

# Leading your team to success and managing through change

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**Change is  
hard at first,  
*messy in  
the middle*  
and gorgeous  
at the end.**  
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ROBIN SHARMA

## Change management

Introducing change to your business impacts not only your process, but also your people. This Health Mart® Change Management Guide is intended to help you successfully navigate common challenges leaders face when managing teams through change.

We'll discuss what your role is as a leader, the four key steps to implementing change with your staff, and how to manage and overcome resistance. As the leader and the forcing factor for change, it's imperative that you understand — and anticipate — how your staff will respond to change to get the best results. Throughout this resource, you'll also see quotes from your Health Mart peers about strategies they used with their staff to successfully approach change and implement medication synchronization (med sync) with their own staff. You are not alone in feeling that this change is a large undertaking for you and your staff, but we believe the change will be beneficial, and your fellow independents encountered — and have overcome — the same barriers you are facing. Health Mart is confident that with the right approach and a motivated team in place, you too will achieve the success of an operationally efficient and patient-focused med sync workflow — one that your staff will benefit from, and appreciate both as a team and as individuals.






It's important to leverage this guide when introducing med sync to your pharmacy, given the large impact on daily tasks and workflow it has on your business and staff. However, understanding all of the positive impacts — to patients, to the staff as individuals, and to your pharmacy as a whole — that will result from med sync will demonstrate that the change was worth it.



# Your role as the leader

The launch of med sync, despite its many benefits, will necessitate a fundamental change in both your pharmacy’s workflow and how you interact with and support patients. Like most change initiatives, your employees are likely to experience some level of resistance and difficulty in making adjustments to this new way of doing business.

As the leader, you are responsible for managing the change process by ensuring employees understand the reasons for change and are fully engaged during the transition process, which makes them feel supported. Specifically, you will need to:

-  **MAINTAIN AN ATMOSPHERE OF POSITIVITY** because the leader sets the tone
-  **HOLD THE TEAM AND YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE** for the success of this initiative
-  **ENSURE THERE IS TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION** between you and your staff
-  **DEFINE, MEASURE, COMMUNICATE AND REWARD SUCCESS** so everyone is working toward and celebrating the same goals
-  **ADDRESS RESISTANCE** proactively and as it occurs with your employees

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We led our team to implement the new workflow one by one. As a manager, it was my responsibility to first learn the program and the system. Then, to get my team motivated to implement med sync, they had to understand the reasons why we were doing it. So I set out to educate them on the importance of med sync and how it improves patient outcomes, how it improves the pharmacy from an efficiency standpoint. I let them see the results of how many patients we were enrolling, and we were setting goals together each month to enroll patients.

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KEITH PFAFF  
Hereford Pharmacy

# Introducing and implementing the change with your team: four key steps

STEP 1

Make the case for change  
THE “WHY”

*“If you want to change the world, first change yourself, then tell others how you did it. Never demand that people change. Inspire them to change using your own change as an example instead.” – DAN PEARCE*

You are not making change for change’s sake. By studying your business fundamentals and analyzing industry trends, you have come to the conclusion that this change is needed for the long-term sustainability of your pharmacy business. You must carefully communicate your rationale with your team and allow your staff to voice their concerns and provide feedback. Make sure you communicate the benefits of med sync to the overall pharmacy and to their individual roles. You know you have succeeded when your employees can articulate why everyone in the pharmacy is implementing this change.

Helping employees see the bigger picture should help prepare them for the impact of change and make dealing with challenges and setbacks less problematic in the later stages.

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Before we launched med sync, I brought the entire team together and discussed how the industry was changing — from declining reimbursements to an increased focus on medication adherence and other clinical performance metrics. I was very honest with them — we needed to change our way of doing business and med sync was our vehicle. It would enable us to increase our script volumes and free up the time we needed to spend with patients — and that to continue on as a successful business, these steps were critical. Failure was not an option.

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SCOTT MEEKS  
Medicine Cabinet Group





## Share the vision THE “WHAT”

Now that your team understands “why” change is necessary, it’s important to create a clear vision of “what” this change is going to provide for your pharmacy. Think of it as your pharmacy’s vision statement, motto or mantra surrounding this change.

### How to create a vision statement

Brainstorm with your team to create a set of collective desired values and outcomes for the pharmacy business and address what the organization will look like once the changes are implemented. What are the positive benefits for the organization, team, individuals and patients? This part of the discussion will help your team members answer the critical “what’s in it for me” question.

This is also the time to address what may happen if you don’t implement change, and how big changes are necessary to maintain a successful pharmacy business. Although all people are different, most are motivated by a change vision that incorporates both a) achieving a desirable outcome, and b) avoiding an undesirable outcome. Based on the industry pressures you have shared, have your staff discuss the outcome for your pharmacy if this change is not made — would your goals still be met, and would the vision statement still be true?

