PSYCHIATRIC PHARMACISTS:

IMPACT THROUGH OPIOID AND PSYCHOTROPIC STEWARDSHIP

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Interventions

Pharmacist review of 2219 patient charts led to **1782** interventions including:

- **269** Discontinued opioid medications
- **481** Adjustments of opioid medication for safety
- **468** Initiations of psychotropic medication lab monitoring or new starts
- **359** Reviews of home medication for adverse drug-drug interactions
- **564** Changes in medications approved by physicians representing an 88% acceptance rate of pharmacy recommendations

Medication Stewardship

- Minimizes risks through consistent review of prescription drug monitoring program
- De-escalates opioids and aids in transition to oral medication delivery
- Avoids duplicate therapy and drug-drug interactions
- Ensures appropriate use of antipsychotics
- Flags high fall risk patients for action through review of polypharmacy
- Allows for coordination of transitions of care with outside facilities for patients on medications such as methadone, buprenorphine, long-acting injectable medications, and clozapine.

Data from Jan 2023 to July 2025



Dr. Holcomb

Optimizing Medication Therapy

Dr. Holcomb, PharmD, BCPS, BCPP works as a Clinical Pharmacy Specialist at Kingman Regional Medical Center in Arizona, a 235-bed hospital offering a wide range of services to the community. She supports care in behavioral health, pain management, and internal medicine.

Working in a region heavily impacted by the opioid crisis with high rates of mental health conditions, stewardship has become an area of passion and a central theme to her contributions to patient care. Stewardship programs ensure medications are used safely and effectively to support the overall well-being of patients.

By creating and leading initiatives in psychotropic and opioid stewardship, Dr. Holcomb plays a pivotal role in optimizing medication therapy for high-risk and clinically complex patients who are medically ill and have co-occurring mental health and chronic pain conditions. Through these programs, she is able to proactively identify potential problems before they become adverse events. She reviews real-time patient data each day to identify those at highest risk, addresses actionable issues, and works to implement safeguards that prevent the same medication related problem from reoccurring.

As the opioid and psychotropic stewardship pharmacist, she conducts daily patient reviews and recommends medication changes guided by key clinical questions:

- Is the benefit obvious today?
- Are we adding any unintentional overdose risk?
- Does the regimen make sense–and is it safe?

Within the antipsychotic stewardship program, Dr. Holcomb is proactively reviewing medications used for the treatment of mental illnesses in order to prevent unintended outcomes. In her inpatient setting, safety is key. Danger for medical impacts, falls, and over-sedation become a focus as does reducing unnecessary medications and simplifying complex medication regimens.

STEWARDSHIP = TRANSFORMATION

"The Opioid Stewardship program elevated the quality of care we deliver. Dr. Holcomb not only improved clinical outcomes but also strengthened the collaboration of our multidisciplinary team. Dr. Holcomb plays a vital role in clinical practice transformation. Our partnership reinforced the importance of ongoing education, open communication, and a shared vision for better patient care."

– Sarah Schritter, RN BSN
Assistant Chief Nursing Officer
Kingman Regional Medical Center

"Dr. Holcomb has been an asset in the management of psychotropic medication regimens of patients during hospitalizations for medical care. In a team effort, her services and collaboration increase the safety and reduce risks for patients."

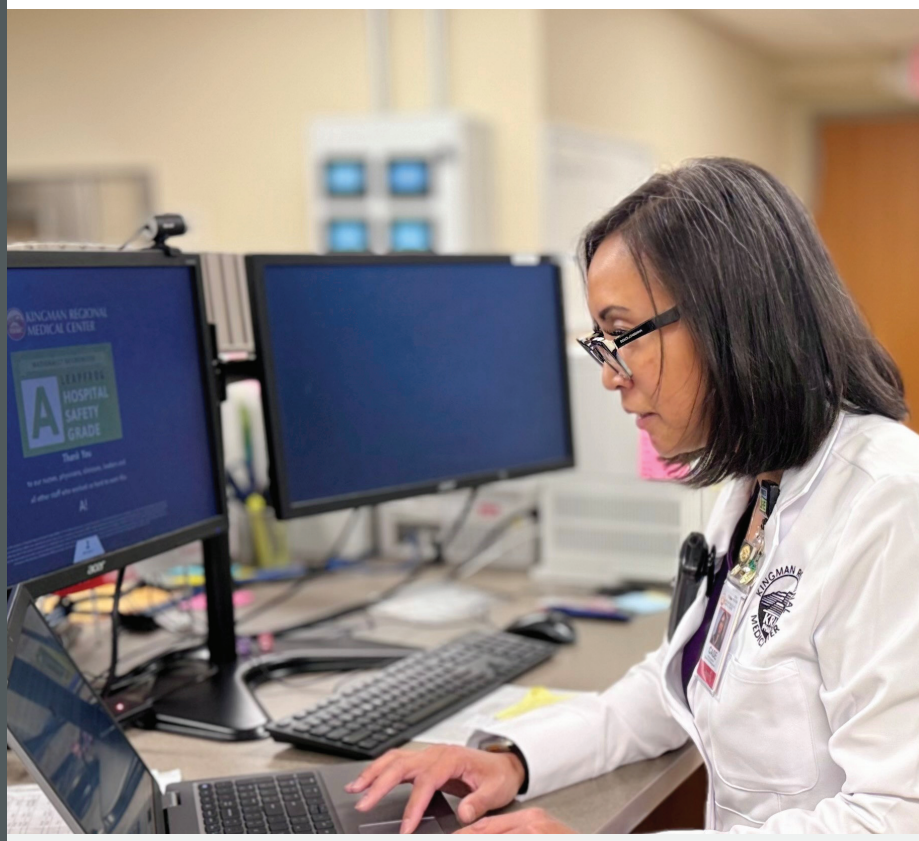
– Dr. Narcedallia Zegarra, MD
Psychiatry & Behavioral Health Integration
Kingman Regional Medical Center

"Kingman and Mohave County have been at the epicenter of the opioid crisis in the State of Arizona and Dr. Holcomb has been at the forefront of change with the development of the Opioid Stewardship Committee. Her institutional knowledge and leadership are the driving force for the hospital and with the inclusion of outside organizations, it allows us to bring a wholistic approach to health needs for the community."

– Robert DeVries
Kingman Health Incorporated Board Member
Mohave Substance Abuse Treatment (MSTEPP) Program & Education Director

Bringing a Wholistic Approach

Dr. Holcomb works at the intersection of mental health, pain, and addiction. Within the hospital, she contributes to patient care while minimizing safety risks. She coordinates with community partners to ensure patients stay connected to care by coordinating access to medications like methadone, buprenorphine, long-acting injectables, and clozapine. Additionally, the work she does coordinating harm-reduction programs makes an impact in her community. By leading through collaboration and stewardship, Dr. Holcomb ensures patients are better able to receive the care they deserve.



American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists

aapp

Improving minds. Improving lives.

This information brought to you by the American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP), a professional association representing psychiatric pharmacists nationwide. Our members integrate into teams of health care professionals, making a difference in overall costs, treatment efficiencies, patient recovery and quality of life.

Learn more at aapp.org/psychpharm.