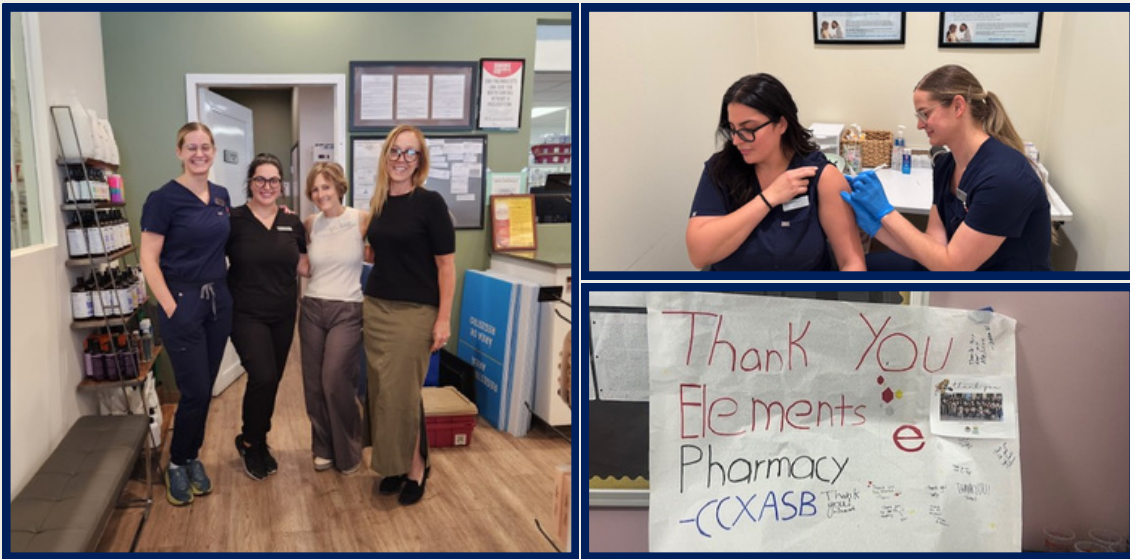


A VIEW INTO: MOBILE CLINICS FOR SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES

Spring 2025 | Featuring: Elements Pharmacy



Introduction

Sherri Cherman, PharmD, is a pharmacist, founder, and CEO of Elements Pharmacy—a community pharmacy in the San Fernando Valley. The following information has been gathered from a series of interviews with Sherri conducted by the Los Angeles Department of Public Health’s Mobile Vaccine & Testing (MVT) team.

Services available at Elements Pharmacy:



Prescription
support



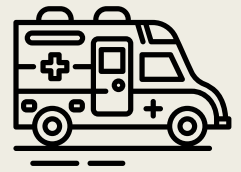
FREE HIV testing
and PrEP/PEP
services



Travel & birth
control consultation



Vaccine
services



Mobile clinics



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

Elements Pharmacy serves populations all around Los Angeles County, hosting events at various facilities and community events. Below are the steps taken to successfully complete a clinical event at Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) and Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs).



Process for successfully completing a clinic:

Before the clinic:

1. Obtain list of residents from facility or face sheets, & copies of completed consent forms.
 - Elements has an optional service to obtain consent from residents in ALFs, while SNFs obtain consent for their residents.
2. Create vaccination plan for residents (guided with CAIR).
3. Verify insurance + determine which vaccines are covered.
4. Consented for vaccines + any lingering issues for each resident are noted in the vaccination plan.

During the clinic:

1. Before starting any work at SNFs, pharmacists review the daily census and check on the stay status of each resident.
 2. Pharmacists follow vaccination plan for each resident and vaccinate.
 3. Clinics typically take 2-4 hours depending on the size of the facility.
- Note:** To service new residents who do not already have a vaccination plan, vaccinators on site check CAIR in real-time; Community events also run this way, real-time.

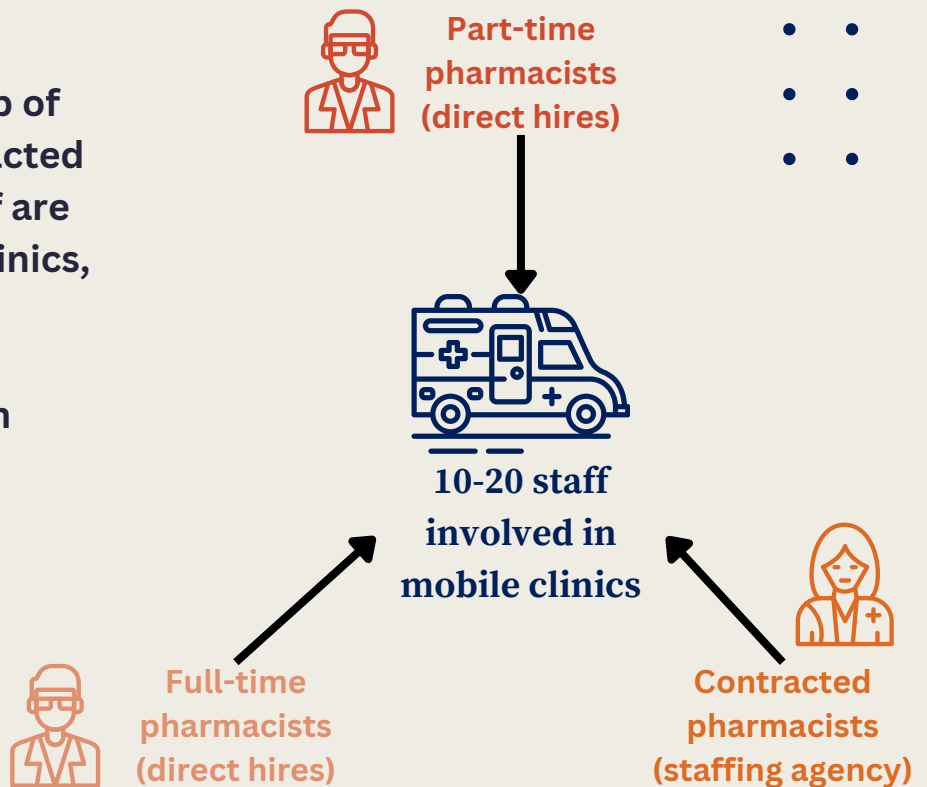
After the clinic:

1. Billing for all services takes place at the pharmacy.
2. Dose information is reported to CAIR and to MVT team's database.



