

## WPQC Spotlight: David Schiek - Rhinelander Hometown Pharmacy

by Mason Brandt, 2022 PharmD Candidate

Pharmacy and health care are moving toward a more comprehensive, patient-centered approach to tackling the needs of patients across the nation. Because of this transition, care providers are increasingly looking for programs that directly focus on patient-centered care and result in measurable improvements. One program operating in Wisconsin with great success is the Wisconsin Pharmacy Quality Collaborative (WPQC). WPQC is a network of pharmacies and payers working to improve the quality of care in Wisconsin.

The WPQC program, initiated by PSW, connects payers to WPQC-certified providers for performing medication therapy management (MTM) services for patients. Services include Level I intervention-based services (medication device instruction, dose/dosage form/duration changes, adherence interventions, etc.) and Level II CMR/A services. Pharmacists benefit from the program by building stronger connections with patients, and patients receive tailored care. Providers can focus on improving medication use, patient safety, and reduced health care costs.

David Schiek, of Hometown Pharmacy

### Q&A WITH DAVID SCHIEK

#### Can you explain the benefit this service (both for you and your patients)?

"The benefits of using this service are two-fold. First, it helps the pharmacy staff to understand limitations the patient may have that the pharmacy would typically be unaware of, such as financial, physical, or educational limitations. Second, and most importantly, it helps our patients develop a reason why they are taking medications and allows them to piece together their disease state and medication list."

#### What training were you and/or staff required to complete to run these programs?

"We trained for the billing side of the program (REDCAP) with a webinar-like module that took an hour or so. We also had 2-3 Zoom meetings that laid out the program expectations, goals, and best execution protocols. We followed that up with a recapping webinar that helped to train our pharmacy technicians. All educational items were easy to understand and execute."

#### How has WPQC accreditation impacted your pharmacy practice and helped your patients?

"I believe the WPQC accreditation has impacted my pharmacy more by helping my patients and getting them a better understanding of not only their disease states but understanding 'why' they are taking their medications. They become more involved and active in their health and less of a bystander."

#### What barriers did you face initiating these programs or do you face operating these programs?

"There were some barriers to the program. Not everyone wants to participate. They are either short on time or can't see the benefit of sitting down for the CMR. Some others will sit down but show little need to change. That is where we hope we made some, even if small, impact for later."

#### What are you particularly proud of about your practice location?

"I am very proud of my staff and how they treat our patients. We are a patient-centered team and are problem solvers for our patients. Especially in a rural area, our staff will often find themselves a link between the patient and exceptional health care. Our team anticipates the needs and expectations of our patients and clinicians and often does things before they are asked, exceeding the expectations of a typical pharmacy."



Above: Hometown Pharmacy on Brown Street in Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, has been participating in programs sponsored by PSW for several years. After receiving WPQC accreditation in April of 2019, Schiek originally participated in the Flip the Pharmacy (FTP) program, a 24-month initiative designed to transform a pharmacy from a “filling prescriptions” mentality to a patient-level focus. FTP uses change packages and domains to optimize staff workflow and implement continuous quality improvement measures with a patient-centered approach. Hometown Pharmacy of Rhinelander not only offers comprehensive medication reviews (CMR) to further WPQC standards, but also offers services such as free medication delivery, durable medical equipment rentals, and blister packing that many larger chains do not offer. Schiek, with 26 years of pharmacy experience in Rhinelander, has strengthened his ties with Rhinelander and Oneida County residents by joining the WPQC through the end of 2021.

Hometown Pharmacy of Rhinelander participates in a WPQC program specializing in diabetes, hypertension, and hyperlipidemia. Patients are introduced to the pharmacy through a Medicaid program that identifies gaps in care in disease states. Each patient flagged must have two chronic conditions, take four or more medications for these conditions, and receive care from two or more physicians. When a patient qualifies, Schiek and his team are primed to intervene. The Hometown Pharmacy team meets with the patient three times over the course of several months to develop and implement a plan of care. With visits occurring every other month, Schiek performs a CMR focusing on the patient's medications and disease states. After a discussion, Schiek helps the patient set small goals to accomplish and build on. For example, if a patient struggles with high blood pressure, the patient may have a goal to measure and record blood pressure readings every morning, and then build to more robust goals as the patient learns to manage their health. Schiek and his team have found that small changes over time have led to a significant positive impact on the health of patients.

Oneida County, in northern Wisconsin, is home to around 35,000 residents and the city of Rhinelander. As a third-generation healthcare worker in Rhinelander, Schiek



*Above: View of the pharmacy and education center, with materials for blood pressure, diabetes, and healthy lifestyle teachings.*

has perfected the art of Northwoods hospitality, forming many relationships in the community. He says that this is what makes programs like WPQC so successful in his community. A Rhinelander native, his long history in the area helps build trust with his patients, and confidence that their care is his top priority. Like any program, this one has had occasional setbacks; Schiek explains that some patients simply refuse the service. Including some who either lack the time or cannot see the benefit of a CMR. These patients are few and far between, however, as Schiek and his team have turned many patients into success stories. Many of his patients have completed the program with substantial health improvement.

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*Above: David Schiek, a third-generation healthcare worker in Rhinelander, scheduling an appointment with a patient.*