

ROSALIND FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND SCIENCE STUDENT WRITING CLUB:

Business Member Spotlight: Morton LTC Pharmacy

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Editors Note:

The Business Member Spotlight is a feature in The Journal that showcases featured PSW Business Support Member pharmacies. Examples may include but are not limited to: innovative practice model changes, management solutions, professional development opportunities, workflow efficiencies, and quality improvement initiatives.

Morton LTC, an independent family-owned pharmacy located in Neenah, Wisconsin first opened its doors in 1932 as Morton Drug. Initially, it was a retail pharmacy in a town of approximately 26,000 people. Because of this it maintains a strong family-based atmosphere. The business expanded to a chain of 14 locations over 30 years and was renamed Morton Pharmacy in 1992. A little less than two decades later, the family exited the retail business and focused entirely on serving the long-term care community of Wisconsin.

Currently, the pharmacy serves long-term care facilities within a 100-mile radius of Neenah. Morton LTC assists patients in 23 counties with the strongest presence in Winnebago, Outagamie, Waupaca, Fond du Lac and Calumet counties. They pride themselves on providing various services including medication deliveries, consulting services with both nurses and pharmacists, disposable supplies such as gloves and blood borne pathogen kits, customized compounding, and emergency after hours service.

Bumps in the Road

The decision for the Morton family to step away from the retail aspect of pharmacy in 2011 to exclusively serve the needs of long term care patients was an emotional one. Steve Morton, CEO said that he still gets questions about the decision today, five years later, but he knows it was the best long-term decision

for the company. Although the transition was difficult, the business maintained the same values and family-oriented atmosphere as the first day they opened in 1932.

By focusing solely on long term care facilities, Morton LTC is fulfilling a need in Wisconsin counties. Due to their growth, they can benefit from economies of scale in purchasing to pass on competitive pricing for their patients.

Day to Day Practice

The company currently employs 15 pharmacists and 45 pharmacy technicians, as well as numerous nurses and delivery drivers. Inside the facility, Morton LTC has both sterile and non-sterile compounding centers that are equipped to prepare non-commercially available products on

demand. The friendly atmosphere coupled with advanced technology allows Morton LTC to provide high quality health care products and long-term care services in a timely and professional manner. Although there is never a truly typical day at the pharmacy due to dynamic patient needs, each day starts off with processing orders that require immediate attention and those that came in during the night.

All employees of Morton LTC are committed to their patients and to maintaining outstanding health care services. Pharmacists stay up to date on their profession by attending annual meetings and holding active positions in committees focused on long term care and insurance reimbursement. As a bonus, all employees who wish to be part of the Pharmacy Society of Wisconsin enjoy having their memberships covered by Morton LTC. With their friendly and well-trained staff committed to the community, Morton LTC continues to foster new relationships and provide services across Northeast Wisconsin.

Raising the Bar

Welcoming new members who share similar beliefs and values to the Morton family is imperative to ensure that they will thrive within the company. The Morton family company does not place emphasis on experience alone. They also look for individuals who have the willingness to go above and beyond what is expected for their patients; patients in long term care facilities may have multiple disease states that require special attention.

Pharmacist Dawn Wypiszynski found out about this pharmacy when she was doing her clerkship in 2006.

Upon graduation, she was offered seven positions, but decided to work for Morton because of their family-oriented ideology. "Morton LTC gives me a great work-home balance. This is important to me because I am a mother of two young children, and the flexible scheduling allows me to tend to my children," stated Pharmacist Dawn Wypiszynski. She is one of 15 pharmacists who are readily available to serve the needs of the long-term care facilities around the clock, weekends, and holidays included!



Above: Steve Morton, CEO (left) and the front door of Morton LTC Pharmacy (right).

By treating staff as family, Morton LTC strongly supports the balance between workload and personal responsibilities. Their goal is to continue welcoming new members to their family and avoid over exerting their experienced employees. Currently, the 15 pharmacists rotate responsibilities such as being on call and consultations and are only required to work on holidays every other year.

Because pharmacists are available 24/7, patients are able to reach a pharmacist at any given time. In addition to providing on-demand answers, pharmacists provide in-person consulting services to each skilled nursing home facility once a month during which they review patient profile charts. Morton pharmacists also take the time to educate the facility staff, as well as answer questions about residents' medication regimens to reduce the risk of medication errors and improve the overall medication therapy.

With a concentrated focus on long term care facilities, Morton LTC understands the needs of assisted living homes such as changes in medications, packaging requirements, and medication deliveries. Morton LTC presently serves about 4,000 patients in approximately 300 facilities that range in size from a four-bed adult family home to skilled nursing facilities with up to 200 patients who receive around the clock care. Working from their

state-of-the-art facility, Morton LTC can provide medication therapy management to each patient – some of whom are being treated for multiple disease states and are on numerous medications. Additionally, Morton LTC pharmacy technicians collaborate with registered nurses of the facilities to maintain the health records of each patient to reassure that they will get their medications filled on-time and accurately.

Using company vehicles and drivers, Morton LTC has exclusive control over their delivery process and can guarantee a high level of customer satisfaction. Deliveries have always been made, despite unpredictable Wisconsin weather. Morton LTC has a strong belief in serving the community; not delivering medications due to bad weather is unacceptable. In extremely inclement weather, four-wheel drive vehicles are used to make the deliveries. Although Morton LTC has set delivery times twice a day, they remain flexible for their clients and also provide emergency delivery services.

Moving Forward

Morton LTC has future goals for expanding within the state of Wisconsin through direct marketing and developing personal relationships with other facilities. Steve Morton and Morton LTC believe in exceptional customer service and providing

the best care for their patients. Their steady expansion allows them to both be reliable for their current clients and continue to provide services to more patients throughout the state.

Morton LTC continues to thrive among their competitors; they do so by differentiating themselves in providing personalized services such as reliable and flexible home deliveries, attentive on-site counseling, and meticulous effort by their staff to provide accurate medication therapy. ●

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References

1. Morton Long Term Care Pharmacy - Home. Available at: <http://www.mortonltc.com/>. Accessed December 15, 2016.