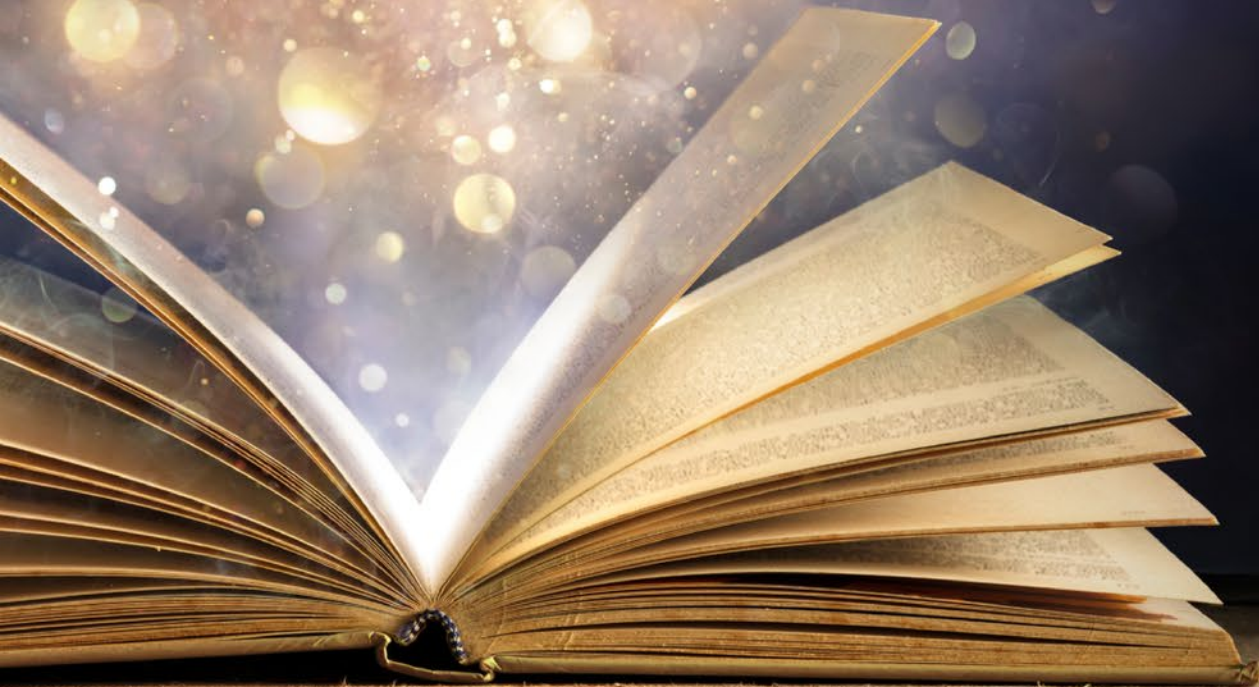


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How a Robust Outpatient Pharmacy Service Turns a Desert into a Dessert

Bree Meinzer, PharmD, BCACP, CACP, Pharmacy Manager, Managed Care

Holly Smith, RPh, MBA, CPEL, 340B ACE, Chief Pharmacy Officer

UToledo Health, Toledo, Ohio

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Learning Objectives



- Identify disruptions and opportunities for patient care due to pharmacy deserts.
- Describe sustainable pharmacy strategies for providing care to patients in pharmacy deserts.



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UToledo Health, Toledo, Ohio

Rite Aid closing all Ohio stores, employees say



JAMES TRUMM ✓
The Blade
jtrumm@theblade.com ✕

JUN 24, 2024 4:57 PM

The Toledo Blade. June 2024.

Pharmacy Deserts



Pharmacy Trends

Analysis of openings, closings, and average pharmacies between 2012-2024 and the pharmacy type openings/closings variance of these pharmacies.

