



## Why Conduct a Brown Bag Review?

- Have you wanted to get into more structured patient-focused care but never knew how to get started?
- Are you looking for an event that might attract attention to your pharmacy?
- Are you looking for a way to help your customers sort out their piles of medicine, which may include expired or otherwise dangerous medications?
- Are you looking for a service for which you could possibly charge your customer?
- Are you looking for an easy way to increase business?
- Do you want to increase goodwill within your community?
- Do you want to promote yourself to other health care professionals?

If you answered yes to any one of these questions, you're a perfect candidate to conduct a Brown Bag Medication Review in your pharmacy. A Brown Bag Medication Review is the perfect way to get to know your customers, to show them that you care about their well-being and to increase your current customer base. You can conduct a brown bag medication review in your pharmacy or somewhere in the community.

## Preparing to Hold a Brown Bag Medication Review

A Brown Bag Medication Review without patients attending or a poorly planned review doesn't accomplish anything. So, how do you get people to attend your reviews? What do you need to think about prior to holding your review? The following lists are guidelines that your peers use in promoting and planning their reviews:

### Promotion:

- Send a press release/media advisory to a local newspaper (a sample is on page 3)
- Place a small advertisement in your local newspapers, including the dates and times of the review and a phone number to call to set up appointments
- Bag stuffers announcing the event to your customers
- Posters in pharmacy or in the location where the event will be held
- Distribute flyers in local retirement communities or nursing homes (you may need to obtain permission from management for your flyers)
- Tell your audience what a Brown Bag Medication Review is. Be prepared to answer questions about your intent in holding these reviews and what will happen at the review.
- Do **not** be too promotional about your pharmacy during your reviews. Participants need to feel comfortable discussing all of their medications, even those items purchased from your competitor. It's fine to give participants pens, refrigerator magnets, calendars, etc., but don't give them too much and don't try to verbally solicit their business.



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### Preparation:

- Set up appointments with patients, if possible (30-minute time increments should be sufficient).
- Set up a separate, private area in your pharmacy or at the facility where the review will be held. Nobody wants to discuss their medication use with the person standing behind them.
- Make sure you have sufficient chairs and tables for the review. You may have quite a few elderly people, have a comfortable place for them to sit while waiting for their appointment.
- Set your staff's schedules so pharmacists conducting the review will not be interrupted during the review.
- If your review is to be held in a nursing home or skilled nursing facility, discuss the patients with medication problems with staff before performing the review.
- Compile helpful reference material to use in your review. The following may be good references for you to use.
  - *Drug Information Handbook*, American Pharmacists Association
  - *Drug Interaction Facts*
  - *Facts and Comparisons* or *Fact and Comparison's "Review of Natural Products"*
  - *"Guide to Vitamins, Minerals, Herbs and Other Nutrients,"* Pharmavites/Nature-Made
  - *Ident-A-Drug*
  - *Pediatric Guide*, American Pharmacists Association
  - *Pregnancy and Lactation Guide*, American Pharmacists Association
  - Laptop computer with drug information CD-ROMs such as *Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database*, by Pharmacist's Letter/Prescriber's Letter 1999, *Clinical Pharmacology*, *Facts and Comparisons "Drug Interactions On-Disk"* or the Mayo Clinic CD-ROM program written for consumers.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date

Contact: Contact Name, Title

Contact Phone Number

## **Patients to Receive Medication Reviews at Name of Event or Location**

**CITY**—Pharmacists will provide patient medication reviews on **Day of Week, Date of Event**, from **Start and End Time of Event** at **Place of Event**.

The event features pharmacists performing **description of services to be performed at the event**. The goal of **Name of Event** is to showcase the value of pharmacists and to help patients understand each medication they're taking, ensure they're taking it safely and complete a medication list to easily keep track of everything they're taking.

"Pharmacists are the most accessible health care professional," said **Name and Title of Event Organizer/Leader**. "Patients typically see their pharmacist every month when refilling their prescriptions. This puts pharmacists in the perfect position to help patients monitor and control their disease states."

