

ARTICLE

5 Key Considerations For Choosing a Pharmacy Automation Partner

In 2024, Cone Health undertook a comprehensive evaluation of its pharmacy automation systems as part of a broader strategic initiative¹. With a focus on building best-in-class, collaborative partnerships, the health system assessed its existing vendor and competitive alternatives across a range of technologies used in acute care pharmacy including automated dispensing cabinets (ADCs), medication carousels, drug diversion monitoring software, and central pharmacy inventory management hardware and software..

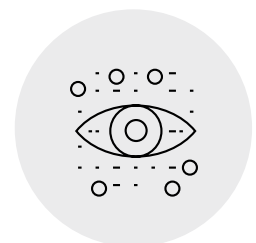
Given the vital role these systems play in streamlining medication management, we find selecting a vendor partner that best meets the strategic needs of your health system is crucial. The following are key areas Cone Health considered in making a decision on a pharmacy automation partner:

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Strategic Alignment & Vision

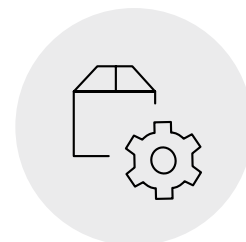
We believe strategic alignment is foundational to the long-term success of a pharmacy automation initiative. A vendor's mission, values, and innovation roadmap should complement your health system's strategic goals. This should ensure the relationship can evolve alongside your organization's growth, changing patient needs, and technology advancements.

Cone Health stressed its prioritization of this alignment during its evaluation, seeking a partner that could support its system-wide strategic plan focused on improving integration and collaboration both within the pharmacy department and throughout the continuum of care. According to Cone Health, Omnicell's ability to meet the needs of diverse care settings – from acute care to outpatient services – provided a strong foundation for initial project execution as well as ongoing evolution and enhancement.



Inventory Management & System Integration

We find that effective inventory management is essential for reducing medication waste, enhancing patient safety, and supporting regulatory compliance. Cone Health noted that it wanted to improve its pharmaceutical inventory visibility throughout its enterprise and access real-time inventory analytics that could help the health system proactively optimize medication availability. Cone Health also indicated it desired seamless integration with its Epic Electronic Health Record (EHR) system to automatically adjust inventories whenever a medication was ordered and administered from the EHR.

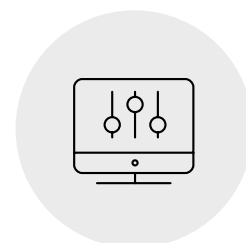


Omnicell offers robust inventory analytics and integration with EHRs that is designed to support real-time tracking and streamlined nurse workflows. For example, integration between Omnicell XT ADCs and Epic and Cerner EHR systems is intended to enable the following capabilities:

- Remote medication queuing that allows nurses to preselect medications, view availability, and document waste directly from the EHR.
- Automated controlled substance reconciliation that compares medications dispensed and/or wasted from the ADC versus those documented as administered in the EHR.

Customization & Functionality

We think that pharmacy automation solutions should be flexible enough to support specialized workflows across the health system. Cone Health said it wanted the ability to tailor its solution to meet the unique needs of different care areas in an effort to maximize impact and ensure smooth adoption across the organization.



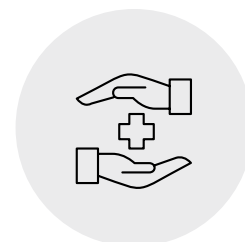
While other vendors had more rigid hardware and software serviceability, Cone Health noted the flexibility of Omnicell solutions. From the health system's perspective, Omnicell's hardware and software is designed to support diverse clinical environments and the company demonstrates a willingness to work with customers to further customize solutions to meet the specific needs of the entire enterprise, down to the departmental level. In addition, Omnicell also presented a flexible contracting process, that was meant to offer scalable pricing and adaptable terms to support both immediate implementation and future expansion.

4

Service & Support

We view reliable service and responsive post-implementation support as essential for sustaining the success of pharmacy automation over time. We find that the vendor you choose must be ready to adapt to evolving needs, work to resolve issues quickly, and seek to continuously optimize system performance. Finally, we believe issue resolution speed, staff training opportunities, and strategies for ongoing system enhancement are all important areas to consider.

Any vendor can claim to deliver in these areas, and Cone Health put Omnicell to the test, visiting with reference sites to evaluate Omnicell's real-world performance when it comes to support. These visits allowed Cone Health to better understand Omnicell's support structure and they said it gave them confidence that the vendor's service claims were credible.

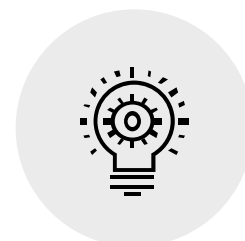


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Innovation & Scalability

As health systems grow and evolve, so must their technology partners. We believe a vendor should offer scalable solutions that are not only designed to meet current needs but also anticipate future demands. In their vendor evaluation, Cone Health prioritized scalability and innovation, emphasizing it sought a partner that could grow alongside its organization.

Omnicell has a strong 30-year history of innovation in the area of pharmacy automation and a detailed roadmap for potential future investment and expansion, which aligned with Cone Health's objectives in this area.



1. Outcomes presented represent solely the experiences of Cone Health. Individual results may vary.

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