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Pharmacy facelift improves patient safety

By: Stacy Neumann

The Main Pharmacy at Evans Army Community Hospital is closing for a massive makeover from November 7th to November 12th. The renovations are the latest step in taking patient safety to the next level.

"We already have the shortest wait time in the Western Region," said John Callahan, outpatient pharmacy supervisor. "This isn't about making it faster. It's to make it safer."

During its closure, the pharmacy's internal space will be completely gutted and rebuilt to incorporate new furniture and equipment as well as improve the work flow for employees. Even the furniture is designed to promote safety by eliminating cracks that pills may fall into. The centerpiece of the new space is a \$350,000 automated prescription dispenser. Once a pharmacist reviews and approves a prescription, the machine automatically fills it. Employees use a handheld scanner on both their computer and then the dispenser to ensure accuracy.

Callahan said, "In the last two years alone, we've had 25 percent growth in business. We have about 1,000 visits a day between the Main Pharmacy and the Woods Soldier Family Care Center pharmacy. This update will take us forward for the next 20 years."

One thing that won't change is the patient's access to a pharmacist. Callahan stressed pharmacists will continue to interact with patients at the window and be available to talk whenever they are needed.

"We are committed to patient safety and satisfaction when patients visit. We want to ensure they receive the medical attention and commitment they deserve," he added.

During the closure, from Nov. 7th-9th, beneficiaries may fill new prescriptions at the WSFCC pharmacy. Refills that were ordered for the Main Pharmacy can be picked up at the Inpatient Pharmacy during duty hours. This is located on the hospital's bottom floor. EACH will fill only emergency prescriptions from Nov 10th-12th.



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