

Dispensary Design and Automation

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Newsflash

- Looking for a high dispensing practices for a commercial pilot scheme for wound care and dressings – get in touch for more details



Quick Advert

- Special Offer on Remote Training sessions for AUGUST 2026 contact me for details!
- Webinar topics for August?



Hot Weather!

- Medicines have specific storage requirements
- Check the PIL for details usually do not store OVER 25 degrees Celsius
- Air con is pretty much essential NOT just fans blowing warm air around!
- Especially true if you are wholesaling out – MHRA!



Overview for this Session:

- An Efficient and well planned dispensary = a safer and more profitable dispensary
- Each item dispensed = £2.50 minimum gross profit
- Beware items/hour calculations – should be 20 per hour minimum [depending on layout and processes]
- If not get in touch!



Overview for this Session:

- Dispensary Management – what you can affect and what you cant affect
- Can't affect – Pharma Discounts, Drug Tariff Price Changes, Market Price of Medicines
- Can affect – your dispensary layout and dispensing processes



Overview for this Session:



- Chance to amend processes to become more efficient

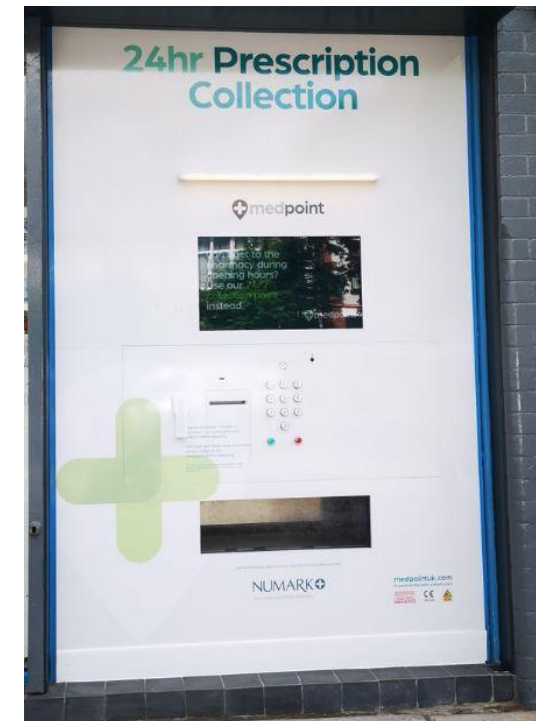
- **More efficiency = Better profitability**

However....

- Space can be at a premium in Primary Care buildings
- Covid Pandemic has meant many other space pressures AND impacted on space use
- Time to think differently?
- How many clinician rooms will be needed in the future?

Consider Prescription Collection Points?

Space Utilization!



Benefits and Features of Prescription Collection Points

- Automates handing out of scripts
- Frees up queues at dispensary
- Frees up staff time and resources
- Cuts workflow interruptions
- Allows you to offer 24/7 service
- Cut scripts leaking to pharmacies
- Offers convenience of internet pharmacies
- No wasted journey as text alert when Rx ready to pick up
- Can pay Rx charges
- Fits in with busy modern lifestyles



Prescription Collection Points – How do they work?

- Load machine using barcodes
- Collection Point software sends text to patient with unique six digit collection PIN
- Sends reminder text if they don't collect
- Patients enter PIN on screen and makes payment if needed and collects medications
- Can be installed in surgery or off-site eg supermarket, library, post office etc



How to make a cost justification for an Automated Prescription Collection Point

- Are you losing or is there a threat of losing scripts to Community / Online Pharmacy?
- Do you know how many are being lost already?
- How many deliveries are being done each week?
- On some busy days (eg Friday) do you at least 1 team member dedicated to giving out ready to collect scripts?
- Could time saved be used more profitably or for the benefit of your patients?



Where do we start?

