



Wold

**HANDLING HAZARDOUS DRUGS:
SUCCESSFULLY PREPARING
FOR USP 800**

We are approaching the one-year mark leading up to the December 2019 CMS deadline for the enforcement of the new USP 800 Hazardous Drugs Handling Regulation in Healthcare Settings. As healthcare organizations plan, design and construct these safer environments for their patients and staff, there are planning and design trends emerging from these projects. Reviewing these trends with team members will help achieve successful outcomes for these important projects.

IMPACTS FROM DRUG DELIVERY TO DISPOSAL

The USP 800 requirements have recommendations affecting the handling of hazardous drugs from delivery to after use disposal. The impact to facilities ranges from adding signage identifying the exposure risks, to constructing new storage rooms, to creating new pressure zones in hazardous drug areas. These are simple modifications in some facilities, but many are experiencing significant and costly challenges meeting these requirements.

COMPLETE REVIEW OF OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

The implementation of the new standards requires a full analysis of existing policies and procedures surrounding the handling and preparation of hazardous and non-hazardous drugs. Many organizations are seeing this as an opportunity to evaluate their facility's ability to support their operations regarding the delivery, handling, preparation, distribution and disposal of medications. This forward-looking approach has led to additional facility improvements while working in these critical spaces.

ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED

One of two major facility improvements consistently required to meet the new standards is additional dedicated areas for proper storage and preparation of hazardous drugs. Based on the inventory of drugs the additional space requirements have varied from repurposing offices or storage spaces, to expanding into adjacent areas with major renovations to create a facility that supports the modern delivery of pharmacy services.

MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS TO BE ANALYZED

The second major facility improvement is mechanical and electrical infrastructure projects related to air handling units and power supply for the hazardous drug areas. The receipt, storage and compounding areas require pressurization and/or air change requirements that may require complete air handling unit replacement or modernization of the equipment serving these areas. Factoring this scope of work into the planning and design process is critical to the success of these projects.

AVOIDING DISRUPTIONS TO PHARMACY SERVICES

One of the major planning factors and challenges working in Pharmacies is that they must remain safely operational throughout any renovation. As such, it is essential to create disruption avoidance and infection control plans which clearly coordinate and communicate how to achieve this goal. Developing these plans with all relevant stakeholders who work directly with or in support of delivering these pharmacy services will provide a clear direction to all planners, designers and contractors working on the project.