Donald Hackett and Lou Scalpati have been in the health care universe for almost 25 years. During that time, they’ve seen a lot of things change within the eHealth market. With their latest venture, RxWiki, Inc., Hackett and Scalpati are coming full circle on one trend they believe is here to stay—digitally connecting patients to their pharmacist.

RxWiki is the culmination of years of innovative technology development, a keen understanding of the ever-evolving eHealth landscape, and strategic timing. Now, NCPA members can take advantage of this technology as the association has partnered with RxWiki. Through this strategic relationship, NCPA will incorporate RxWiki’s Digital Pharmacist™ offering as a new, cost-free benefit for its members. The Digital Pharmacist suite includes website, social media, and mobile solutions for pharmacists to deliver medication information to patients.

“With pharmacists becoming more involved in the delivery and management of patient care, there is a valuable opportunity for greater collaboration with patients to improve overall health outcomes,” says NCPA president and pharmacy owner Donnie Calhoun, RPh.

“The strategic goal of this partnership is to empower community pharmacists with world-class medication information and digital solutions to better engage patients within the pharmacy and from any digital device,” says Hackett, RxWiki chairman and CEO.

**Digital Solutions**

In describing RxWiki’s capabilities, Hackett says, “As health care delivery shifts toward an age of accountable care, RxWiki’s solutions are supporting community pharmacists’ transition into a new role as the ‘primary-
In partnering with NCPA, RxWiki will have the opportunity to connect thousands of community pharmacies and their patients to timely, trusted medication information and digital tools to improve patient medication management. New solutions must leverage innovative technologies to create work-flow efficiencies that reduce costs and improve patient outcomes.

RxWiki’s digital solutions enable community pharmacists on any scale to connect and engage with patients on Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. Additionally, patients will be able to leave the pharmacy with a mobile app customized for their needs.

“RxWiki’s Digital Pharmacist program has delivered measurable results for my pharmacy,” says Mark Newberry, PharmD, owner of Tarrytown Pharmacy in Austin, Texas, who tested the program earlier this year. “Within the first two months, Tarrytown Pharmacy’s Facebook audience more than doubled, our customer reviews on Google+ earned us a ranking of excellent, and we received more than 300 online requests for driving directions to our store. That digital visibility translates to new patients coming through our pharmacy’s front door.”

Kent Lambrecht, owner of Vail Valley Pharmacy, Edwards, Colo., says he heard about RxWiki’s Digital Pharmacist solutions from Andy Berg (RxWiki’s director of network membership), who had done a rotation at Valley while a pharmacy school student.

“As pharmacists continue to play a more active role in patient care, it has become important for our pharmacy to keep patients and customers engaged through several mediums,” Lambrecht says. “Social media in particular has proved to be a powerful tool to attract and connect with patients. RxWiki’s solutions have definitely enhanced Vail Valley Pharmacy’s digital presence and given me and my staff a valuable opportunity to interact with patients outside of the pharmacy.”

Bill Osborn, PharmD, president of Osborn Drugs, Inc., Miami, Okla., says his pharmacy has had a Facebook page for about five years, and RxWiki has helped enhance its online profile.

“We found RxWiki through NCPA and were asked to be a beta site,” he says. “It has been great to have a source of suitable content that will not direct patients to mail order promotion or other content not showing community pharmacy properly.”

While having a website is certainly important, Osborn says that Facebook is more flexible and “so much easier to maintain.” He also points out that the adaptability and versatility of social media can help level the playing field with larger organizations such as chains. In fact, he says the personal touch that pharmacists can deliver through social media is a valuable asset for independents. Osborn says that Osborn Drugs has divided its social media offerings into three primary categories: health care, gifts, and local staff news.

Osborn says that he knows other independent pharmacists might be taking a wait-and-see approach to find out how things shake out, but in his opinion, with younger people (and plenty of older ones) being completely immersed in mobile technology, being proactive is a must.

“A lot of these people will be our future customers, and some already are,” he says. “We need to stay on top of the newest technology trends to enhance health care because customers will expect that from us.”
down the industry’s silos of fragmented, non-communicating apps.

When Hackett and Scalpati started RxWiki, the big question was how the company would leverage its platforms and health content to change the way doctors, pharmacists, and patients communicate. They knew that today’s low health literacy rates had been largely due to both the quality of and patients’ ability to access medication information and health news.

The ACA has created an opportunity for RxWiki to change the rules of the game.

The first part of this evolution equation is content. RxWiki’s patient-centric publishing model focuses on transparency, velocity, and accessibility. The company’s goal is to deliver trusted, multimedia medication news within minutes, not weeks, of when new research is released.

RxWiki’s digital medication encyclopedia is created for patients, by pharmacists. From patient-centric medication news to Food and Drug Administration alerts and manufacturer updates, RxWiki’s pharmacist-
created-and-edited content is written in positive, neutral language targeted at an eighth-grade reading level. RxWiki also publishes video news and information segments. These concise and effective videos are integrated within relevant text to provide patients with a versatile multimedia experience. All medication information is available to consumers at no cost via websites, social media, mobile, and print platforms.

**Distribution Options**

The second part of the equation is distribution, which is rooted heavily in the company’s technological capabilities. The ACA created a demand for patient education and engagement in an effort to improve patient outcomes while also reducing overall health care costs.

Among health care providers, pharmacists are often the lowest cost operators. As a result, pharmacists have moved away from product-based business models to become more involved in the delivery and management of patient care.

RxWiki is building out the technology and infrastructure that will continue to support the needs of patients and pharmacists as the industry evolves. The company has developed this suite of digital solutions to support pharmacists as they transition into their new role of “primary-care-pharmacist.”

RxWiki embraces the power of social media and mobile devices to share its content with patients and bring pharmacists into the digital conversation. Social media, in particular, has developed into a space where RxWiki brings pharmacists and patients together to communicate and collaborate.

On-demand accessibility to information and interaction via social media and digital devices has made it possible for RxWiki to not only connect a national network of pharmacists and their patients but also connect both parties with engaging medication information that empowers patients to play a more active, informed role in their health.

The RxWiki Digital Pharmacist solutions also serve as marketing tools for pharmacies, enabling pharmacists to boost their online presence, increase brand awareness, attract new customers, and strengthen relationships with existing patients to build loyalty.

To learn more about these solutions and how to enroll, please visit http://www.ncpanet.org/digitalpharmacist.

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