

Solving Data Management Challenges for Hospital Pharmacy

EXPLORE BEST PRACTICES FOR DATA CONVERSIONS

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Hospital
pharmacies have
unique data
challenges.

Like any healthcare entity, your data is one of your most valuable assets. Being able to access it how and when you need it is critical to being able to provide patient care.

So, what happens when you decide to change pharmacy systems?

It's not as easy as taking one set of data and transferring it to a new platform. A pharmacy data conversion can be a complex process that must take into account a variety of factors. While some fields are consistent across platforms, others are not.

Many data fields require special attention and are specific to hospital pharmacy. Additionally, there are considerations around structured and unstructured data as well as purging some data elements prior to a conversion.

In this guide, we're sharing best practices on hospital pharmacy conversions, so that your data is always accessible, portable, and interoperable.

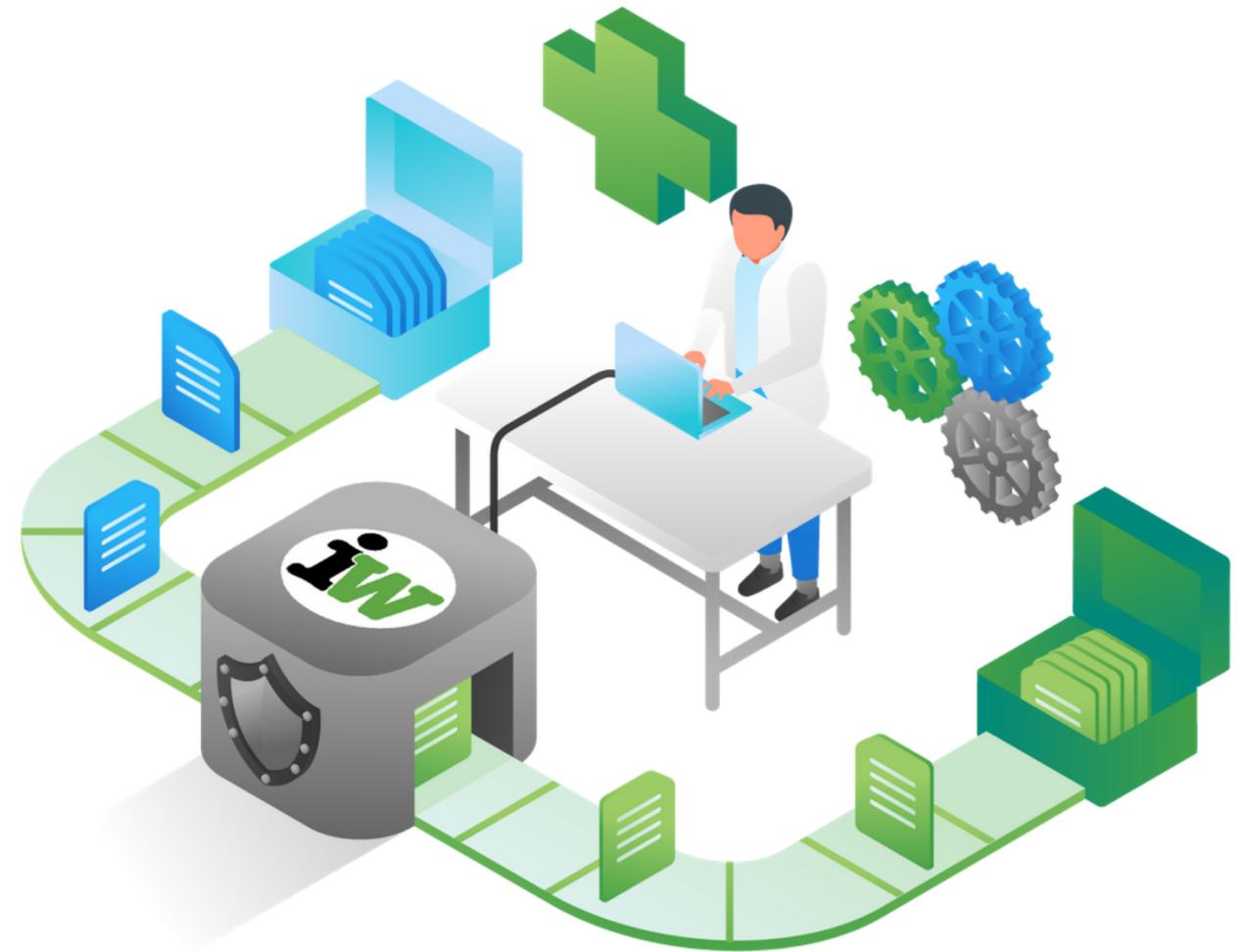
Hospital pharmacy data conversions are not a one size fits all.

