



Choosing an Electronic Prescribing Application that is Right for Your Practice

Over 95% of the nations' pharmacies are enabled for electronic prescribing. By connecting your practice to your local pharmacies, you can experience a dramatic reduction in phone calls and faxes to authorize refills and clarify prescription information.

To get started, all you need is Internet access (preferably high-speed) and electronic prescribing software that is certified to connect to the Pharmacy Health Information Exchange™, operated by SureScripts®, which facilitates the secure transmission of prescription information between physicians and pharmacists, and provides access to life-saving information about patients during emergencies or routine care.

There are many solutions to choose from and evaluating them may seem like a daunting process. The first question you need to ask is would your practice be better suited for standalone electronic prescribing software or an electronic medical record system?

A standalone electronic prescribing solution will allow your practice to automate the refill authorization process, send new prescriptions to your local pharmacies, and does not require a substantial upfront investment. By comparison, an Electronic Medical Record system includes electronic prescribing as part of a suite of functionalities will allow you to automate your entire practice and eliminate chart pulls, but may require a bigger initial investment and more dramatic change in office workflow.

“There are many solutions to choose from...”

Once you have decided on the type of solution for your practice, you will want to start contacting solution providers to find out more about their specific products. The following scorecard will help you compare and contrast the features of different solutions.

Electronic Prescribing Solution Buyers Guide

Category	Feature/Function	Question to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Functionality*	Refill authorization	Will the solution enable me or my staff to receive refill requests from pharmacies directly on my computer instead of by fax or phone and send back approvals or denials electronically with a few key strokes?			
	New prescriptions	Can I send a new prescription directly to the pharmacist's computer through my PDA, Desktop, Laptop or Tablet PC instead of to their fax machine?			
	Two-way communication	Is the solution enabled for two-way communications with pharmacies (through a connection to the Pharmacy Health Information Exchange) or just one-way fax transmission of new prescription information?			
	Reporting	Does the solution include reporting capability about prescription history for the patient and the practice?			
	User tools	Does the solution provide aids such as favorites-lists or chart-labels to aid system use and practice workflow?			
	Drug interaction checking	Does the solution provide alerts for drug to drug, drug to allergy and other checks for patient safety?			

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Category	Feature/Function	Question to Ask Vendor	Solution A	Solution B	Solution C
Functionality* <i>(continued)</i>	Formulary management	Does the solution display formulary information related to patient's drug coverage to help manage patient cost? Does it include all of the drugs available on formulary or only the preferred drugs?			
Related Functions (EMR Solutions)	Modules	Does the solution provide one or more related modules, such as lab results or charge capture?			
	Modular EHR	Does the solution provide a comprehensive electronic health record that can be implemented in stages beginning with prescribing?			
Hardware Architecture	Mobile	Can the solution run on a device such as a PDA, and does it provide a method for synchronization, either wirelessly or through a cradle?			
	Desktop	Does the solution provide applications that run on a desktop, requiring just an internet connection, or additional software?			
	Remote computing	Does the solution provide access when prescribers are away from the office?			
Services	Initial training	Does the vendor provide training for the physician and staff in the use of the application? Is the training onsite or remote?			
	Ongoing Support	Does the vendor provide ongoing support and customer service to assist you and your staff after implementation?			
	System interfaces	Does the vendor provide the ability to retrieve demographic information from the billing system?			
	Updates	Does the vendor send periodic updates to the system for ongoing improvements and enhancements?			
Costs	Hardware	What are the costs for all recommended hardware including any networking equipment?			
	Software and services	What are the one time and on going costs for the software and any training and interfacing services?			
	Special offers	Are there any special offers such as free trials, rebates or discounts?			

If you have any questions about this worksheet, or if you would like additional resources to help you learn more about the benefits of pharmacy connectivity, please contact the SureScripts Electronic Prescribing Resource Center™ **1-866-RxReady (866-797-3239)**.

**Note: this is a list of common functions found on most solutions however it is not intended to be a comprehensive list of functionality.*