County

LUCAS

Tract Social Vulnerability Index*

All

Pharmacy Type

(All)

Group Dates By

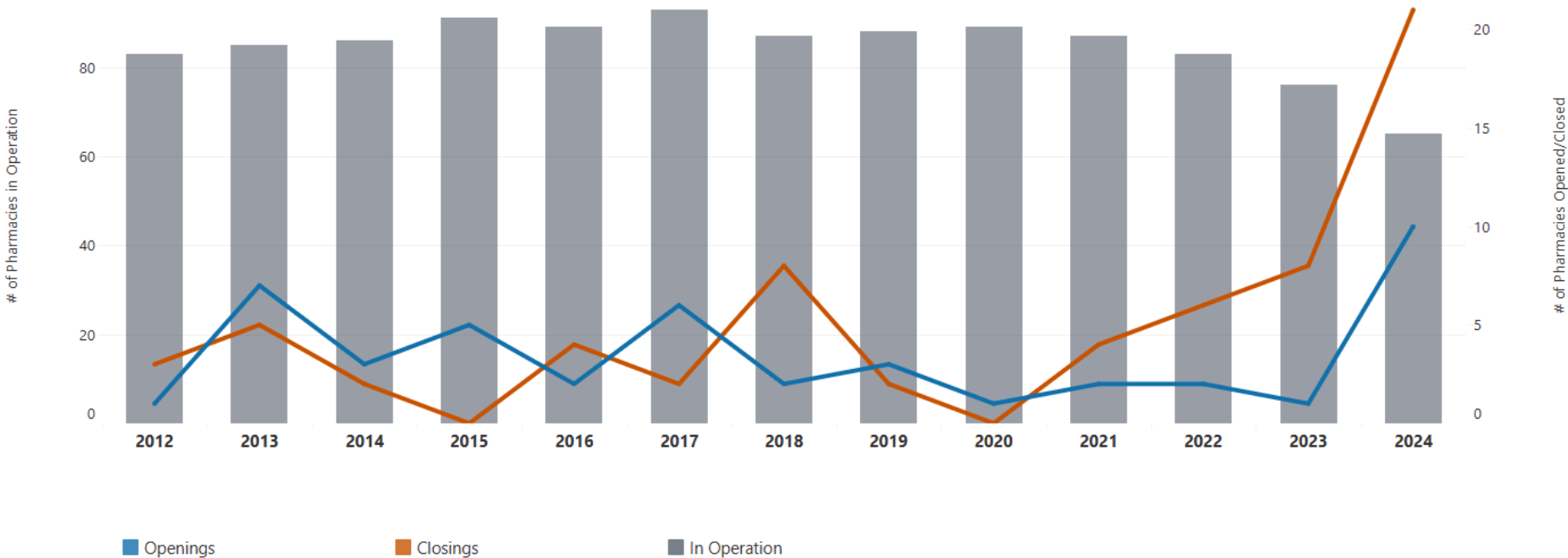
Year

Openings, Closings and Pharmacies in Operation*** by Year

Year

2012

2024



State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy. Ohio Pharmacy Access Dashboard. DataOhio. Accessed July 31, 2025.

Pharmacy Deserts



Outpatient Pharmacy Minimum Standards Rules

Effective 5/1/2024, the following rules on outpatient pharmacy minimum standards go into effect. These rules are the result of the work of the Ohio Pharmacist Workload Advisory Committee and feedback provided by pharmacy professionals through various surveys. For more information on the Pharmacist Workload Advisory Committee, please visit: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/PWAC.

- **4729:5-5-02:** Minimum Standards for the Operation of an Outpatient Pharmacy.
- **4729:5-5-02.1:** Provision of Ancillary Services in an Outpatient Pharmacy.
- **4729:5-5-02.2:** Mandatory Rest Breaks for Pharmacy Personnel.
- **4729:5-5-02.3:** Requests for Additional Staff and Reports of Staffing Concerns in an Outpatient Pharmacy.
- **4729:5-5-02.4:** Significant Delays in the Provision of Pharmacy Services.
- **4729:5-5-02.5:** Outpatient Pharmacy Access Points.

State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy. Outpatient Pharmacy Minimum Standards Rules. 2024.