If you need additional help or information about creating a vision statement, we suggest you explore some of the many helpful resources available online.

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We sat down together as a team and asked, 'What's our end result? What is the threat if we don't do this, and what are the opportunities if we do go down this course?' And we decided for us, the 'why' was to improve patient outcomes, to improve our operating efficiencies, and to ensure we're relevant in the future of pharmacy — for both our patients and our staff.

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**JOSH BORER**  
*Rex Pharmacy*



## Communicate the path to success THE “HOW”

Once you have effectively communicated the why and the what, the next step is to explain the how. Create and review a med sync launch plan with your team noting the phased approach to goals and milestones (oftentimes these are created during the med sync implementation meeting). Change is usually best received when it is implemented in bite-size pieces with short-term attainable goals — which helps your team experience quick wins along the way. Share that you know there will be bumps along the road, but you will work together to correct them and keep moving to reach the goal.

- **Let your team know that they will have what they need to be successful.** Explain the resources you will be making available to ensure their success — this includes things such as training, additional staffing, technology, etc.
- **Ensure employees know that they have a part in developing and refining the new process.** Ask for input, acknowledge ideas and opinions, and act on feedback received. Asking and ignoring will damage your credibility and sabotage your change efforts, so this is an important aspect of the feedback process.

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It's easy to be a leader when everything is going great. When things are tough and the market changes, that's when you really have to find out who you are and find a way to make it happen and make it to the finish line.

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**GREG PAISLEY**  
*Shrivers Pharmacies*



STEP  
4

## Monitor, measure, report and celebrate

When presented with change, people often respond with a wide range of emotions. It is important to stay in close touch with your team through the transition. Keep them informed on how you are progressing toward goals and meet regularly to give timely feedback on which areas are on track and which areas may need some additional focus (e.g., number of pharmacy staff trained, number of patients enrolled, inventory level, script count, clinical performance). Some additional suggestions include:

- **Monitor employee engagement and program execution.** When you observe change-related anxiety, demonstrate genuine concern and work with the employee(s) to find a positive solution. For example, if you see employees whose morale is suffering or who seem overextended, consider de-prioritizing some of their other duties or temporarily reassigning them so they can focus more on the important issues that are related to med sync.
- **Measure program impact on business metrics.** Define where you stand on key metrics and what success looks like in terms of direction or attainment. Examples of this might be to share month-over-month comparisons on these key metrics, such as cost-to-dispense, average inventory turns, and clinical performance (e.g., improving adherence scores of all BCBS patients in the 70–80% range).
- **Report program results to team (daily, weekly, monthly).** Create a scorecard for all employees (employee-specific scorecards are the most beneficial) and discuss them at regular meetings. For example, with a med sync program, you could measure how many patients are enrolled in med sync, and as the program continues to gain momentum, you can track how many patients are coached by pharmacists when patients pick up their synced medications.
- **Celebrate success.** Provide a reward in the form of praise, recognition or monetary incentive that allows for team members to share in the success of the initiative with the owner. Set patient enrollment, operational and clinical goals that are tracked and shared over time.

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I think that our success really came from having not only that open conversation with my staff about the 'why' and the 'how' but then continuously staying in touch to ensure we were all on the same page. This is probably one of my proudest accomplishments — being able to motivate our team and to see them really contribute toward that goal.

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JOSH BORER  
Rex Pharmacy

# Managing resistance

“One reason people resist change is because they focus on what they have to give up, instead of what they have to gain.” – RICK GODWIN

## It’s perfectly normal

Let’s face it — most people prefer predictability and stability in both their personal and professional lives. As a result, people tend to avoid situations that upset the order of things, threaten their self-interests, increase stress or involve significant risk. When faced with changes to the status quo, people usually resist at first. However, as a leader you should remember the following:

- Resistance to change is *normal*
- *Accept* that people will have resistance
- People will likely *need time* to transition from resistance to acceptance of the change
- Allow your team to *openly communicate* their concerns about the change or why they are resisting

## Reasons for resistance

In the likely event that you encounter resistance when making a change in your business, it is critical that you identify not only that resistance is occurring, but also the reasons behind resistance. Resistance can occur when employees:

- Have legitimate concerns about the impact of the change on the business
- Do not understand the underlying need for change
- Doubt their ability to succeed in the new future state
- Fear a loss of control or a diminished importance in the business
- Fear job loss as a result of the change
- Are uncomfortable with any type of change no matter the degree

## Addressing resistance

Once you have identified the reason for resistance, as a leader, you must address the issue head-on. When you do, however, you must remember to be empathetic and try to understand your employees’ perspectives. Consider the following examples in addressing instances of resistance.

