technicians continue to be **underutilized** in *most* practice settings - often play the role of a pharmacy assistant
 - Contradicts the fact that the dispensary process is primarily **technical** in nature
- Many pharmacists continue to **lack the understanding** of the scope of practice of a pharmacy technician (including new graduates)

**How can I apply best
practices of a fulfillment
centre into my practice?**

Role of RPTs in Other Practice Settings

Dispensing and Packaging

 RPT - Overseeing **blister packaging/patient refill process** and schedule to ensure deadlines are met

Quality Assurance

 RPT - QA verification of prescriptions, and participation in **operational changes** as part of **risk mitigation** in response to drug errors/near-misses

Delivery and Distribution

 RPT - Participation in operational changes to enhance **efficiency**

Electronic Systems and Integration

 RPT - Implementation and adoption of **new technology** to support operations (e.g. batch fill, RTI, PrescribeIT etc.)

Specialized Services

 RPT - Participation in **simplification of existing processes** and **training/onboarding** of new hires

How can I advocate for the
profession in a setting that
hasn't *yet* recognized the
value of RPTs?

Advocacy

- Many individuals tend to approach advocacy from a **one-dimensional** perspective, focusing solely on presenting their ideas to address their own pain points, wants, and desires
- Crucial to invest time in comprehending the other person/organization's pain points, wants, and desires, and to develop a solution that **intertwines** both perspectives

Advocacy

Discovery Process/Needs Assessment

- Uncover your employer/practice site's **needs/pain points** by engaging with relevant stakeholders at all levels (staff RPh/RPTs/PAs, leadership, etc.)
 - Ask probing questions to gain a **deep understanding** of their context

Design the Solution

- Develop a well-crafted solution **utilizing the expanded scope of practice of RPTs** that **directly addresses** the identified needs and aligns with their goals
 - Tailor the solution to their **specific** requirements, preferences, and constraints.

Propose, Deliver and Adapt

- Propose your solution, ask for **feedback** and address any **friction points/barriers** to implementation
 - Suggest a **pilot period** if there continues to be hesitancy after the step prior
- Implement the solution and **monitor** its progress closely in **collaboration** with relevant stakeholders
- Continuously **evaluate and optimize** the solution to ensure it remains aligned with evolving needs



Conclusion

Remember that advocacy is an **ongoing** effort.

It requires **persistence, collaboration, and a collective voice** to effect the change you want to see

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"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." - Henry Ford

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Thank You!