



The Data-Driven Culture And The Art Of The Data Dashboard

Everybody wants it. Few achieve it. Most spend lots of time and treasure on it.

The all-important “it” is organizational focus – getting everyone in an organization focused on the same goals with the discipline to stay the course. This effort isn't specific to any one industry, but Nebraska Medicine's Integrated Specialty Pharmacy is a clear success story in regard to using data to get an organization focused. Through strategic trial-and-error Nebraska Medicine has solved a lot of vexing focus problems experienced by most integrated specialty pharmacies with a deceptively simple but powerful solution of a dashboard. In an interview they shared the secrets of their success – and their dashboard.

A True Data-Driven Culture

The team at Nebraska Medicine's Integrated Specialty Pharmacy believes that a data-driven culture is critical to meeting its mission of improving patient outcomes. This is the case because a data-driven culture allows integrated specialty pharmacies to be better able to partner and engage with other departments within the organization. Integrated specialty pharmacies that master the art of data can clearly and consistently demonstrate how they are improving the patient experience and providing value to the health system.

One of the key steps to evolving an organization to a data-driven culture is solving the challenges of organizing and presenting the data in an actionable form. Data in and of itself is useless unless it is configured into an appropriate form-factor. If that form-factor is hard to use or maintain, people won't bother using it. Simplicity and ease-of-use of data are important, and this is precisely why – and how – the dashboard was developed by Nebraska Medicine's Integrated Specialty Pharmacy team.



Nebraska Medicine™



About: The University of Nebraska Medical Center

University of Nebraska Medical Center is a \$1.8 billion academic health system with 9,500 employees and over 70 specialty and primary care clinics, offering 50 specialties and subspecialties.

The Nebraska Medicine Specialty Pharmacy Program was established in 2013 with the mission of partnering with provider teams to improve patient outcomes and serve as an extension of the healthcare team. Its goal is to eliminate barriers that can prevent patients from successfully starting therapy, remaining on therapy, and achieving optimal outcomes.

A key component of its mission is engaging with Specialty Therapy Management areas including GI/IBD, cystic fibrosis, dermatology, hepatitis, multiple sclerosis, oncology, migraine, rheumatoid arthritis, and psychiatry.

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Challenge: When The Low Hanging Fruit Is Gone

At first, Nebraska Medicine's Integrated Specialty Pharmacy didn't really need dashboards because the Specialty Pharmacy was new and pent-up demand for services was great. The team leveraged their integration with medical records to facilitate growth within disease states but kept data in-house and only reviewed metrics within the pharmacy department. Data was still important but not as much of a priority as it is today.

Then the proverbial "low hanging fruit" was picked and the market became more competitive. Nebraska Medicine's Integrated Specialty Pharmacy needed to change strategy to show the value it brought to the entire organization. They realized that all the wonderful things the integrated specialty pharmacy was doing and the resulting benefits it brought – obvious to the team – were almost invisible to other members of the hospital staff.

How could they show the value of the integrated specialty pharmacy for improving patient outcomes? The team thought they were doing all the right things, but how do you prove it?

Their answer was to make their team even more data-driven and create a simple dashboard to ensure everyone within the organization is driving toward the same goals. In short, the dashboard was a data-driven decision-making tool devised to show everybody else what they were doing and how the actions of the integrated specialty pharmacy forwarded Nebraska Medicine's overall goals.

Solution: A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats

The Nebraska Medicine Integrated Specialty Pharmacy's solution was to institute a dashboard template using organizational-wide goals as the immutable anchors. The key was that the template is used across the entire organization tying the integrated specialty pharmacy closer to the health system's priorities and areas of focus. This made the template relevant across the entire health system.



The dashboard's three immutable anchors are:

- Quality and Safety
- Patient Experience
- Financial Stewardship.

All managers and above at Nebraska Medicine's Integrated Specialty Pharmacy use this template to manage and measure data to drive how more services can be provided to more patients for better outcomes. This system helps create an environment for a laser-like focus on the hospital goals while providing full transparency and a tool for different departments to engage with.

For instance, the integrated specialty pharmacy team can share with the Dermatology Clinic key data points that tie directly into the organization's objectives. The dashboard may show how many injection trainings were done on the new biologics in the last month, share the number of assistance programs and how much was saved out of pocket, completed interventions, revenue generated, etc. The integrated specialty pharmacy team meets regularly with the specialty clinics using the dashboard as a decision-making tool to discuss and decide on various actions.

Telling The Integrated Specialty Pharmacy Story

Nebraska Medicine's Integrated Specialty Pharmacy team's dashboards are effective in telling the integrated specialty pharmacy story and showing its value. It is a tool to help decide on next steps and if this action will generate more revenue or identify areas where services can be expanded. Using the dashboard to focus, engage and measure uncovers more treatment and revenue opportunities for the integrated specialty pharmacy, clinics, and hospitals. This is what the team, in landlocked Nebraska, calls "a rising tide lifting all boats."

A data-driven culture with a dashboard as a decision-making tool are part of the answer for integrated specialty pharmacies looking to provide more services to more patients with better outcomes.

Dashboard Lessons Learned

- 1 Data = credibility.** Providing the data allows you to frame the challenge and solve the problem or recognize the opportunity.
- 2 Data begets data.** Once you start providing data others will increasingly crave it.
- 3 Start small** (see #2 above). Provide information that is readily available and don't let perfect get in the way of good. Share the data you have with stakeholders so they can provide feedback on what additional data adds value.
- 4 Use a standardized templated dashboard for everyone.** Standardization will allow you to compare progress to organizational goals across all departments.
- 5 "Big tent" approach works best.** Engage with all and invite all to engage with you. The more interactions and discussions the better the data.
- 6 Use the data** to drive strategic growth and justify additional resources.

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