



## New Ulm Medical Center offers instant medication machine

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Think back to the last time you needed a prescription filled after a late night visit to the emergency department, only to have to wait until the pharmacy opened the next morning. The nights of anxiously and sometimes painfully waiting to get a prescription filled may be over at New Ulm Medical Center.

New Ulm Medical Center is partnering with InstyMeds, an electronic retail pharmacy through which patients can purchase basic, acute-care drugs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The instant medication machine looks similar to a vending machine and will be located in the New Ulm Medical Center Emergency Department waiting room.

The InstyMeds system works similar to how patients have a prescription filled at a retail pharmacy—they need to bring their prescription benefits card, as well as a credit card, debit card or cash for the co-payment.

“The machine is intended for immediate needs and is not meant to replace the services of the local pharmacies,” said Reid Horning, PharmD, New Ulm Medical Center pharmacy manager. “We’re providing another option to people, particularly for patients that we serve after hours, so they don’t have to travel or wait for the most commonly prescribed medications.”

The machine is stocked with approximately 50 of the most common prescriptions produced by acute care visits. Physicians in the New Ulm Medical Center Emergency Department will order prescriptions electronically, which are sent to the InstyMeds machine. The patient is given an access code to order the prescription from InstyMeds.

InstyMeds verifies insurance coverage for patients and accommodates self-paying customers. Cash, credit or debit cards are accepted. Patient support is available through a licensed pharmacist 24 hours a day via a telephone mounted on the front of the machine. “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,” said Horning. “This new service keeps patients close to home without having to travel to a 24-hour pharmacy.”

The machine will also be convenient for Saturday Walk-in Clinic patients or post-surgical patients who may be leaving the building at a time when local pharmacies are open, providing another convenient option to accessing prescriptions.

Installation of InstyMeds machines is an Allina-wide initiative, Horning said, with machines already available at Owatonna Hospital and Buffalo Hospital. The NUMC InstyMeds machine is scheduled for installation later this month.

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An InstyMeds electronic retail pharmacy machine will be installed at New Ulm Medical Center near the Emergency Department this month.

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