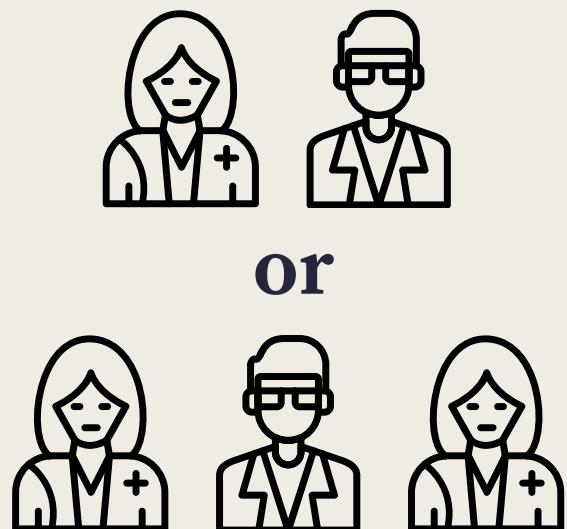
Staffing

Element's workforce is made up of part-time, full-time, and contracted pharmacists, though most staff are part-time. To staff its mobile clinics, Elements pulls from all of its available workforce; there are between 10-20 staff involved in mobile clinics.



Field teams


Field teams usually consist of 1-3 staff. At Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) teams usually consist of 1-2 pharmacists, a pharmacist and an intern, or a pharmacist and a technician. At assisted living facilities, teams include an additional person to support with crowd control. Field teams are assigned the day before events take place. Full-time personnel are assigned first followed by available part-time and contracted individuals.



Let's talk about: Insurance and vaccine coverage


Insurance Type	Covers
Medi-Cal	Usually covers all vaccines
Medicare Part B	COVID-19, Pneumonia, Flu, Hepatitis B*, Tdap*
Medicare Part D	RSV, Hepatitis B*, Tdap*, & other recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)
Private Insurance	Coverage varies by insurance

*Medicare part A, B or D depending on a person's circumstances



Is the billing process the same for all the insurance types listed above?

The process is similar for those with Medi-Cal, Medicare part D, private insurance and even Medi-Medi patients (patients with a dual Medicare and a Medi-Cal plan) because all of these tend to use Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) to manage prescription drug benefits/programs.





So how is billing different for patients with Medicare part B?

Medicare part B cannot be billed real time. First you verify benefits and then claims get uploaded later.



How do you bill and what does it cover?

At Elements Pharmacy we bill using an Electronic Medical Record (EMR) System. Insurance usually covers the cost of vaccines and the administration fee.





Skilled-Nursing Facilities (SNFs) have patients on a long-term stay or a short term-stay. How does billing work for them?



Short-term stay patients go through a process called “consolidated billing”, where SNFs must be the ones completing the billing for Medicare part B covered vaccinations (except COVID-19 until 2029) for patients under this stay.



What would this mean for a patient on a short-term stay with Medicare part B who is vaccinated by a pharmacy?



If a pharmacy ends up vaccinating and billing, medicare will request the money back.



Outreach



Elements Pharmacy conducts outreach in several ways: they send mass emails with the goal of educating, updating, and informing the facilities, and they do regular check-in calls that serve to remind partners about their free services or to follow-up to get them on their calendar. Attending conferences and tabling at events are also part of their outreach strategy.

Barriers

Administered vaccines by other entities (private providers, SNFs, etc). are not always reflected on CAIR.

Turnover in nursing homes; the IP nurse staff turns over a lot.

Cold calling is hard, establishing new relationships is a challenge.

Insurance covers the vaccines and their administration but not time.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

about mobile clinics...

1. What kind of system do you use for scheduling?

Elements follows a scheduling system that allows them to see which events are happening throughout the week. For mobile clinics, the scheduling system runs on a google excel document. For the in-pharmacy services they use a scheduling system that works like an EMR (Intend).

2. How many hours would you say a pharmacist spends checking CAIR, creating a patient chart, making phone calls for one facility prior to actually going and vaccinating?

10-15 minutes per patient, including: CAIR, getting a hold of the responsible party, verifying insurance, reviewing the face sheet, and taking detailed notes.

3. Does Elements have a minimum requirement for vaccinations to schedule a clinic?

No, Elements doesn't require a minimum number of people getting vaccinated to schedule a clinic.

- If facility has a large number of patients, they can choose the date and time for vaccination
- If facility has smaller number of patients, Elements lets them know when they can come in



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

about outreach...

4. Do you try to establish new relationships with facilities, SNFs, or assisted living sites that you haven't been to yet?

Yes, but cold calling is hard, establishing new relationships is challenging. Their tabling events help with this aspect.

5. When you're reaching out to people, who do you feel is the most effective person to talk to?

- For SNFs: IP nurses are usually the main persons for contact, the second point of contact would be the Director of Staff Development (DSD), sometimes the Director of Nurses or consultants, rarely the Administrators.
- Non-SNFs: usually the Administrators or Health Services Director are the main persons for contact.

