

# ABSOLUTE SCOOP

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

About 30% of patients require a medication intervention during a transition of care to a new healthcare setting.

*Written by Kevin Fearon, President and Chief Operating Officer*

**Happy New Year and Welcome 2023!** The previous year was filled with big challenges of COVID recovery, labor shortages, challenging reimbursement, and an evolving search to create a sustainable model to meet the growing elderly population with limited staffing in the long term care community. As managers of the industry, we must all lead through uncertainty and address each of these problems one by one and pioneer the new way. Our last newsletter outlined the milestones that Absolute Pharmacy has achieved over the last decade and while we are proud of our model, we still see many opportunities and requirements to evolve for the future.

As hospitals, post-acute care, and pharmacies adopt technology, the opportunity for interconnectivity can be an industry changing. We all enter the same information multiple times; this creates duplicate work, time delays, and the potential for error. There will never be enough money or resources and with the growing demands of senior healthcare, it is imperative we join together to create a lean system that enables seamless transfers of care and data sharing.

We do see a new model evolving! Partnerships between pharmacies and nursing facilities is in its infancy with the creation of bi-directional data bases. Absolute drug packages are embedded with barcodes to match the patient and drugs to prepare for bedside scanning. Each partner will need to agree on standards to enable all of the scanning details and common real time drug libraries. Absolute is also investing in redundant packaging automation to improve our capacity and reduce the time required to prepare medications for bedside administration. We are also in the early stages of trialing vision technology. This software recognizes the presence of a drug in a package as well as its color and geometry; if any of the requirements don't match, the package will be rejected. All of these advancements take time and trial and error but will improve quality and free up clinicians for improved care. We believe these are all critical steps to our future and to maintain our position as a technology leader.



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In addition to technology, other quality processes centered on transitions of care must be managed. Absolute's Admission Medication Review (AMR) is an example of how critical it is to review admission orders. About 30% of our patient orders have a transcription error at the point of admission, requiring a medication intervention. We envision hospital orders importing to our systems – eliminating manual transcription, avoiding errors, and improving workflow and timelines. These are all fundamentals of lean methodology where we reduce process steps to improve quality.

There is no silver bullet that will improve our medication model. We will all need to be committed to creating a better system one piece at a time. It's a new year where we have the opportunity to pioneer new ways of delivering patient care. We look forward to sharing innovative ways to care for our seniors wherever they may reside.

**Thank you for being a business partner with Absolute as we work together to overcome the challenges of the past year and embrace a new model of care in 2023!**

## About the Author



Outside of work, Kevin enjoys time with his wife, Vicki, his adult children, and grandchildren. He loves pranks and activities including boating, snow-skiing, pickleball, and hiking.

**Kevin Fearon is currently the President of Absolute Pharmacy. Kevin joined us in 2011 and contributed to Absolute Pharmacy's expansion of product offerings, technology solutions, and growth of servicing over 10,000 patients. Kevin has broad pharmacy experience beginning his career in hospital and transitioning to institutional practice in LTC for the last 38 years. He held national leadership positions in Best Practice for over 15 years where he interacted with Boards of Pharmacy and automation companies. Kevin is a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy and Baldwin Wallace University, where he obtained an MBA. He is the past President of ASCP and Chairman of the Board.**

**MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION IS TO STOP PROSCRASTINATING.**

**I'LL WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW TO START.**



**I WAS GOING TO QUIT ALL MY BAD HABITS THIS YEAR.**

**BUT THEN I REMEMBERED THAT NO ONE LIKES A QUITTER**