Hospital pharmacy data conversions are always a custom job because systems are used independently, making migrating data tricky.

The type of hospital pharmacy you operate—inpatient, outpatient, or employee—matters. Every kind of hospital pharmacy has its own unique data and often must be interoperable with other systems like EHRs.

Additionally, large health systems have different priorities than a community hospital. A large organization will, of course, have more data, but the differences are greater than just volume.

Hospital pharmacy data is critical to improving patient care and ensuring they receive the right medications. That's why it's crucial to work with a data conversion partner that understands your operating model.

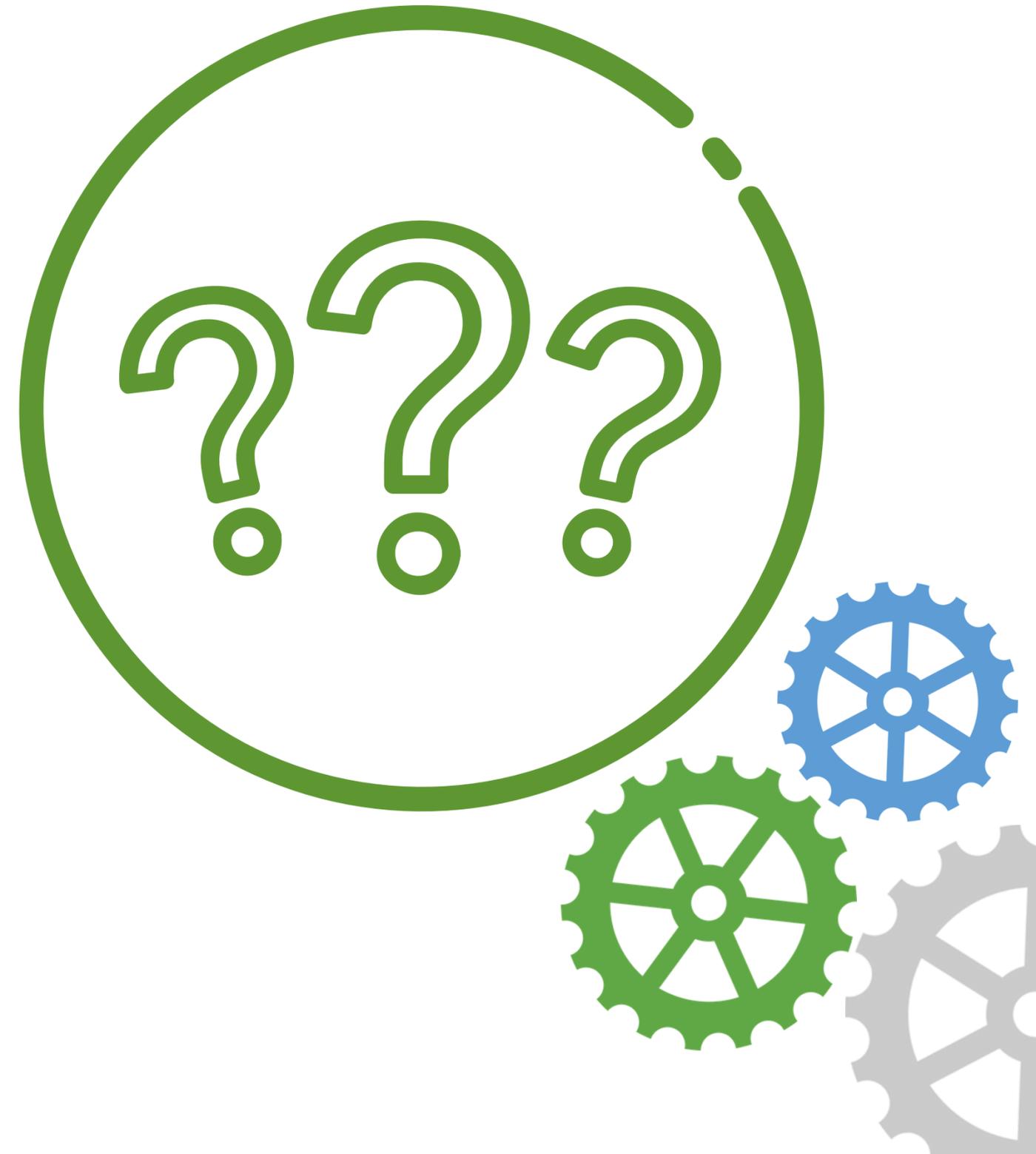


Choosing a data vendor-what questions to ask.

There is no shortage of data vendors in the market. However, a generic data vendor isn't the best choice for pharmacy. Your data has specific considerations, including compliance mandates. It's not simply converting patient data from one platform to the next. There are many nuances to delivering a seamless migration. You need a team of pharmacy data experts.

When deciding on whom to partner with, ask these questions:

- How many hospital pharmacy data conversions have you completed?
- Do you have a working knowledge of our old and new system?
- How do you maintain HIPAA compliance?
- Is the data encrypted? If so, how?
- Is the data backed up? If so, where?
- Can you format unstructured data?
- If special programming is required, can you facilitate it?
- Do you offer options for archiving data?
- Are there any additional fees that could come up?
- Will I have a dedicated point of contact during the project?
- What are your QA protocols?





Data fields-a look inside what can cause challenges.

A data conversion project is rarely simple. There are seldom direct matches to fields. While moving data is easy when you only have a few basic fields, that's not the case with hospital pharmacy. Here are some data fields that can cause challenges.

Patient Allergies and Medical Conditions

Patient allergy and medical conditions are not one-to-one match from system to system. Different codes and abbreviations are used, making this a data element that causes problems.

Ask questions about how this will be converted, including:

- Are patient allergies and conditions transferrable via text fields?
- Are exact matches applicable?
- Will custom programming be necessary for a seamless conversion?

Fields Not Aligned with Intended Use