- In an ideal world – what would you change in your practice as a whole?
 - Some or all of your processes?
 - The location of your dispensary?
 - Location of stock in your dispensary?
 - Fixtures in your dispensary?
 - Location of your reception?
 - Where paper records are stored? (Lloyd George files?)
 - We can help you with an independent view of things



Case Study: Relocation of Your Dispensary

Consider:

- Front location, near exit (ignoring one-way systems!)
- Visible signage (Dispensary inside and out)
- Maximise space available to allow for growth and avoid over-crowding
- Create the right workflow straight away through good internal design
- Looking to ensure the Dispensary “captures” as many prescriptions as it can

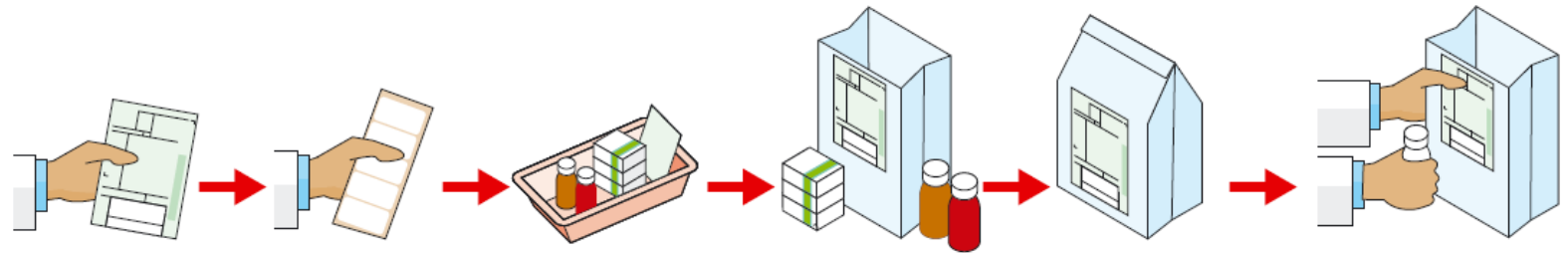


The Stages of a Prescription

– Pharmacy based but similar

Stages in dispensing a prescription

Use design to minimise errors at each stage of dispensing a prescription for medicines.



1

Receipt of prescription and clinical check

- clinical checking
- medicine counter
- prescription reception
- use of computer
- access to internet
- access to patient records
- computer ergonomics

2

Creation of label

- printer position
- prescription holders
- location
- labelling machines
- type of printer

3

Medicines assembly

- place for interim storage
- use of robots

4

Accuracy check

- accuracy check

5

Storing dispensed medicines

- storage for collection
- storage of omissions
- storage of completed prescriptions with queries

