

Partner Spotlight: The Specialty Pharmacy

What is a specialty pharmacy?



According to the National Provider Identifier website (npidb.org), a specialty pharmacy is one that “dispenses generally low volume and high cost medicinal preparations to patients who are undergoing intensive therapies for illnesses that are generally chronic, complex and potentially life threatening. Often these therapies require specialized delivery and administration.”

How can a specialty pharmacy serve the needs of people with cancer?

Kris Admire, Patient Education and Resources Program Manager for Amber Pharmacy, collaborated with us for this article.

Amber Pharmacy, located in Omaha, specializes in providing services and medications for complex and chronic conditions such as cancer.

Specialty pharmacies offer services that go beyond filling prescriptions. These services include compounding, help with administering medications, and being located within a cancer center itself. Specialty pharmacies are more likely to keep less common medications in stock.

Amber Pharmacy in Omaha is Nebraska’s only brick-and-mortar specialty pharmacy with a cancer-specific program. Amber has a specialized oncology program, called the Promises Oncology Program, that includes prescription education and counseling, psychosocial supports, referrals to community resources, and side effect management. Amber also offers a Patient Education and Resources Program, which provides educational materials, helps patients locate basic needs such as housing, transportation and social services.

Not all specialty pharmacies offer this kind of support, but they may be able to help patients obtain certain medications or preparations. If you are interested in utilizing a specialty pharmacy, ask your healthcare provider what options are available.

What role do pharmacies play in public health?



Pharmacies play an essential role in providing integrated healthcare solutions. Pharmacists work closely with patients to ensure safe use of medications and provide proactive counseling on the management of side effects, which reduces physician, hospital and emergency room visits.

While the majority of patients speak English and Spanish, translation services are widely available. For instance, Amber Pharmacy uses a company called Language Line that offers translation services in over 175 languages.

Specialty pharmacies also offer prompt mail services to patients who are in rural or remote areas, and do regular follow-up and monitoring over the phone.

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“Conquering Cancer Through Collaboration”

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