

## EGUIDE

# Medication Management: Reducing Risk and Improving Outcomes for Individuals with I/DD



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## What You'll Learn

Individuals with I/DD are a vulnerable population with unique risks. Compared to the general population, those with I/DD have more comorbidities, like epilepsy, hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, anxiety, and depression, and take more long-term medications to manage them. Their complex medication regimens put them at higher risk for polypharmacy, drug interactions, adverse events and administration errors, any of which can cause harm or have a negative impact on health outcomes.

Complex medication regimens can be challenging for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), especially at a time when many organizations are understaffed – and nobody wants to make an administration error that puts an individual's health at risk.

Taking the right approach to medication management – one that is simple, drives accountability, and increases safety – reduces burden on DSPs and leads to better health outcomes for the individuals they serve. Learn the key elements of successful medication management.

## Key Elements of Successful Medication Management

To make medication administration easier and more efficient for staff while mitigating risks to the individuals you serve, simplicity, safety, and accountability are key.

### > Simplicity

Simplicity in medication management gives staff more time to focus on care and reduces the risk of administration errors. Clear labels and intuitive packaging help DSPs identify the medication, the individual it's for, and when it should be given, and make it easy to record in a written or electronic MAR. The ability to clearly see the amount of medication on hand can prevent costly and disruptive trips to the ER for emergency refills.

### > Safety

The right approach to medication management – one that is simple and drives staff accountability – helps reduce the potential for missed doses and other administration errors, and ultimately leads to better outcomes. Bill Deane, Senior Vice President of Pharmacy Operations at PharMerica, points to calendar cycle dispensing as a simple and safe solution for many organizations. “Each card is individually labeled and the medications are easy to identify,” he says. “The DSP only has to look for today’s date on the card. There are fewer touches and less chance for errors.”



**75% of individuals with I/DD take long-term prescription medications vs. 59% of the general population.**

## > Accountability

The right approach drives accountability by making it easy to verify that the right medication was dispensed to the right individual. A DSP or their supervisor can easily recognize missed doses and quickly resolve any issues. With calendar cards, for example, a quick look is all that's needed to spot a missed dose.

Efficient and effective medication management reduces burden on staff, builds confidence, and helps protect those you serve. To learn more about optimizing medication management for your organization, talk to your pharmacy services provider.



Individuals with I/DD are 2.5 times more likely to be hospitalized for an adverse drug event.

Individuals with I/DD have a higher rate of comorbidities than the general population and treating them may require complex medication regimens. Common comorbidities are:

- > Epilepsy
- > Diabetes
- > Heart failure
- > Coronary heart disease
- > Hypertension
- > Cancer
- > Chronic pain
- > Inflammatory bowel disease
- > Asthma
- > Parkinson's disease
- > Anxiety
- > Depression
- > Vision impairment
- > Loss of hearing

Pharmacy Alternatives has the most expertise in the I/DD market and has been meeting the needs of individuals and agencies for over 30 years. We share your commitment to making a difference every day with closed-door pharmacy services for specialized populations delivered locally in all 50 states. Learn how our services and hands-on support can help you empower those you support to live life to the fullest.