

CASE STUDY: NEW YORK HEALTH SYSTEM

AI-aided drug diversion prevention solution supports patient safety and care quality

Challenge

- Needed an automated solution to help prevent drug diversion
- Required strong reporting capabilities for compliance and investigations
- Lacked a practical means of instilling best practices and procedures

Results

- Behavioral analytics and AI modeling to support drug diversion detection and remediation, leading to a significant reduction in unresolved discrepancies
- Reduced unresolved monthly discrepancies to below 5%
- A “best-in-class” dashboard to assist compliance and investigation needs
- Ongoing opportunities to engage and educate frontline staff



Organization Snapshot: New York Health System

Location
New York

Industry
Healthcare

Beds
600

“With Imprivata Drug Diversion Intelligence in place, I’d put our drug diversion program up against any other in the country.”

– Health System Director of Pharmacy

Drug diversion – the act of illegally obtaining or using prescription drugs intended for patients – takes place some 37,000 times per year, according to the Porter Research 2021 study. It happens in healthcare organizations of all shapes and sizes, and at all levels of clinical and other staff. The real-world impact of this growing problem carries far-ranging ripple effects. In addition to patient safety, care quality, and trust, drug diversion takes a damaging toll on security, compliance, privacy, and the organization’s reputation. At a New York health system, the pharmacy team faced the challenge of drug diversion head on. Here’s a look at how the team implemented a solution purpose-built for their needs – including adhering to best practices.

The challenge

When the director of pharmacy joined the health system, she immediately zeroed in on finding a better way to tackle drug diversion. She knew they needed to advance past their spotty manual approach, and she understood that meant finding a comprehensive automated solution that delivered greater visibility through monitoring and detection capabilities driven by behavioral analytics. “We were well aware that the draw to drug diversion is pretty high, whether it be by an employee, a patient, or a family member,” she noted. “And in the case of an employee, we know we can make a real impact if we have the ability to detect it early and connect them with the right help, especially given the care and behavioral services we have on our own campus.”

The solution

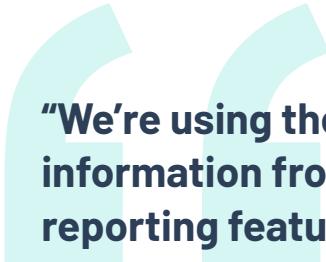
A vendor evaluation team including the director and associates from compliance, IT, and clinical staff led the search for a new solution. Following an aggressive timetable, they completed the selection process in six months. It started with a deep-dive self-assessment to identify weaknesses and needs, followed by RFPs, demos, customer references, and a scoring matrix. “We wanted to move quickly, but at the same time we wanted to ensure we took a comprehensive, non-biased approach,” she emphasized.

Based on their criteria, the search led the evaluation team to choose Imprivata Drug Diversion Intelligence, a comprehensive solution that manages the full lifecycle of a drug diversion program. With that decision made, it was time to roll up their sleeves. An Imprivata drug diversion analyst supporting the implementation worked closely with the director and her associates to keep the go-live schedule on track, facilitate change management initiatives, and resolve any details that needed fine-tuning. As she noted, “Our analyst really helped us stay accountable. She was also very responsive to our needs, and importantly, very open to our feedback.”

IMPRIVATA DRUG DIVERSION INTELLIGENCE

- Helps healthcare organizations detect and remediate drug diversion via behavioral analytics and artificial intelligence modeling from data including EHR and HR records
- Provides complete visibility into user access and medication misuse
- Enables the identification of discrepancies in high-risk scenarios, anomalous behaviors, and system access issues

"Imprivata Drug Diversion Intelligence has helped us meet and exceed our expectations when it comes to monitoring and detection," she added. "It gave us powerful technology we can easily integrate with our current systems, providing us with a 'one-stop' solution. The bottom line is that it's helping us ensure that patients are getting the medications they need, and that's a fundamental part of our mission to deliver the best possible care every day. With Imprivata Drug Diversion Intelligence in place, I'd put our program up against any other in the country."



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– Health System Director of Pharmacy

Driving best practices

Along with monitoring and detection capabilities, Imprivata Drug Diversion Intelligence features robust reporting capabilities that have benefited the health system on multiple levels. For starters, the reports have been extremely efficient and effective in supporting compliance and state investigations into diversions. The director explained that the primary investigator they've worked with in response to diversion incidents greatly appreciated the platform's strong dashboard metrics and underlying analytics, which he describes as "best in class."

In addition, she and her associates are leveraging the Imprivata solution's reporting metrics to create teaching opportunities focused on instilling transparency and accountability. "We knew we needed to do a better job of adhering to best practices," she noted. "And so we're using the great information from the solution's reporting feature to engage, educate, and share knowledge with frontline staff to help shore up our procedures."

An example of a procedural issue revealed by the reports involved improper handling and documentation of medications. Shortcuts and bad habits in conjunction with medical wasting procedures – including delayed and combined wasting, along with poor documentation – created incorrect records and compliance issues. "Those teaching opportunities facilitated by the reports are helping us to minimize problems and keep issues from snowballing out of control," she added.

Together, the Imprivata drug diversion solution and the related educational efforts by the director and her associates are making a measurable impact when it comes to identified behavioral discrepancies, leading to a continuing downward trend. "We've instilled greater accountability regarding our response to discrepancies," she said. "And we've been able to dramatically reduce unresolved monthly discrepancies to below 5%, something we've never done before. It's an unbelievable stat for an organization of our size and scope, and a great example of process improvement, right at the bedside."

Focus on continuous improvement

The experience of implementing Imprivata Drug Diversion Intelligence has provided valuable lessons learned, which the director has proactively carried forward. She noted that the lessons have included making – and keeping – the initiative a top priority for stakeholders and ensuring they all share this common goal. "You can't do it by yourself," she reflected. "You need that full engagement, commitment, and continuity to really make things happen."

She added that being new to the organization at the time gave her the advantage of a fresh perspective. "Looking at things without preconceived biases about the way they should be done can be invaluable. That means stepping back when you're too close to a problem so you can better recognize what's not working. And then you realize, 'Yes, we really can do this a little better.'"

Maintaining a constant focus on improvement and further instilling best practices remain pivotal objectives for the director and the health system. That includes continuing to fully leverage the Imprivata solution, while also making drug diversion prevention something frontline staff live and breathe every day. This level of engagement is already helping to drive a valuable domino effect: greater awareness of diversion stimulates the ability to see how things fit together and ask tough questions, which in turn leads to new opportunities for enhancement. As she explained, "All of that sets you up for continued success. And when we see the health system become healthier, we know we're making meaningful gains."



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Imprivata delivers simple and secure access management solutions for healthcare and other mission-critical industries to ensure every second of crucial work is both frictionless and secure. The Imprivata platform of innovative, interoperable access management and privileged access security solutions enables organizations to fully manage and secure all enterprise and third-party identities to facilitate seamless user access, protect against internal and external security threats, and reduce total cost of ownership.

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