

CASE STUDY

Tufts Medical Center



CHALLENGE

For Tufts Medical Center to deploy a referential and point-of-care drug information solution that provides comprehensive information in a simple-to-use format, improves patient care, and integrates with its formulary.

SOLUTION

Elsevier's Clinical Pharmacology

RESULTS

Tufts can retrieve drug information more quickly to aid with everyday problems, and in emergency situations to help save people's lives. It has reduced costs by between \$50,000 and \$70,000.



The Challenge

“Clinical Pharmacology clearly met our needs better than any competitors. There are many reasons we chose it, but what it came down to is that the drug information is simply easier to find. We also felt that it was more appropriately geared towards the pharmacist than other solutions. And it was the only one with formulary integration, which was extremely important to us.”

Russel Roberts, senior clinical pharmacy specialist with Tufts Medical Center

Tufts Medical Center is a world-class academic medical center located in Boston. It is composed of a full-service hospital for adults and the Floating Hospital for Children. The center is also the principal teaching hospital for the Tufts University School of Medicine.

Tufts was not satisfied with its existing pharmacology solution. It was extremely expensive and difficult for pharmacists to use. Notably, they could not easily find important information they needed, such as drug interactions, in a single location. In addition, the solution didn't integrate with Tufts's formulary system.

“The pharmacology solution was very cumbersome,” remembers Russel Roberts, senior clinical pharmacy specialist with Tufts Medical Center. “There was some good information in it, but searching through it to find the information you needed was extremely challenging. If you were asked a specific, difficult question from a nurse or doctor, you might not easily find an answer because the system was not easy to use. In addition, its cost was excruciatingly painful. We realized that we needed to find something better.”

The Solution

Tufts launched a search for a better system, and quickly found that Elsevier's Clinical Pharmacology was an ideal fit. One key benefit was that Tufts found it much easier to find answers quickly than with the former product.

“Clinical Pharmacology clearly met our needs better than any competitors,” Roberts says. “There are many reasons we chose it, but what it came down to is that the drug information is simply easier to find. We also felt that it was more appropriately geared towards the pharmacist than other solutions. And it was the only one with formulary integration, which was extremely important to us.”

In addition, Clinical Pharmacology costs significantly less than the previous solution, and saved Tufts between \$50,000 and \$70,000.

Clinical Pharmacology is web-based and updated in real time with the latest information from leading authoritative sources. All 50 State Boards of Pharmacy accept it as a professional drug reference. In addition, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) officially recognize it as a drug compendium for use in Medicare coverage decisions regarding the appropriate use of drugs and biologics for patients with cancer.

The Results

Pharmacists, nurses, and other health care professionals use Clinical Pharmacology on a daily basis as an integral part of patient care. They find that it provides all the detailed information they need about drugs in a single location, in a simple-to-use format.

“No other system includes the amount of detailed information you find in Clinical Pharmacology,” Roberts explains. “It includes pH’s, stability and other detailed information that simply isn’t available in other systems.”

Not only does Clinical Pharmacology aid with everyday problems, but Tufts also frequently uses it in emergency situations, and it has helped save people’s lives.

“We get a lot of cases of drug overdoses, and it’s important that we find toxicology information quickly,” Roberts explains. “A pharmacist or nurse can’t know everything about all drugs, and in emergency situations like that, it’s vital that they get information fast. With Clinical Pharmacology they can do a quick search and get whatever they need.”

Clinical Pharmacology can be accessed remotely from home, which Roberts explained, has helped Tufts in emergency situations as well.

“I get called a lot at home about acute-care issues and life-threatening situations. I can simply log in, find the information I need, and provide it to the nurses. That’s something I couldn’t do before.”

Roberts cites Clinical Pharmacology’s ability to create adverse drug reaction reports as particularly useful. And he finds that its clinical comparison feature helps Tufts with formulary management by providing detailed overviews about drugs, including cost comparisons and efficacy.

A key feature for Tufts is Clinical Pharmacology’s integration with FormChecker, Elsevier’s formulary and communication system for hospitals. The seamless, two-way integration between these solutions makes it easy for users to get information from Clinical Pharmacology while using FormChecker and vice versa.

“We use that feature on a daily basis because it’s incorporated right into our formulary,” Roberts says. “What’s also useful is that there’s a drug interactions tab right in the formulary that takes the data directly from Clinical Pharmacology.”

An extra benefit of Clinical Pharmacology at Tufts is that pharmacists now get fewer questions from nurses about drug identification and compatibility because nurses have that information at their fingertips. This frees up pharmacists’ time to dispense prescriptions and perform other high-value tasks.

One of Clinical Pharmacology’s most important benefits is improved patient care. Tufts is just beginning to use it for patient education, by providing handouts about drugs and drug interactions to patients when they leave the hospital.

Roberts expects Tufts will use drug interaction reports that way even more in the future.

Even more vital is that it helps ensure that patients receive precisely the drugs they need, and that the drugs they are prescribed work properly together.

“We use it quite frequently to prevent potentially dangerous drug interactions,” Roberts explains. “There’s a great deal of toxicology information, and that helps us determine proper dosing. Any time a pharmacist uses Clinical Pharmacology, it means he’s trying to find important information, and ultimately, the biggest beneficiary is the patient.”

Tufts Medical Center

“Elsevier provides great support whenever we need it. For example, when our Internet access went down, they provided an alternative way for us to access Clinical Pharmacology. That was a tremendous help.”

Russel Roberts, senior clinical pharmacy specialist with Tufts Medical Center

Tufts Medical Center is a world-class academic medical center located in downtown Boston, home to both a full-service hospital for adults and Floating Hospital for Children. The Medical Center is the principal teaching hospital for Tufts University School of Medicine. It offers outstanding patient care to both adults and children, teaches generations of future physicians the most advanced medical science, and breaks new ground with ongoing, innovative research.

Clinical Pharmacology

Trusted by more than 2,000 hospitals, Clinical Pharmacology is accepted as a professional drug reference by all 50 State Boards of Pharmacy. Clinical Pharmacology is a web-based application that provides the most current information through real time updates. It is also officially recognized as a drug compendium for use in Medicare coverage decisions regarding the appropriate use of drugs and biologics for patients with cancer by the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Clinical Pharmacology has been named by independent research studies as the most complete and dependable drug reference solution on the market today. For health care professionals, that means it provides the most comprehensive, current drug information through the industry’s cleanest, easiest-to-use interface.

For more information, please:

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