

Phoenix Healthcare

610 Sycamore Street, Suite 240

Celebration, FL 34747

407.792.2255

www.phoenix-hc.com

email: paul.chard@phoenix-hc.com

**Therapeutic Nurse Educators:
Pharmaceutical companies can add value to Physicians,
educate patients and positively impact revenues**

When a Physician discusses a chronic disease with a patient, they are often faced with a barrage of questions and challenges:

- What is my diagnosis and prognosis?
- How do I take my medication?
- What are the side effects and how do I manage them?
- Why do I need a change in therapy?

A lack of time spent with the patient is often why so many patients end up discontinuing their treatment or not achieving the best results because of poor technique.

Therapeutic Nurse Educator programs are specifically designed to help patients start and, even more importantly, continue with their prescribed therapy, by providing free medical advice and supporting the already time-stressed physicians in their efforts to fully meet the patient's needs.

They then call periodically to make sure patients are administering their medication as prescribed. More patients continue their therapies because of the personal attention provided by these trained professionals, which means improved patient health, and increased compliance and improved treatment continuation.

In addition to providing guidance to patients on an individual basis, some conditions with broader patient bases can merit group classes with patients in doctors' offices. Information provided can range from how to inject the medication to explaining the importance of the half-life of medications and why it is important to take the medication "2 times per day, morning and evening." Feedback from the many programs already offered has been phenomenal. This is a great way to have one-on-ones with patients without over-committing valuable physician office resources.

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Pharmaceutical companies, large and small, must continually evolve and improve the interactions between themselves and Physician Offices. Nurse Educator programs achieve this goal by providing Direct to Patient education as well as educating Office staff in disease states, treatment options and the consequences associated with not continuing treatment.

As a result of Nurse Educator programs, Pharmaceutical companies add value to the Physicians office by improving the clinical knowledge of office staff, helping to identify patients who may benefit from a change in therapy and encouraging patients to continue therapy.

Nurse Educator programs are attractive to Pharmaceutical companies because they help provide an avenue to encourage patients to adhere to the recommended drug regimen. Patients with long term illnesses really need to stay on their medications for their whole lives, but many fail to comply because either they feel no symptoms, or because the therapy may initially add to their discomfort.

It is reported that this type of patient non-compliance may cost the Pharmaceutical Industry \$30 billion in lost revenue each year.

Nurse Educators, in short, serve patients, physicians and companies.

Implementation of a Nurse Educator Program requires an experienced team to recruit, hire and train solid professional individuals. Nurse educators need to have excellent communication skills, be credible and have a solid clinical background. They also need to have a substantial knowledge base in their area of expertise and have the skills to convey that knowledge in an easy to understand and plain language to people who are already struggling to maintain their own health.