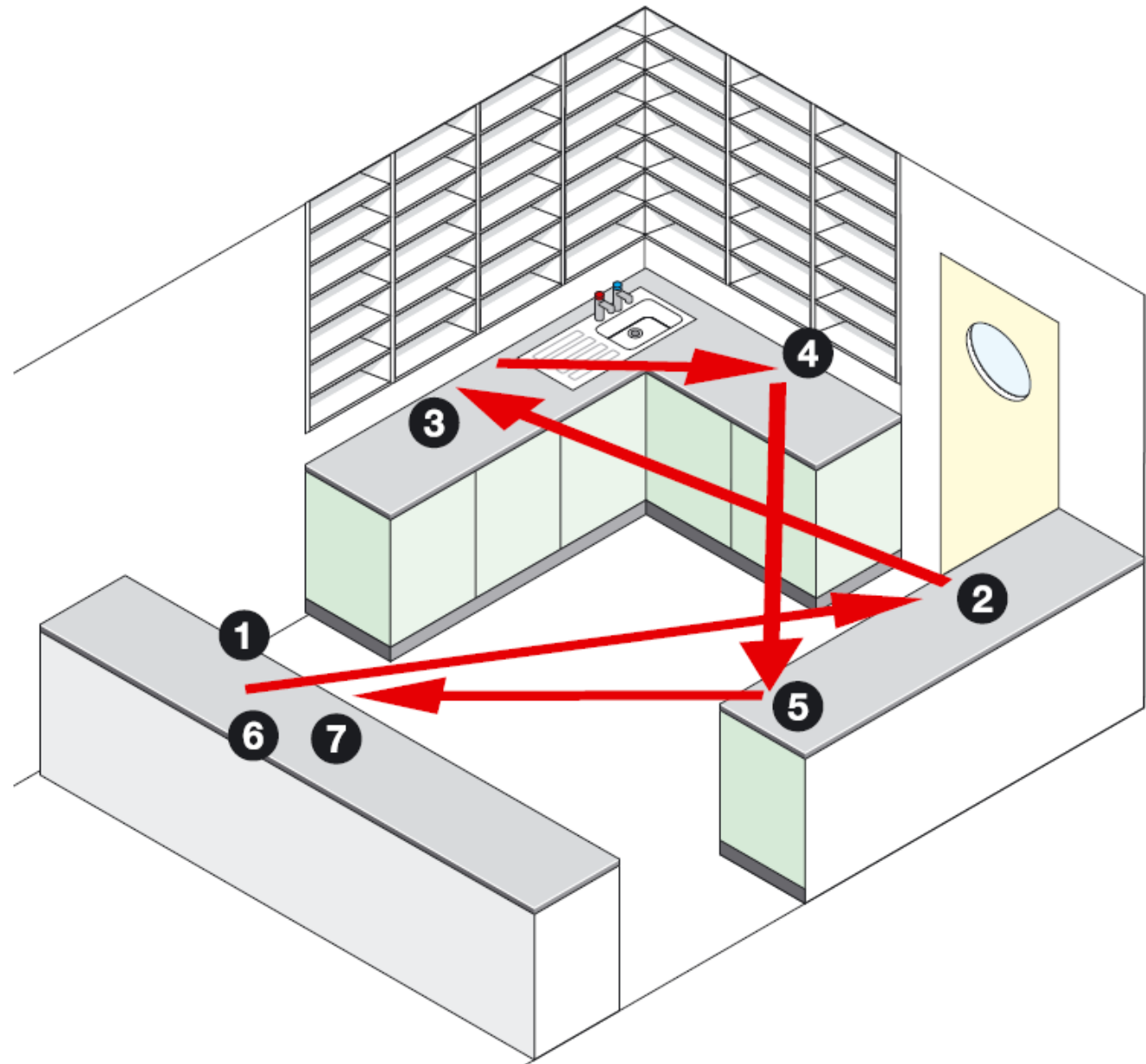
6

Medicines collection/ final accuracy check and patient counselling

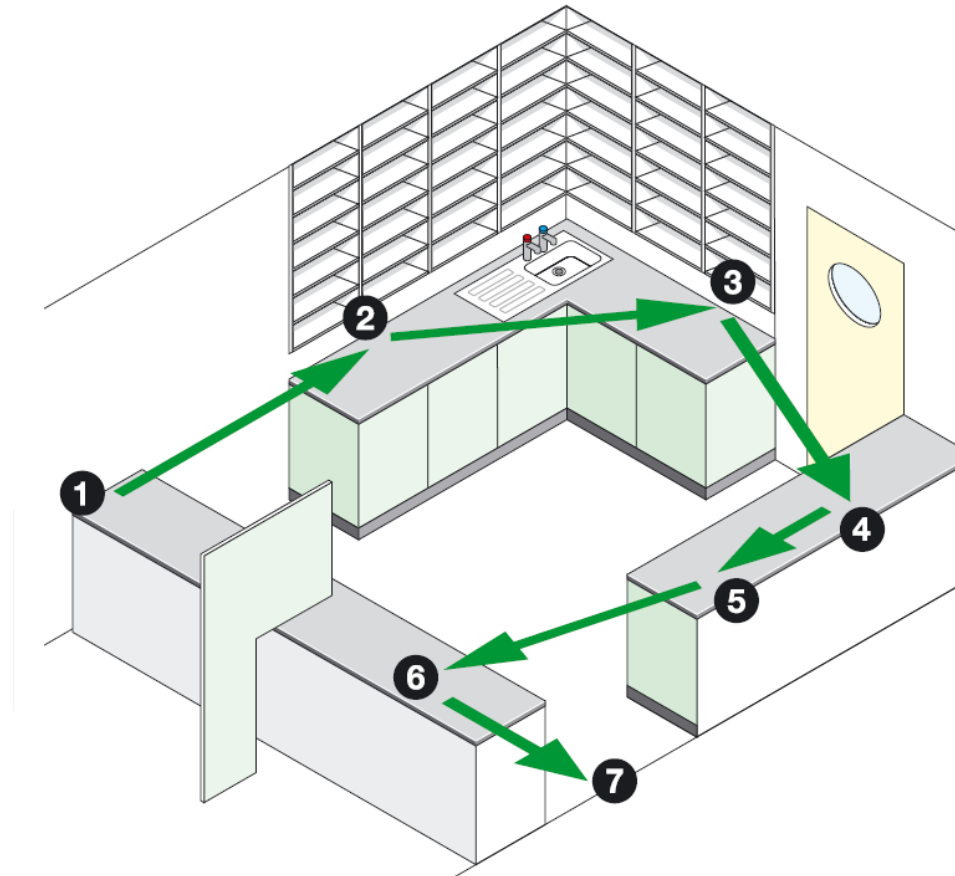
- prescription collection
- access to patient records
- use of computer for record keeping
- information leaflets
- patient counselling

