

**A convenient addition:  
Pleasanton Family Practice  
installs 'first in the state'  
medication vending machine**

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**PLEASANTON** - A new convenience for patients has come to Kansas and believe it or not, the first one in the state of Kansas is right here in Linn County.

An InstyMeds™ fully automated ATM-style dispenser of prescription medications was installed at the Pleasanton Family Practice clinic on Friday, June 27.

"This is a great addition," said Dr. Jay Allen, PFP physician, "if you come in with poison ivy, I can send the prescription to the dispenser by computer and you just pay and go."

The state-of-the-art technology dispenses medication directly to the patient at the point of care.

What does this mean for Linn County residents? No more trips to the pharmacy with a sick child, no more waiting for medication when you just want to go home. Simply input your prescription code, insert your payment by cash or credit card and in minutes you have your medication and your headed home.

InstyMeds Corporation, a Minneapolis, Minn., based company, developed the machine because of a personal experience of the founder of the company.

Ken Rosenblum, founder of the corporation was sent out by

his wife one night at about 10 p.m. to obtain a prescription for their son who had an ear infection. What he found was that no pharmacies were open that time night.

Rosenblum did some investigating and discovered that the nation is facing a shortage of pharmacists.

Working with engineers, pharmacists and doctors, Rosenblum spent the next two years developing the InstyMeds™ dispenser. An on-site pilot began in April 2001 and has been successfully completed and is now being expanded nationwide.

The InstyMeds™ machine utilizes a web based prescription writing software application.

Patient information is received electronically from the Practice Management System or Electronic Medical Record (EMR) systems or is easily entered through a web application and is sent to the dispenser.

The patient then has the option of receiving a printed prescription to take to the pharmacy or receiving a prescription order to receive medication at the InstyMeds™ dispenser right there on-site, where they use a color touch screen that allows simple access to the dispenser system.

The machine is stocked with 40 to 60 of the most common prescriptions and from 8 to 22 bottles of each kind. The unit is capable of labeling and dispensing nearly any form of medication, including tablets, capsules, inhalers, sprays, creams suspensions and syrups.

Patients receive information sheets with their medication similar to those received at the pharmacy.

With the dispensation machine interfacing with the

medical facilities registration system, there is no need to re-enter insurance information. Insurance approval is obtained in real time and if an insurance issue arises, it's routed to the InstyMeds call center.

Co-pays can be made at the dispenser by credit or debit card, or by cash, right at the machine.

"This machine is intended to offer patients a convenient alternative for filling their prescriptions, especially for patients that we serve after normal pharmacy hours," said Allen.

"With the influx of people moving into Linn County, the need for after-hours care and on weekends has likewise increased," said Rhonda Kellstadt, an advanced registered nurse practitioner with the clinic.

"Minor illnesses and emergencies don't always occur in a nine to five timetable," she continued, "so we have increased our hours of operation to meet these needs. The InstyMeds dispenser is the logical next step in fulfilling patient needs."

"Patients will have their correct medication within three to five minutes, and it will have been verified three times to ensure they are receiving the right medication and dosage," added Allen.

