BYU Student Health Center Strengthens Financial Position, Maintains Vital Services with Help of Intalere Pharmacy Assessment

THE CHALLENGE

Brigham Young University (BYU) based in Provo, Utah, is home to more than 33,000 undergraduate and graduate students. As such, the university’s Student Health Center, which offers service to all BYU students, their spouses and their children, remains an important and busy contributor to campus life.

The center offers a full spectrum of primary medical care and treatment, including pharmacy services, generally filling 100-200 prescriptions per day. As a long-time member of Intalere, and a participant in Intalere’s Health Alliance of the Rocky Mountains (HARM), the BYU Student Health Center had worked with Intalere on several cost reduction initiatives, both for the overall facility and within the pharmacy function. But when the facility’s director approached their Intalere Pharmacy Advisory Specialist at a regional meeting, his request was somewhat more urgent than normal.

According to Greg Chavez, Intalere Pharmacy Specialist, BYU Student Health Center leadership was concerned because they had been losing money in reimbursement on their pharmacy benefit management business. Because the facility also offers support to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Missionary Training Center at cost, they also received some supplemental funding, and they were concerned about being able to continue this practice.

“They asked us if we were able to do a pharmacy optimization assessment to find ways to reduce costs and bring more efficiency to the facility’s operations,” said Chavez. “There seemed to be some real concern initially that they might have to close.”

“Volatility is growing in pace and severity in the market,” said Brad LeBaron, Administrative Director, BYU Student Health Center. “We had seen a healthy bottom line eroding over time and recognized the need to address it. External reviews can many times be very helpful in these situations.”

A SHORT TAKE ON SUCCESS

Challenge
Declining reimbursements, erosion of previously healthy bottom line.

Solution
Intalere Pharmacy Consulting assessment and strategic solution implementation.

Outcome
Collaborative solutions to reduce costs and enhance efficiencies allowing the facility to maintain vital services and rebuild financial sustainability.

“It’s never a question of size of facility or amount of the fee that the project will generate, the level of service from Intalere is always high. My challenge is always the most important thing to them.”
Brad LeBaron - Administrative Director, BYU Student Health Center
The Intalere pharmacy team put together a proposal and, because of strong relationships and a history of successful collaboration with the facility, was able to get executive approval for the assessment in short order.

An Intalere pharmacy assessment offers a comprehensive review of all pharmacy operations and delivers actionable strategies for cost containment, regulatory guidance, medication safety and quality of care. In addition to inpatient pharmacy expertise, Intalere pharmacy experts can help design a pharmacy, assist with meeting USP <800> regulations, improve outpatient (OP) pharmacy efficiencies and assist with 340B audits.

“As a traditional provider you can sometimes get comfortable, but the market doesn’t allow that anymore,” said LeBaron. “We needed to face reality, and gain the insight of another set of critical eyes. This sort of auditing, now more than ever, is needed at least every few years.”

LeBaron explained that with funding, as well as regulatory and reimbursement challenges, “Sometimes the daily work is all you can do. It is great if you have the time and expertise internally (for operational audits), however, most providers of our stature don’t.”

The Intalere team worked closely with the facility’s financial analyst and was able to develop a list of recommendations which included:

- Adjust the hours of operation to minimize overstaffing and inefficiencies.
- Engage with an outside vendor to manage pharmacy operations.
- Renegotiate their pharmacy benefit model.

In a relatively short time frame, the Intalere and facility teams worked together to achieve important, positive results. The suggested efficiencies were implemented over the course of a few months and allowed the center to maintain operations and continue the vital services provided to the students and staff at BYU.

“We helped them to find all the information they needed and we were then able to use that data and collaborate in finding solutions to reduce costs and help them become more efficient,” said Chavez.

Several of these adjustments also brought benefits in other areas, as the change in hours of operation also resulted in efficiencies and reduced costs in the lab and diagnostic imaging areas as well.

“We couldn’t be more grateful,” said LeBaron, who shared that the pharmacy assessment document remains as a daily reminder and “to do” list for continued implementation.

Intalere’s mission focuses on elevating the health of healthcare by designing highly personalized solutions to improve our members’ financial, operational and clinical performance.

**About Intalere**