- Where does Endorsing/Altering the Main Body of the Prescription fit into this?

Workflow – Hot to Get it Wrong



Workflow – How to Get it Right



Above An uninterrupted and logical workflow will help to reduce errors.

- Where does Endorsing/Altering the Main Body of the Prescription fit into this?

Creating the Right Environment



- **Layout**

- Workflow and processes
- Lighting
- Noise
- Ergonomics

- **Delivery**

- Extra space or even separate area
- Unpack and check space
- Storage of boxes

- **Storage**

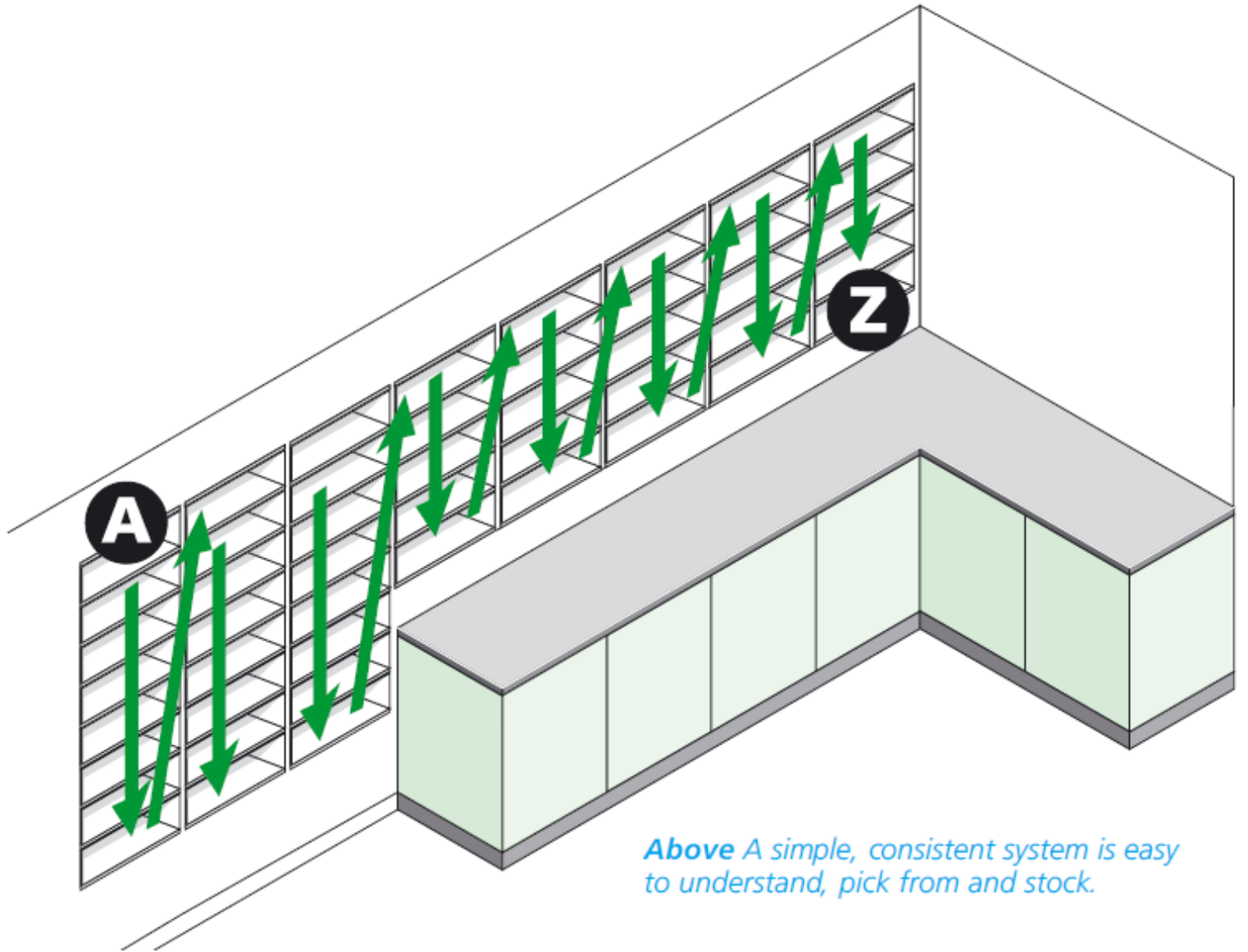
- Drawer systems and shelf dividers
- Ample fridge space
- Ample Controlled Drugs space
- Separate areas for waste

