

CASE STUDY:

Forum Extended Care Services Implements TCGRx Solutions, Realizes Unparalleled Efficiencies



Forum Extended Care Services
Chicago, IL

“The TCGRx team has solved our issues better than any other vendor we’ve ever dealt with, fully supporting our success. Perhaps the biggest advantage is that TCGRx is always forward thinking—identifying opportunities before we even know we have a problem.”



PROJECT SUMMARY

CHALLENGE: Provide resources to optimize inventory management and existing automated tablet packaging system, while improving overall accuracy and efficiency of pharmacy operations.

SOLUTION: ATP-384 & ATP-71, InspectRx™, customized Beacon® inventory management system, and workflow assessment and consulting services.

BENEFITS:

- **Inventory reduction:** 60% reduction in carrying costs for inventory
- **Efficiency:** New ATP machines processing 2,500-3,500 scripts per day
- **Accuracy:** No documented packaging errors at pharmacist check in 23 months
- **Labor savings:** Reduced technician script fill time by 15%; 75% reduction in pharmacists’ check and auditing time
- **Reduced Audit Time:** Reduced physical inventory time as well as the third party audit process

CASE STUDY: FORUM EXTENDED CARE

SUMMARY

With tighter reimbursement and increased regulatory and service requirements, it was identified that control of labor and inventory costs must be addressed while also maintaining accuracy and enabling the ability to grow the business. Forum and TCGRx have worked together to implement pharmaceutical packaging and electronic imaging technology for unit dose and multi-med needs, inventory management, and secure medication storage. The results have allowed Forum to grow and sustain their operations while lowering costs and driving accuracy.

PHARMACY PROFILE

Forum Extended Care Services provides high quality institutional pharmacy and consulting services to long-term and senior care facilities in Illinois and Wisconsin. Governed by the philosophy that personal attention makes all the difference, Forum offers hands-on experience in long-term care, hospice, hospital pharmacy, and nursing home administration. With 150 employees, Forum serves more than 90 facilities and 8,000 residents throughout the Midwest.

CHALLENGES OVERCOME

The staff at Forum had made significant investments in pouch packaging technology from one of the big suppliers. The problem was that while the vendor provided sufficient technology, their hands-on expertise and resources were not there and they were unable to efficiently and accurately implement a multi-med, short cycle solution with their product.

There were also significant inventory challenges with the increase in generics and generic changes from the wholesaler. Forum needed a solution to reduce and control inventory.

SOLUTIONS

Packaging

After underutilizing their investment for too long, Forum's President, Brian Kramer, MBA, RPh turned to Duane Chudy at TCG for assistance. After upgrading the firmware and replacing the software with a more intuitive, user friendly version, the Chudy Group set out to teach Forum's technicians how to use the ATP system, and, according to Kramer, "TCGRx's expertise and consulting services made all the difference, and we are able to provide, with one single solution from TCGRx, a unit dose prepack box, a multi-med pouch, and a unit-dose cycle pouch to our customers. The system is now fulfilling our needs to both streamline the operations while also allowing us to give our customers options."

After several years of running a FastPak* EXP 320, Forum upgraded the machine with TCGRx technology, which included the addition of another row of 64 canisters. In 2010 Forum added an ATP-71 to help with pre-packs and allow for virtually 100% automation of all oral solids. In 2011 they added a TCG ATP-384 and ATP-71 to their workflow to handle prepacks as well as multimed and unit-dose cycles. With the new machines in place, Forum was able to operate utilizing one technician per two machines, which are capable of servicing up to about 2,000 residents on a single shift. This both increased labor efficiency while also providing a more planned and reliable production and delivery schedule. They then added the InspectRx™ to streamline the pouch verification process and to make it more accurate. According to Kramer, "InspectRx, working in tandem with the ATP system, provided us with the ability to keep photographic evidence of cycle fills, a feature we weren't sure we would ever need. As it turns out, we've used it many times to verify accurate script fulfillment."

"The accuracy in picking from the light guided, barcode validated IMS reduces pharmacist interaction and rework time, which has certainly made a huge difference to us."

Inventory Management

Forum has also implemented TCG's Beacon® inventory management system. "The Beacon system space savings has reduced our technicians' walk and search time. The accuracy in picking from the light guided, barcode validated IMS reduces pharmacist interaction and rework time, which has certainly made a huge difference to us," said Kramer. In addition, by using the Beacon

system, Forum has been able to cut their inventory carrying costs by an astounding 60%. This has all been done while also reducing the storage area of medications by about 50% and reducing technician search and return time dramatically.

RESULTS

- **Inventory Reduction:** Inventory items have been reduced by 60% – contributing to cash flow, increased space, and reduced waste.
- **Efficiency:** Dramatically increased script volume without adding staff.
- **Accuracy:** Imaging and pick and put to light inventory management has reduced re-work errors and has reduced customer facing issues.
- **Labor savings:** Technician script fill time has been reduced by 15%; pharmacists' check and auditing time has been reduced by 75%.
- **Reduced Audit Time:** The Beacon IMS has dramatically reduced physical inventory time as well as the third party audit process.

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

Kramer quipped, "At Forum, if it can be broken, we'll break it. Processing 2,500 to 3,500 scripts per day with a complexity of different packaging solutions, the TCGRx team has reduced the process to its lowest common denominator so that it's repeatable...every day, on every shift. This has resulted in unparalleled efficiencies, and the reliability of the TCGRx equipment is also exceptional. The TCGRx team has solved our issues better than any other vendor we've ever dealt with, fully supporting our success. Perhaps the biggest advantage is that TCGRx is always forward thinking—identifying opportunities before we even know we have a problem."

*FastPak is a registered U.S. trademark of AutoMed Technologies, Inc.

For more information, visit us on the web at www.TCGRx.com