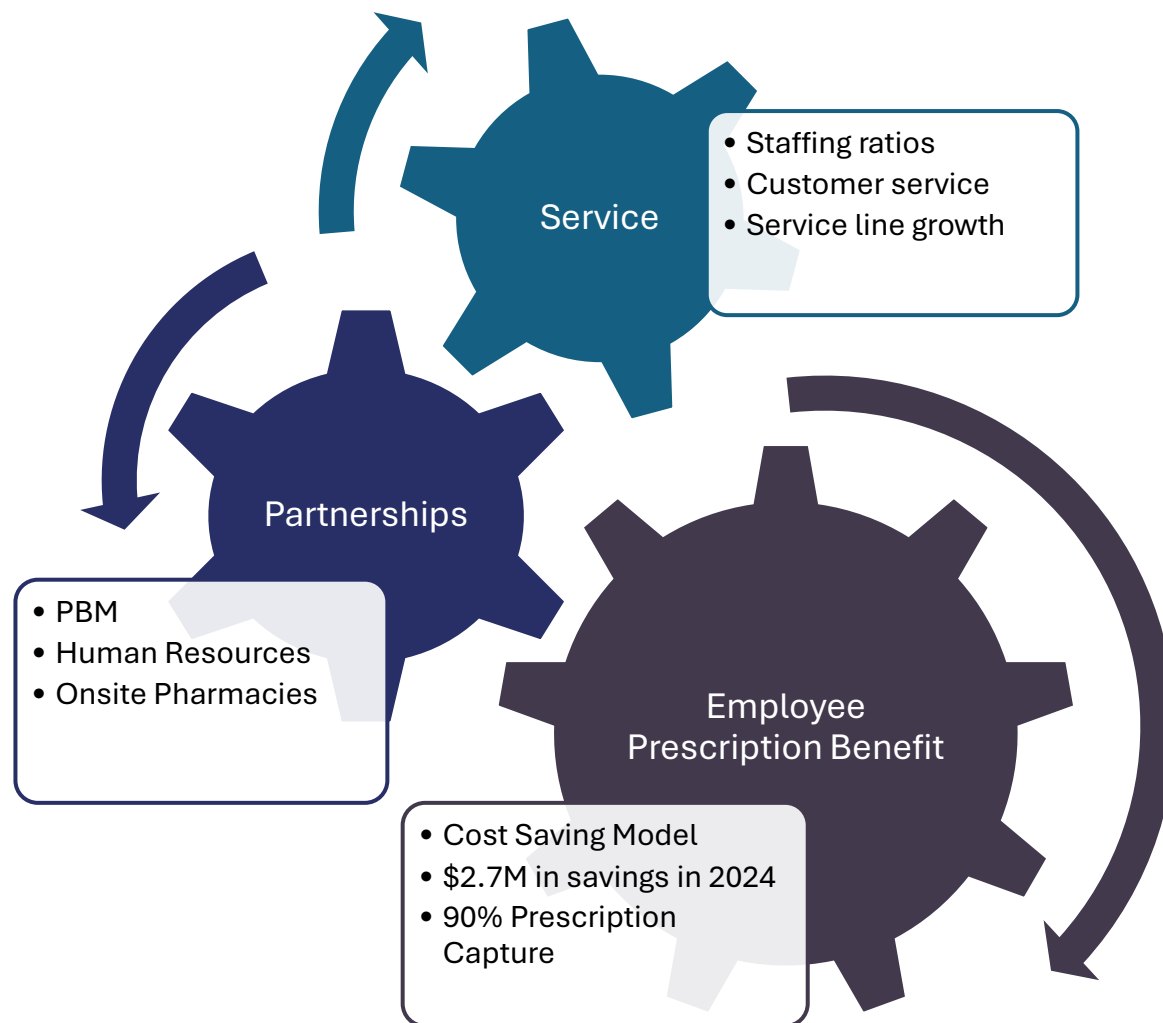
UToledo Health Outpatient Pharmacy Enterprise 2023-2024

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- Four Outpatient Pharmacies
 - 2 Traditional Retail/ Community
 - 1 Specialty Hybrid
 - 1 Ryan White Pharmacy
- Embedded Clinical Pharmacists
 - General Internal Medicine
 - Transplant
 - Anticoagulation



UToledo Health Outpatient Pharmacy Enterprise 2023-2024



How UToledo Health Responded



Stabilized

- Increased growth in volume
- Filled open positions

Steady Growth

- Leaned into new marketing campaign
- Identified additional marketing opportunities

Strategic Initiatives

- Partnership with provider clinics
- Leverage embedded pharmacists

Marketing Campaign

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**THE POWER
UTOLEDO**



Community Marketing

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THE POSSIBILITIES



Community Marketing/ Engagement

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THE POSSIBILITIES



UT
UTOLEDO
HEALTH

NEED TO SWITCH PHARMACIES?

Make the **MOVE** to **UTMC Pharmacies** today!