REASON FOR RESISTANCE

Your staff may have legitimate insights as to why the change may not work.

EXAMPLE: Your lead pharmacy technician points out that one of your other technicians is going on maternity leave and another is a new hire just getting started with the system. Recommend waiting until further onboarding or better staff strength.

Employees do not understand the underlying need for change.

EXAMPLE: A technician is still not quite sure about why it is better to reduce a customer’s visits from five times a month to one.

Employees feel like they are being required to do more with the new change or question what’s in it for them.

EXAMPLE: Your staff pharmacist might feel like it’s one more thing added to his or her plate with no additional pay.

Employees are not sure if they have the necessary skills to succeed in the new future state.

EXAMPLE: An older pharmacist might feel that he or she is not up to date with the new clinical skills needed to run the program.

Employees fear the loss of control or diminished importance.

EXAMPLE: The cashier might feel that part of their value was being able to deal with that difficult patient better than any other staff member, and less contact with that customer might not allow her to showcase those skills.

Fear of job loss.

EXAMPLE: Your staff might hear the “reduction in cost benefit” as justification to lay off workers.

Individuals were comfortable in the status quo or resist anything new.

EXAMPLE: A pharmacist may not want to do anything new in terms of advancing the profession. They reject doing flu shots, POCT, and MTM. You might have to ask if not your idea, what would they do to address the headwinds experienced by the pharmacy.

ADDRESSING RESISTANCE

Fix the issue immediately if you are able to, as it builds credibility with your team and demonstrates the importance of the initiative. If necessary, consider adjusting your med sync implementation plan based on feedback, but make sure you are moving forward.

Reinforce your “case for change” (the “why”) along with your vision statement (the “what”). Remind your staff of the eventual benefits med sync will have not only for the pharmacy, but for them as individuals in their roles as well.

Although it may take some time, these changes are designed to make the business more efficient and their jobs easier. Focus on “what’s in it for me” statements.

Listen to what each of the various roles contributes when developing the “why” or the vision statement for your pharmacy and refer back to those reasons (e.g., pharmacists will be able to spend more time with patients; techs will be able to manage inventory more easily, etc.) during these times of resistance.

Assure employees that they will have the skills needed for the changing roles. Remind them of the training and support plan that you have in place.

Explain how they will use their current skills in the new program and how essential those skills are to its success.

Keeping the doors of communication open and soliciting input, support and help from employees lets them know that their contributions matter. Involve them, elicit their feedback, and let them volunteer for participatory roles in the change, and all of these in turn will help give them a sense of control during periods of change.

Explain where they fit in your success vision for the pharmacy. This change is being made to protect the business, and without it, the risk of job loss is higher given the new pharmacy landscape.

Include some of this person’s suggestions as appropriate and convey the importance of your strategy. They may just not be someone you can move forward with.

Once your staff understands the reasons for change, and sets a goal together as a team, it’s important to address how med sync will impact their individual functions in the pharmacy. Because med sync is a shift to a proactive workflow and a more patient-centric approach, many staff members may feel that their current skills won’t translate into the new mode of business you’re embracing. By demonstrating to them their tasks in traditional pharmacy versus the new med sync model, you’ll give them confidence to understand that they will be able to succeed and already have the skills to do so. Med sync will simply take their current strengths and roles and help them be more efficient, spending more of their time where it counts — with patients.

Change management summary

“We cannot become what we want by remaining what we are.” – MAX DE PREE

After reviewing this guide, we hope you feel empowered and confident to lead your team through change. Your leadership will be the key to your success — just remember, change is a process for everyone involved, and doesn’t always come without obstacles.

Health Mart wants to see you and your team succeed in implementing and maximizing med sync in your pharmacy. We believe it’s a true game changer for your business and your staff. We’re confident independent pharmacies have what it takes to make the change to a proactive med sync workflow that frees up your time and enables you to focus on patients who already know that you put their care and health first. We also know that despite your capabilities, you may run into difficulties or questions along the way — and that’s why we’ve built a team of Health Mart Performance Advisors who can help you problem-solve and share best practices if you ever do get stuck. Contact this team of advisors directly by phone at (855) HLTH-MRT (855.458.4678) or by email at healthmartoperations@mckesson.com.

Want additional training and resources on med sync?

Health Mart’s got you covered! Get in sync with the Health Mart Operations Toolkit for more guides and Health Mart University<sup>SM</sup> for training courses.

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My biggest piece of advice for somebody that hasn’t implemented med sync yet is — what are you waiting for? If you can help just one more person get better, get healthier, this is the right place to start.

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ART AWERKAMP  
County Market Pharmacy





## McKESSON

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