



Case Study

Advancing Behavioral Health Outcomes Through Pharmacy-Led Care Navigation

CHALLENGE

Patients with serious mental illness and substance use disorders face significant barriers to medication adherence, including cost, transportation, fragmented care, and long waits for follow-up treatment after hospital discharge.

SOLUTION

Advantage Healthcare Services partnered with a large pharmaceutical manufacturer to deploy Community Health Liaisons (CHLs), providing community-based, pharmacy-led support during care transitions and medication management.

RESULTS

- Improved transitions from inpatient to outpatient care
- Increased patient engagement and adherence to long-acting injectable therapy
- Reduced burden on providers and discharge teams
- Strengthened coordination between pharmacy, providers, and community resources

Keywords: Schizophrenia, Serious Mental Illness (SMI), Long-Acting Injectables (LAI), Medication Adherence, Treatment Adherence, Behavioral Health Pharmacy, Specialty Pharmacy, Pharmacy-Led Care,

Executive Summary

Medication adherence remains one of the most persistent challenges in behavioral health care, particularly for individuals living with serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorder (SUD). While care models traditionally focus on patients, providers, and payers, they often overlook the critical role pharmacies can play in supporting continuity of care, medication access, and patient engagement.

Advantage Healthcare Services, a specialty behavioral health pharmacy, partnered with a large pharmaceutical manufacturer to address adherence gaps for individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia and prescribed long-acting injectable (LAI) antipsychotic therapy.

Through a pharmacy-led care navigation model powered by Community Health Liaisons (CHLs), Advantage extended support beyond prescription fulfillment to help patients successfully transition from inpatient to community-based care, improving continuity, engagement, and medication adherence during high-risk periods.

The Challenge

Behavioral health medication adherence is consistently low, with nearly half of patients with major psychiatric disorders failing to take medications as prescribed. For individuals with SMI, missed or delayed treatment can lead to symptom destabilization, emergency department utilization, inpatient readmissions, and higher overall healthcare costs.

Patients face multiple barriers to accessing and maintaining treatment, including transportation challenges, medication costs, limited education, and fragmented care during transitions. These challenges are especially pronounced following hospital discharge, when patients often wait weeks, sometimes months, to access outpatient psychiatric care.

For providers and health systems, limited resources make it difficult to offer the level of follow-up, education, and coordination required to support patients during this vulnerable period. As a result, gaps in care persist, undermining clinical outcomes and straining the broader behavioral health ecosystem.

The Approach

Advantage Healthcare Services addressed these challenges by expanding the role of pharmacy through a community-based care navigation model centered on Community Health Liaisons (CHLs).

In partnership with the pharmaceutical manufacturer, Advantage deployed CHLs to support individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia who were prescribed a long-acting injectable antipsychotic where consistent adherence is critical. The program focused on patients transitioning from hospitals, partial hospitalization programs, and other acute settings into the community.

Key elements of the approach included:

- Community-based CHL workforce: Paraprofessionals with lived experience and deep ties to the communities they serve
- Transition-of-care support: Direct collaboration with hospital discharge teams to ensure continuity following inpatient stays
- Patient education and engagement: Ongoing medication education, appointment coordination, and support navigating community resources
- Pharmacy-led coordination: Integration of medication management with broader care planning, rather than treating pharmacy as a standalone service
- This model enabled Advantage to function as an extension of the care team, providing sustained, real-world support during one of the most critical phases of a patient's treatment journey.

Let's Continue the Conversation

Discover how Advantage's Community Health Liaison model can support LAI adherence and strengthen schizophrenia care in your practice. Call us at 1-714-706-9030 or visit www.ahcspharmacy.com.

Results

The CHL-supported model delivered measurable improvements across care continuity and patient engagement, including:

- Improved transitions from inpatient to outpatient care
- Increased patient engagement during the post-discharge period
- Greater continuity in long-acting injectable therapy
- Reduced burden on providers and discharge teams
- Stronger coordination between pharmacy, providers, and community services

By embedding pharmacy support directly into the care continuum, Advantage helped address common points of failure that often lead to missed doses, disengagement, and relapse.

Impact

This partnership demonstrates how specialty behavioral health pharmacies can serve as a critical connector across the care ecosystem, bridging gaps between patients, providers, payers, and pharmaceutical partners.

The CHL model highlights a scalable approach to:

- Supporting medication adherence for complex behavioral health conditions
- Enhancing outcomes without adding strain to already-limited provider capacity
- Creating new, sustainable pathways for funding wraparound services through pharmaceutical partnerships
- Positioning pharmacy as an active driver of care coordination, innovation, and patient-centered support

By redefining the role of pharmacy in behavioral health, Advantage Healthcare Services is helping to deliver more connected, reliable, and effective care, where patients are supported not just at the point of prescription, but throughout their recovery journey.

