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A NEW WAY TO THINK ABOUT ROSTERING



GUEST AUTHOR — 03/04/2017

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Should you think differently about rostering to support a forward pharmacy service model? Glenn Guilfoyle thinks so

It's 5pm Friday afternoon. Betty is just about to knock off for the week. She walks into the staff tea room to look on the pinboard to read next week's roster. "Bummer.....I am on the early shift Monday morning".

Because the trusty roster tells her nothing more than the times of the day, and what days she is to work, Betty makes her usual assumptions about her role in the team on that shift, her task priorities, where she is to work, and how that combination of location, role and task priorities co-ordinates with those of her colleagues on that shift. After all, why shouldn't she? It's always been that way. After all {again}, this is retail pharmacy - we never know what any day is really going to look like, we never know which customers will come, nor how many, nor when. We will serve them as best we can, wherever they want us to serve them, and so we have to be flexible as a team.

This paradigm in retail pharmacy today would be far more common than not. Workflow and customer traffic flow studies of a heterogeneous array of more than 250 retail

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POLL

What concerns you most about the codeine upschedule? *

- Dealing with stock issues
- Feeling helpless in recommending products to patients
 - More time spent dispensing the same products once they're S4 (may not apply to everyone)
- Doctor shopping
- Loss of income
- Angry/unhappy patients
- Loss of trust with my patients
- Loss of product lines
- Patients moving on to stronger, more dangerous alternatives

pharmacies over recent years indicate that

that fewer than half of Australia's pharmacies feature clear signage and other props for customers, with specific "tools of the trade" for staff, at service counter locations supporting specialised script-in, script-out, otc service, stationed in such a way as to support consistent and streamlined workflow and customer traffic flow.

On the less than half on the "positive" side of this ledger, less than half of these actually consistently honour and implement these structures and disciplines they have set up. Effectively then, more than half of this sector set themselves up for "Rafferty's rules", and then another quarter set themselves up to facilitate effective customer engagement and efficient script processing, but let "Rafferty's rules" rule anyway.

So it is no surprise then, that rosters are most commonly set up just to tell Betty what days and times we want her to come in to work.

Think about your favourite AFL or NRL team. Its Thursday night Team selection night for the forthcoming weekend game {translation = shift}. Each player in the team is selected to play in a specific location on the field {translation = specific service counter, processing bench, aisles location}. And it is written on the game plan {translation = roster}.

Each player can see where they are playing, and where each team mate is playing and what their team contribution role is. Moreover, each player can see their task priorities for their selected position for that shift. And those of their team mates in their nominated positions for that shift. Transparency and accountability.

Next week and game comes around, it's now Thursday night.... the team is reselected for the next game {translation = next shift}. A different number of players are available for selection this week {translation = on the next shift, we have more/fewer team members available}. New players come in, some players go out. Other players are selected to play in different positions on the field, compared to where they played last week. But the same principles apply....

- Each player in the team is selected to play in a specific location on the field
- Player/position selection are written down for the whole team on a game plan for all to see

- People will be prescribed stronger doses of codeine
- Loss of autonomy
- Loss of counselling opportunities about pain management

Tick all that apply

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- Each player can see their task priorities in their selected position for that shift, and therefore their over-arching role contribution for the team
- Each player can see all their team mates' task priorities in their selected position for that shift
- Transparency and accountability

If these principles are consistently applied to the rostering of the team members of the dispensary team, and coupled with a disciplined service counter location culture that supports a consistent workflow and customer traffic flow then you afford yourself a ticket to play in the game.

Not necessarily to win.....but you need this ticket to play to have a chance of winning the game.

The game of Australian retail pharmacy survival and relevance.

Glenn Guilfoyle is Principal of the The Next Level , providing advice on better systems and sales for community pharmacy

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