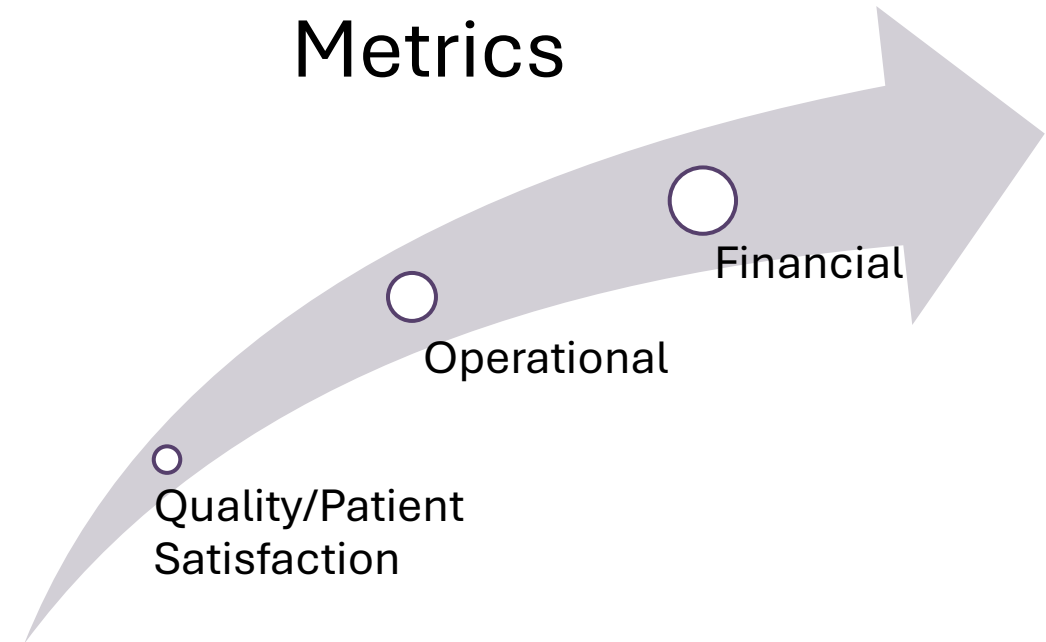
How to Switch:

1. **Contact Us:** Call your preferred pharmacy to start the transfer process
2. **Provide your Details:** Share your current prescription information with us
3. **Relax:** We take care of the rest to ensure a smooth transition

