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e-Prescribing Improves Filling Prescriptions

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—e-Prescribing, or electronic prescribing, offers patients convenience, improves the process of filling prescriptions and improves patient safety.

“I find that e-prescribing allows patients to often have their prescriptions filled and waiting for them when they reach the pharmacy. However, the best thing about electronic prescribing is its ability to improve patient safety,” said Ryan Kauffman, M.D., a family physician in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

When a physician electronically prescribes a prescription, it is entered into the physician’s computer and sent directly to the patient’s pharmacy immediately. There is no waiting time or handwriting for the pharmacist to interpret. The significant benefit to the patient is the convenience of eliminating the extra trip to the pharmacy to drop off the prescription.

“In a typical day I can write around 100 prescriptions; no matter how much I try to write legibly, there are times that some scripts may be too difficult to read and there is the opportunity for misinterpretation. With electronic prescribing, a printed version goes directly to the pharmacist and there is never a need to interpret. Electronic prescribing also allows refills to be processed more quickly and allows me to send many mail-in prescriptions directly to the pharmacy—saving my patients the time, expense and hassle of doing it themselves,” said Kauffman.

E-prescribing is paperless and involves two-way, computer-to-computer connection; there are no papers or faxes involved. This makes it secure, whereas paper prescriptions have the potential to be stolen, copied, forged or manipulated.

By eliminating hand written and faxed prescriptions, e-prescribing reduces the risk of medication errors and provides physicians with real-time electronic functions that automatically check for possible drug interactions. This electronic capacity provides access to a patient’s medication history. When prescribing a medication to a patient, a physician is able to reference that patient’s medication history through the information in the computer from the pharmacy. This assists the physician in checking for any potentially harmful drug interactions.

“E-prescribing also improves patient safety by checking all prescriptions against a patient’s allergies and for drug-to-drug interactions, thereby reducing the risk of my patients having a bad reaction from medications that I prescribe,” Kauffman stated.

The Ohio Academy of Family Physicians is a statewide professional association with more than 4,400 members, including practicing physicians, family medicine residents and medical students. The scope of family medicine encompasses all ages, both sexes and every disease entity. Family physicians provide comprehensive, continuing care to all members of the family.



FACT SHEET

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How Does e-Prescribing Benefit Patients?

- Significantly improves patient safety
- Convenience – eliminates the extra trip to the pharmacy to drop off the prescription
- Secure alternative to paper prescriptions
- Reduces the risk of medication errors
- Reduces the potential for fraud or tampering
- Provides access to a patient's medication history
- Ensures an accurate, legible prescription will arrive at the pharmacy

Source: www.getrxconnected.org/AAFP