Workflow & Processes

- Consider the location of:
 - PC Terminals
 - Printers
 - Medication Stock
 - Bag & Store
 - Location of collection



Workflow & Processes



Above A simple, consistent system is easy to understand, pick from and stock.

A Cluttered Dispensary



Drawer Systems

- How to waste space with rack and spur shelving!



Drawer Systems

- Sloped pull out drawers – saves space and far easier to re-stock



- Prescriptions to Collect / Finished Script drawers

Drawer Systems



Solutions

- What can we do to alleviate the current problems?
- Removing queues
- Safer dispensing
- More efficient use of space



Dispensary Patient Pick Up Point



Portapharma Storage Unit



First Steps in Automation: Dispens-IT

Principle of extra check now available across other clinical systems

A screenshot of the "Dispens-IT Process Item" window. The window has a yellow background and contains the following information: "MOUSE, MICHAEL MR." in a grey box, "FLUCLOXACILLIN CAPSULES 500 MG" in a white box, "Quantity: 28" in a grey box, "Scan or Type Barcode:" followed by a white input field, and "Enter batch ID:" followed by a white input field. Below these fields is a yellow box with the text "Scan the barcode on the item (or click print if none present)." At the bottom are four buttons: "Menu", "Hold", "View Label", and "Print". To the left of the main window is a smaller window titled "Items in Queue" with a table showing a list of items with checkboxes for "Hold" and "Select". To the right is a window titled "Prescribed" with a list of dates and times: "2/2013 09:55", "2/2013 09:55", "2/2013 09:55", and "2/2013 09:55".A screenshot of a "BARCODE INCORRECT" error message window. The window has a pink background and a blue header. The text inside reads: "The barcode scanned was: 123456 but this does not match the item prescribed: RAMIPRIL TABLETS 5 mg 28". Below this, it says: "If the item is incorrect or the barcode is incomplete: Click Rescan to try again." and "If item and barcode are correct: click Update to store a new barcode against this item." At the bottom are two buttons: "Rescan" and "Update".