Embedded Pharmacist Expansion



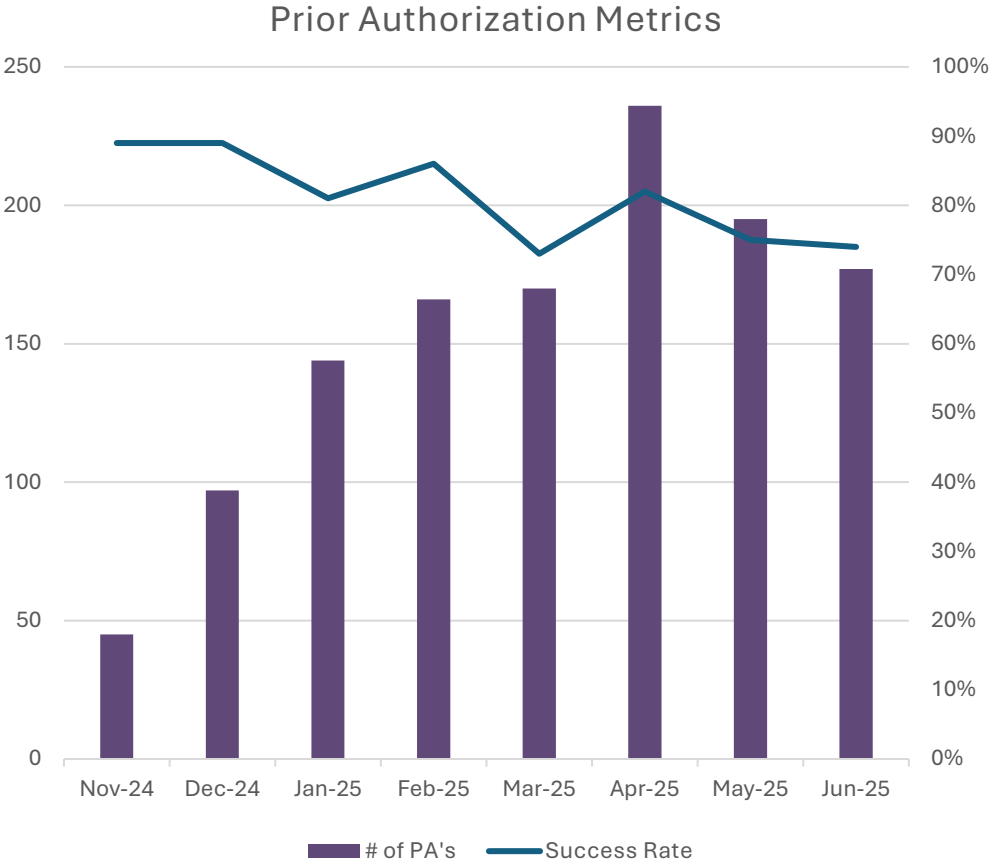
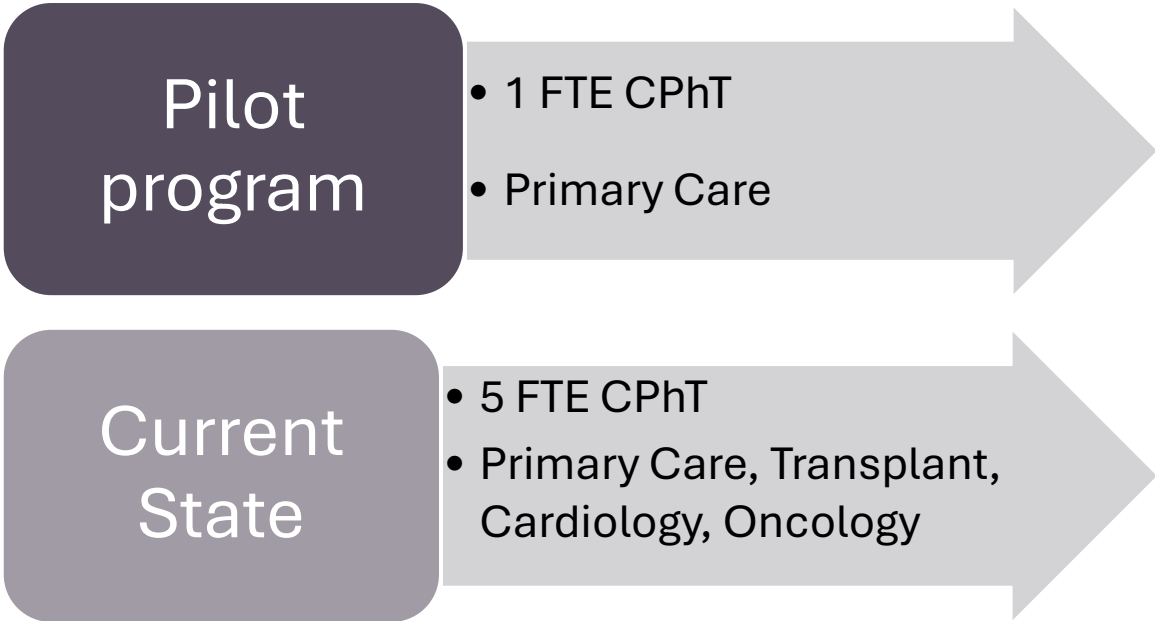
- Realignment of all outpatient pharmacists in clinics
- Expansion into other service lines



Centralized Prior Authorization Service



Goal: Enhancing the patient experience through medication coordination and access



Source: Data provided is from UToledo Health’s internal database.

