
Medical Group Bans Pharmaceutical Sales Reps from Doctor Offices*The Everett Clinic, Everett, Washington*

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The age-old practice of pharmaceutical sales reps pitching new medications directly to doctors is being challenged by organized delivery systems across the country. For example, since 1998, the Everett Clinic—which serves a quarter of a million Washington State patients—has banned drug sales reps from their doctors’ offices, relying instead on its pharmacists to evaluate the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of new prescription drugs. The pharmacists then make their recommendations to a committee of physicians. If approved, the drug is then included on the medical group’s endorsed list of medications. The pharmacists routinely visit medical group physicians educating them about efficacy and evidence-based use of medications. The result is a savings of almost \$88 million per year for the group’s contracted health plans compared to the Washington state average.

Excerpted from:

Managing Prescribing Cost and Quality: One Group’s Experience

By Jennifer L. Wilson Norton, R.PH., MBA, Albert W., Fisk, M.D., M.M.M., and Nathan M. Lawless, R.Ph.

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“This article is a step-by-step description of how one multispecialty group practice successfully developed a core competency of managing the quality and cost of prescribing. In 1998, the Everett Clinic’s prescribing cost was higher than the statewide network average for one of Washington’s largest health plans. In 2002, after developing and implementing the changes described in this article, the clinic’s annual prescribing costs are \$4 million below the network average for the total of its two largest health plans. . . .”

FOR MORE INFORMATION:**Kathy Moore**

Director of Marketing
The Everett Clinic
3901 Hoyt Avenue
Everett, WA 98201
tel.425.259.1180

kmoore@everettclinic.com
www.everettclinic.com