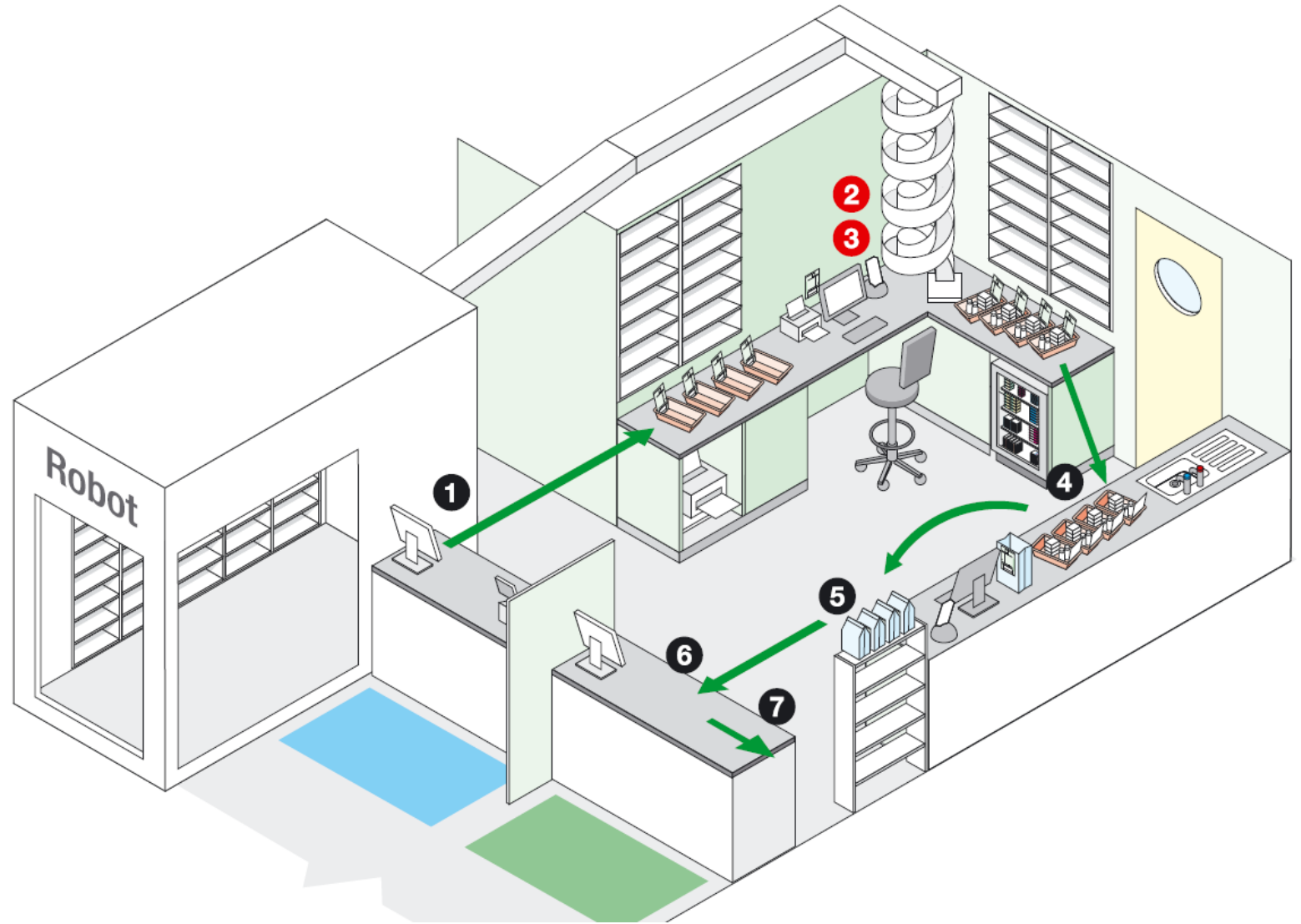
First Steps in Automation in MDS – The Poppitt De-blistering Device:



Professional
Poppitt –
semi-
automatic
desk-top



Consider
Robotics?