Do you currently use a field that is categorized for one thing, but you input other information? That's a common practice, but it can cause data conversion mismatches.

This misalignment could be troublesome if not addressed early. Your conversion partner should be able to custom program to convert these fields. The only caveat is that the fields that are being repurposed must be consistent; otherwise, manual intervention may be necessary.

340B Fields and Special Characters

Converting this data isn't the difficult part. It's determining which specific elements you need to carry over. Talking about 340B fields and compliance with the program is a must before a conversion. Leaving this to chance or believing it's implied could be disastrous.

Special characters can create issues, such as hyphenated names and apostrophes. Talk to your data management provider about how these are handled pre-conversion.

Before converting, consider the benefits of purging and archiving.

Medical retention regulations require you to maintain patient records for specific time limits. But they don't all need to migrate to your new system—nor do you need to keep legacy systems live.

First, consider a purge. Purge any “bad” data or records outside the regulatory scope of retention. This action will reduce the amount of data for which you are responsible.

Once you have it filtered down to what you must keep, map out a plan for what should be converted and what can be archived. You can archive documents, data, and images in a secure, searchable repository. By doing this, you can access old information in minutes in the case of an audit.





Archiving could save your hospital pharmacy time and money.

- Access records via a web-based tool
- Search with robust filters to find what you need fast
- Run audit reports in minutes
- Store data, documents, and images
- Reduce costs associated with keeping legacy systems live
- Meet compliance regulations related to HIPAA, Medicare, and other record retention laws
- Search across multiple locations

Hospital pharmacy data will only become more complex. You need a partner to help you manage it better.

New regulations, mounting pressures for interoperability, and a desire to reduce costs are all future trends that will impact how you use, move, and access data.

No matter your data management challenges, you can find a true partner with us. We've completed over 27,0000 pharmacy data conversions since 1997 plus other archiving and analytics support.

Contact us today for pain-free solutions.



Connect with Us

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