



EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

Lead from the Center

Building an Enterprise Medication
Management Operating Model

Executive Summary

Healthcare is entering a new phase of enterprise transformation. As health systems expand across hospitals, outpatient facilities, and new models of care, the complexity of delivering safe, efficient, and consistent medication management continues to grow. We believe what health systems once managed successfully at the facility level must now be governed at enterprise scale.

For many organizations, medication management has evolved through a series of local improvements. Often individual hospitals have implemented technologies, refined workflows, and adopted operational practices suited to their own clinicians and patients.

While these investments often deliver significant local clinical and operational benefits, executive teams should also consider how independently implemented technologies, workflows, and operating practices may affect enterprise consistency as health systems continue to grow.

We find the executive challenge today is no longer improving medication management within individual facilities. It is building an operating model capable of delivering consistent clinical, operational, and financial performance across an entire health system.

That requires a fundamental shift in thinking.

Medication management should no longer be viewed as a collection of cabinets, software applications, and departmental workflows. It should be managed as a strategic capability that connects governance, operations, technology, and clinical practice through a common operating model.

We believe organizations that make this transition will be better positioned to standardize operations, improve workforce productivity, accelerate modernization, and build a more resilient enterprise capable of supporting future growth.

Healthcare Has Become an Enterprise Business

Healthcare has become more operationally complex. Large health systems are expected to improve quality while reducing cost, address persistent workforce shortages, integrate newly acquired facilities, expand outpatient services, and continually modernize technology while maintaining safe, uninterrupted patient care.

Frequently these pressures are reshaping how executive leaders think about transformation.

As organizations grow, every additional facility has the potential to introduce new processes, new technologies, and new operational variation. What once represented local flexibility gradually becomes enterprise complexity. Variation increases, governance becomes more difficult, technology portfolios fragment, clinical practices diverge, and operational visibility narrows. Over time, leadership may spend more effort managing inconsistency rather than driving improvement.

For enterprise health systems, operational excellence can no longer depend on disparate (or numerous) local decisions. We find it depends increasingly on a common operating model capable of creating consistency without sacrificing clinical quality.

When evaluating enterprise medication management, organizations should consider how governance, workflows, technology, and operational processes work together.

Few operational disciplines influence so many aspects of daily healthcare delivery. As such, we have seen that medication management has evolved beyond a pharmacy responsibility into an enterprise leadership priority.

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Why Local Optimization Seems to Have Reached Its Limits

Most health systems did not intentionally create fragmented medication management environments. Technology was deployed to solve immediate operational challenges. Individual facilities introduced new workflows and departments implemented improvements based on local priorities. Clinical teams optimized processes to meet immediate needs; each decision made sense independently. However, collectively, they often created increasingly complex operating environments.

As organizations scale, this complexity has the potential to generate hidden costs. Policies may become difficult to maintain consistently. Workflow variation can increase across facilities. Technology upgrades frequently require extensive coordination. Operational data typically becomes distributed across multiple systems. Enterprise leaders may struggle to establish common standards while preserving local operational performance. None of these issues reflect technology failures; they are governance challenges.

The question is no longer whether individual technologies perform well within individual hospitals. It is whether the organization can govern medication management consistently across every facility while continuing to modernize, innovate, and grow.

This distinction matters.

We see healthcare executives are no longer looking at this as just a technology purchase, but asking which operating model will best support the enterprise over the next decades.

From Technology Decisions to Operating Model Decisions

In our experience, enterprise transformation programs are often most successful when technology investments are supported by common governance, standardized operating practices, and coordinated workflows.

We view medication management as following this same path. Enterprise leaders increasingly require the ability to establish common governance, standardize clinical and operational practices, coordinate workflows across facilities, and continuously improve performance without creating unnecessary disruption.

Technology remains essential, but technology alone cannot deliver enterprise consistency. It must operate within a broader governance framework that connects people, processes, policies, and operational standards across the organization.

This is where we see medication management begins to resemble other enterprise operating disciplines, such as finance, supply chain, and human resources. Each operates according to enterprise standards while supporting local execution.

We believe that organizations that recognize the importance of this shift in medication management will be better positioned to reduce variation, simplify modernization, and build a stronger foundation for long-term operational performance.

Five Capabilities of an Enterprise Medication Management Operating Model

Building an enterprise operating model requires more than deploying new technology. It requires capabilities that allow executive leaders to govern medication management consistently across the organization.

1

Enterprise Governance

Clinical, operational, and technology standards should be established centrally while preserving appropriate flexibility for local care delivery. Governance is intended to create consistency, accountability, and strategic alignment across the enterprise.

2

Enterprise Visibility

Leaders require a complete view of medication operations across hospitals, departments, and care settings. Enterprise visibility enables informed decision-making, proactive management, and continuous operational improvement.

3

Enterprise Orchestration

Medication workflows should function as connected processes rather than isolated activities. Coordinated orchestration reduces operational friction, improves communication, and creates greater consistency throughout the medication-use process.

4

Standardization at Scale

As organizations expand, common policies, workflows, and operating standards become essential for maintaining quality, improving efficiency, and supporting enterprise resilience.

5

Centralized Administration

Modern enterprise platforms should enable organizations to manage policies, upgrades, configurations, and operational standards from a central point of control — meant to reduce administrative burden while accelerating innovation across every facility.

Together, these capabilities have the potential to transform medication management from a collection of operational activities into a coordinated enterprise capability.



Enabling Enterprise Performance

We think governance is the foundation on which enterprise performance is built.

When organizations reduce unnecessary variation, establish common operating standards, and improve enterprise coordination, they create the conditions for broader operational improvement. Clinical teams can spend less time navigating inconsistent workflows. Operational leaders can gain greater visibility into enterprise performance. Technology teams can simplify deployment and ongoing administration. Executives should gain greater confidence that strategic initiatives can be implemented consistently across the organization.

Most importantly, clinicians can spend more time delivering care and less time managing operational complexity.

This is why we see medication management is increasingly becoming an executive conversation rather than a departmental one. Its potential value extends beyond pharmacy, enabling workforce productivity, operational resilience, enterprise standardization, and long-term organizational performance.

Looking Ahead

We expect healthcare transformation will continue to accelerate. Enterprise growth, workforce pressures, financial constraints, and continuous modernization will require operating models capable of adapting without adding organizational complexity.

We believe that the organizations that succeed will establish true governance models that enable technology, people, and processes to operate as a unified and coordinated enterprise.

For medication management, this represents an important shift. We anticipate that the future will not be defined by individual devices or isolated software applications. Rather, we think it will be defined by the ability to govern medication management as a strategic enterprise capability: Connecting clinical excellence, operational performance, and long-term transformation through a common operating model.

Platforms built around enterprise governance, orchestration, and centralized administration are designed to make this transition possible, enabling health systems to standardize operations, modernize with confidence, and build a foundation for continuous improvement.

Ultimately, we see the question facing executive leaders is whether their medication management operating model is prepared to evolve with it.

Executive Discussion

As healthcare organizations continue to pursue enterprise transformation, executive teams should consider three strategic questions:

- How consistently is medication management governed across the enterprise today?
- Where does operational variation create unnecessary complexity, cost, or risk?
- What operating model will best support long-term modernization, standardization, and enterprise growth?

Contact your Omnicell representative to discuss how you can create an enterprise medication management operating model for your organization.

About Omnicell

Omnicell helps health systems to create more connected medication management environments through enterprise visibility, interoperable cloud technology, standardized workflows, and operational intelligence.