Examples of Robotic Installations



Avonnex / Pharmathek systems

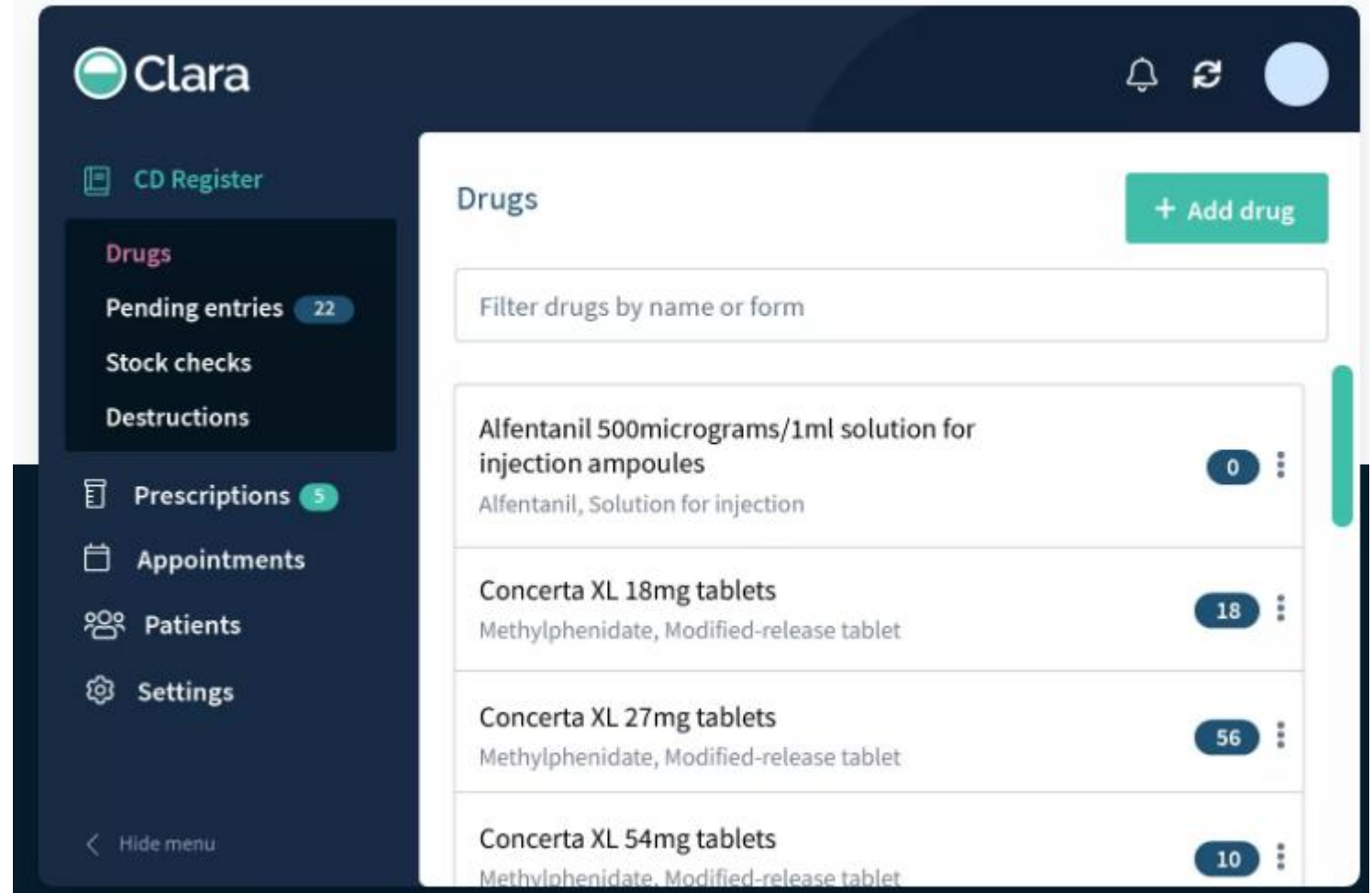
How to make a cost justification for a Robotic Installation:

- Have you got high dispensing volumes – in excess of 10,000 items per month?
- Could you create a “Hub and Spoke” model of dispensing between your main surgery and branch sites?
- Does your practice struggle to recruit new team members?
- Can be a big investment but could this be off-set against longer term savings and benefits?



Other areas of Automation and Innovation in Dispensing:

- Electronic CD Registers – huge time saving



Where do we
start?

- Any questions?

