



Long Term Care Pharmacy Alliance

### Long-Term Care Pharmacies vs. Retail Pharmacies

Long term care pharmacies that serve people who live in nursing facilities and assisted living facilities are vastly different from traditional retail pharmacies where most people obtain their prescription medications. Nursing facility residents have specialized medication needs that can change frequently, and because of their complex clinical conditions, such as poor absorption and multiple diagnoses, they frequently take multiple medications and require access to specially trained geriatric pharmacists.

Furthermore, the nursing facility resident's needs are far more complex and demanding, sometimes requiring multiple deliveries of medications per day, including emergency orders during non-traditional business hours. Long-term care pharmacies must also support the regulatory environment in these healthcare facilities with appropriate packaging that promotes accurate medication administration and resident safety. As a result, pharmacies that serve this population must be designed to meet these unique needs, as illustrated below:

<b>RETAIL PHARMACY</b>	<b>LONG-TERM CARE PHARMACY</b>
Limited hours of operation	24-hour, 7 day-a-week, 365-day-a-year emergency service required to meet residents' round-the-clock needs
Medicines dispensed to walk-in patients at the pharmacy counter	Medicines must be delivered to nursing facilities
Medicines packaged in traditional bottles and vials	Special packaging needed to aid nursing staff in safely administering medications and tracking controlled substance medicines, such as morphine
No need for an emergency drug supply	Small emergency supply of medicines for last-minute immediate needs must be maintained, checked and periodically replaced
Limited patient services	Extensive pharmacy services provided, such as frequent safety reviews (to determine if a medication should change) because residents' conditions change more often
No service for indigent patients	All residents of a nursing facility must be served, including low-income residents, regardless of their ability to pay