Each participant will receive a personal health medication chart after reviewing their therapy with a pharmacist. They will look for any interactions between the many medications you are taking in case some are interfering with the effectiveness of others and to make sure that you are safe with your current regimen. Your pharmacist will help you create a medication plan, so you can stay organized and in control of your health.

**Any additional information about the pharmacy or organization**

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NOTE: Members of the media are invited to participate in the review.



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## Things to Bring For Your Brown Bag Medication Review

Most Americans fill a dozen prescriptions annually, and after age 65, they fill up to 30 prescriptions every year. This is the average. Do you fit that description? Because many people take multiple prescription medications, in addition to vitamins and other supplements, it can be a challenge keeping them all straight. How do you know if they are all working the way they should? That's where your pharmacist can step in, help you stay organized and make sure that you are taking your medicine safely to get the most benefit out of each therapy.

### How Does a Brown Bag Medication Review Work?

Your pharmacist will go through, medication by medication, and make sure you understand what each medication is for, how and when to best take it, how to store it and answer any questions you have. They will look for any interactions between the many medications you are taking in case some are interfering with the effectiveness of others and to make sure that you are safe with your current regimen. Your pharmacist will help you create a medication plan, so you can stay organized and in control of your health. If you are assisting in the care of someone else, your pharmacist can coach you on how to best help that person be on track and consistent in their medication use, even recommending organizational devices and other tips to make sure they are taking the right medication at the right time, every time. Your pharmacist will also then help you create an up-to-date medication list that you should keep with you at all times. This list should be shared with each physician you are being treated by, so they can update their records and make sure your health is being managed properly.

### How Does a Brown Bag Medication Review Keep Me Safe?

By doing a medication review with your pharmacist at least once a year, and following up with your pharmacist about your medications at every prescription fill, you are taking the initiative to get the most out of each therapy and make sure they are working the way they were designed. Your pharmacist is the expert on your medications, and they know how to best help you manage your therapy in coordination with your health care team. They help ensure that you are taking medications the right way so they are the most effective; they make sure there will be no negative reactions with any other medications you are taking; and they prep you for potential side effects and what to do if they occur and note if any food you are eating with the medications would interact. In addition, your pharmacist can help you if you are having trouble affording your medication and can be your advocate so you can get the care you need.

### What Should I Bring to My Brown Bag Medication Review

- All prescription medications
- All over-the-counter medications in your house, whether you're taking them or not
- All herbal alternative medications
- Any organizational medication boxes, etc., that you use
- A list of all your doctors and their phone numbers
- A list of all allergies, particularly to foods and medications
- A list of any medication questions/concerns you have
- A spouse and/or caregiver



## Checklist for Medication Review

**During the medication review, be sure to check the following:**

- Indication for each medication
- Drug interactions between medications
- Adverse reactions
- Ability of patient to pay for the medications
- Expiration dates of medications
- How the patient is taking his/her medications
- Lifestyle issues (e.g., smoker, alcohol, etc.)
- Physical disabilities
- Monitoring tests
- How the medication is being stored
- Cultural/reading level, capability
- Drug/food interactions
- Drug allergies

**Make sure the patient understands:**

- What the medication is used for
- How to take it (with or without food, number of times/day, etc.)
- What to expect from the medication
- Side effects
- When the patient should contact his or her physician

## Take Home Messages for the Patient

**Before patients leave the review, make sure they understand the following:**

- Stress the importance of properly disposing of expired or discontinued medications.
- Clarify questions on any remaining prescriptions.
- Explain the importance of keeping medications in the original containers.
- Remind patients to communicate with their doctor or pharmacist about any side effects of medications, OTCs or herbals.
- Suggest medication schedules and/or the importance of compliance.
- Reinforce lifestyle modifications to promote well-being.
- Encourage patients to take charge of their own health and make sure they know their ABCs: Ask, be sure and call
- Give them your phone number should they have additional questions for you.
- Offer to give them a follow-up call to see if all of their questions were answered.
- Discuss the use of organizational aids (i.e. use of pill box reminders).
- Send only one sheet of information home with the patient, if possible.

