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Hospitals add in-house pharmacies to cut readmissions

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With about 20 to 30 percent of prescriptions never filled, more hospitals are hopping on the trend to offer pharmacies in-house. In fact, 35 percent of the 5,000 hospitals in the country have at least one pharmacy aimed at patients being discharged to make sure they get their medications and stay on track, according to Doug Scheckelhoff, vice president of professional development for the American Society of Health System Pharmacists in Bethesda, Md., [Naples News](#) reported.



Florida's Lee Memorial Healthcare System opened pharmacies at two of its Lee County hospitals. Although not intended as competition for heavyweights such as CVS or Walgreens, the hospital-based pharmacies do add an element of convenience to make sure patients leave with their meds and [understand the side effects and dosages to increase adherence](#).

"If we can offer increased access to medications and an opportunity to educate patients, we can have a positive influence they are not coming back (and getting readmitted)," Mark Collum, Lee Memorial director of ambulatory pharmacy services, told the newspaper.

Staring down the barrel of a 0.11 percent cut under readmission penalties, every little bit of [transitional care could help curb those readmissions](#).

In addition to cutting out pit stops for patients, in-house pharmacies also might carry drugs not commonly available at major retailers.

"We looked at the types of medications dispensed over the last year and made sure that we had all the very expensive and high-risk meds that people had trouble finding when they go home from the hospital, to make sure we had them in stock," Collum told [NBC 2](#).

Patients who understand post-discharge instructions are 30 percent less likely to be readmitted or visit the emergency department, according to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, [Naples News](#) noted.

For more information:

- read the [Naples News article](#)
- see the [NBC 2 article](#)