

NEW PHARMACY

OFFERS a DOSE OF SAFETY



Desmond Waters, R.Ph, MBA
Pharmacy Director

Waves of opportunity for a bigger, better Pharmacy rose when Mercy's former basement-level Pharmacy was flooded in the Flood of 2008.

Mercy Pharmacy Director Desmond Waters (yes, his last name is really Waters) rose to the occasion and turned adversity into opportunity. Today, the Pharmacy is a state-of-the-art, fully automated, robotic department, located on the first floor.

"Providing the best possible care resulting in the best possible outcomes is our No. 1 priority," says Desmond. "With the implementation of our new pharmacy automation systems, our goal is to provide exceptional care and enhance quality, and provide excellent services and customer satisfaction for our patients."

The Pharmacy features a new robotic prescription system, which automatically dispenses the ordered medication into the patient-specific bar-coded envelope, upon request by the pharmacist. Other new technology includes a drug storage unit, high-speed unit dose tablet packager, a unit dose liquid packaging system

and narcotic dispensing machine, with built-in security features and error reduction software.

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*Desmond Waters
Mercy Pharmacy Director*

"Mercy aspires to be a center of excellence, and that includes the Pharmacy," says Desmond. "Our brand new automated technology increases patient medication safety, improves quality, is cost-effective and allows processes to run smoothly and efficiently. The automation also helps us transition to electronic patient record keeping."

The Pharmacy's technology dovetails with the hospital's new Bedside Management Verification (BMV) and electronic Medication Administration Record (eMAR) (for more information on BMV/eMAR, see page 10).

At the bedside, a nurse uses a hand-held scanner to verify the bar-coded medication package against the bar-code printed on the patient identification bracelet. In a matter of seconds, the data is processed to confirm the



The Pharmacy robot inserts medications into bar-coded plastic bags for each patient. Pictured Amy Cobb, Pharmacy Operations Manager and Susan VanGorden R.Ph., Pharmacy Informatics and Automation Manager.

patient's identity, as well as the right medication, dosage, route and time by validating against the patient's eMAR.

The FDA reports medication errors cause at least one death every day. In July 2006, the Institute of Medicine revealed medication errors hurt more than 1.5 million people nationwide who receive care in hospitals, nursing homes and physician offices each year. The report cites information technology as a key factor to preventing these errors.

While 23 percent of U.S. hospitals have adopted bar-code technology to ensure safety during medication administration, the AHA

reported in 2005 that only half have fully implemented the technology.

This highly efficient process means less manual labor is needed in the Pharmacy, which allows pharmacists to become more patient-focused. Pharmacists will be available resources for medical providers and take part in the clinical interaction on the hospital floors.

"This exciting medication safety project is energizing the entire hospital and our community, and we are so glad to be part of it," says Desmond.