Impact



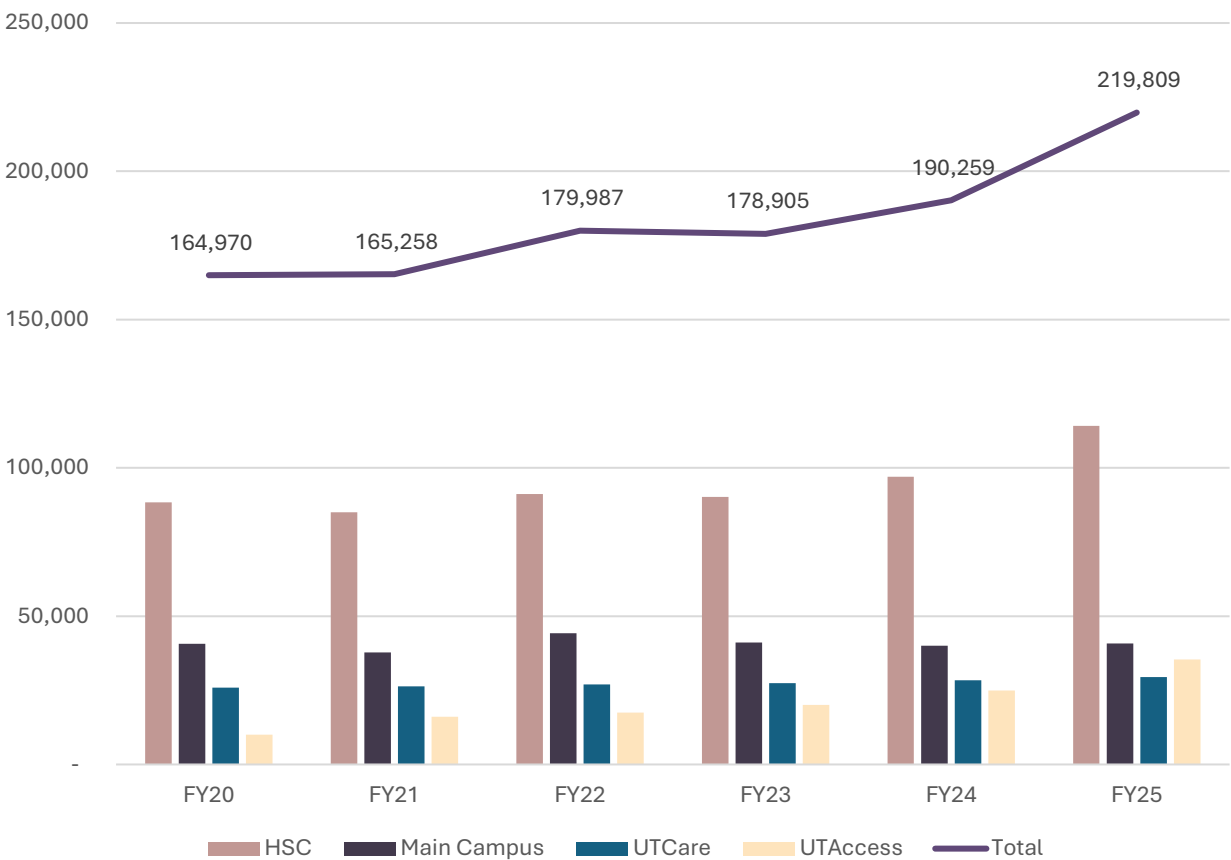
Specialty Pharmacy Performance Metrics

PA Turnaround Time ~17 hours

Patient Assistance ~12M Annually

Revenue +16% year over year

Total Outpatient Pharmacy Prescriptions Dispensed



Source: Data provided is from UToledo Health’s internal database.

Future Directions



Lessons Learned



- Retail pharmacy disruptions create access barriers.
- Health-system owned pharmacies are well-positioned to fill critical gaps.
- Strategic marketing and outreach amplify impact.
- Embedded pharmacy staff enhance patient outcomes, satisfaction, and utilization.

Key Takeaways



- Actively engage with the community to build stronger connections and drive meaningful impact.
- Clearly define your competitive edge.
- Say 'yes' to supporting patients and providers by addressing key pain points in the medication access process.

Questions?



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Holly Smith, Holly.Smith3@utoledo.edu

References



- State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy. *Outpatient Pharmacy Minimum Standards Rules* (Rules 4729:5-5-02 through 5-02.5. Columbus, OH: Ohio Board of Pharmacy; 2024.
<https://pharmacy.ohio.gov/documents/pubs/messages/2024-03-27%20outpatient%20pharmacy%20minimum%20standards%20rules.pdf>. Accessed July 31, 2025.
- State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy. Ohio Pharmacy Access Dashboard [Internet]. *DataOhio*. Columbus, OH: Ohio Board of Pharmacy; accessed August 4, 2025. Available from: Ohio Board of Pharmacy, *Ohio Pharmacy Access* dashboard.
<https://data.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/data/view/ohio-pharmacy-assessment-?visualize=true>. Accessed July 31, 2025.