

CASE STUDY



Patient-First Focus Leads to Growth

Dottie Farfone, Chief Clinical Pharmacist, and Scott Farfone, Chief Operations Officer, achieved 100% compliance on their first application to URAC in 2015 and maintained 100% compliance during re-accreditation in 2019.

Building a new pharmacy operation from the ground up

Dottie and Scott Farfone started Dottie's Pharmacy in Charleston, SC in 2013, leveraging his business experience and her pharmacy background. At first, it was just the two of them, with Scott as technician and Director of Business Operations and Dottie as Chief Clinical Pharmacist. They quickly built their client base up by setting regular goals – first 10 patients, then 25, then 75, and so on. Their strategy worked. Today Dottie's Pharmacy has been licensed from Virginia to Florida. Their team of technicians, along with seven full-time and part-time pharmacists, fill over 400 prescriptions a day.

It wasn't long before they decided to add a specialty focus to their business. "We knew we would need a niche to grow and thrive," says Scott. "The doctors we were working with were asking us to look into carrying specialty medications," adds Dottie. Moving into specialty pharmacy just made sense. They also knew to be successful in the space, they would need their URAC accreditation, which is what ultimately led them to investigate temperature monitoring solutions.



Dottie Farfone, Chief Clinical Pharmacist, and Scott Farfone, Chief Operations Officer

CASE STUDY

Monitoring temperatures in patient medication shipments

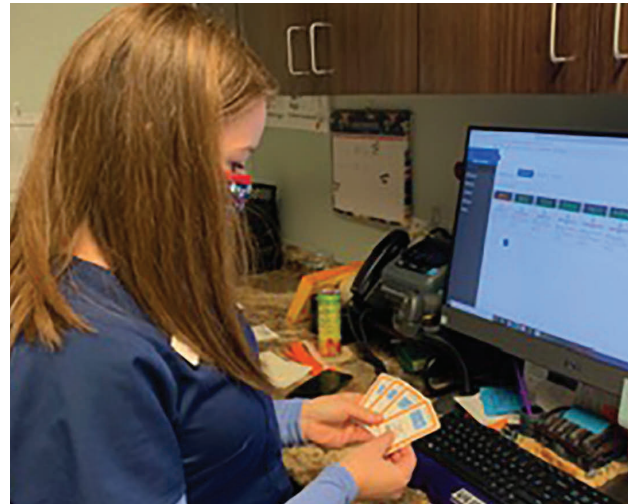
Dottie's Pharmacy began using temperature indicators in their cold chain shipments as soon as they started in specialty pharmacy. "We used a different indicator initially," says Scott. "But they weren't accurate at all. We knew we wanted something better for our patients."

Then, at an industry event, Dottie and Scott met Katie Kraverath, Senior Business Development Manager at Temptime. Since then, they've used TransTracker® in their patient shipments. A single-use temperature indicator, TransTracker gives patients an easy-to-read visual cue of whether their medication has gotten too hot or too cold. In some instances, for example, shipments have been delayed in transit because of weather or holidays. "With the TransTracker, our patients can see immediately if their medication needs to be replaced," says Dottie. Scott says the bottom line is that it's all about the patients.

"We've never had a TransTracker fail us – and that's what really matters. It just gives us and our patients peace of mind."

Shortly after they committed to specialty pharmacy and began using TransTracker, Dottie's Pharmacy moved into a new, larger space. "Specialty medications can cost \$40,000 or \$50,000 for a 30 day supply," explains Scott. "We needed a way to make sure we were following manufacturer instructions and keeping them in the appropriate temperature range, so they remained effective for our patients." Added to this, URAC requires pharmacies working toward accreditation to verify they are monitoring medication temperatures onsite as well as in shipping. On Katie's recommendation, Dottie and Scott chose the W-200 – a long-range wireless sensor designed to monitor temperatures and relative humidity in production and storage areas as well as refrigerators and freezers. A free mobile app helps them set preferences such as alarms, while a web-based dashboard gives them an at-a-glance view of the status of all their devices in real time. The pharmacy then receives immediate alerts should any of the sensors record temperatures that exceed the programmed limits.

The pharmacy opted to have a W-200 sensor installed in each of their refrigerators and freezers, says Dottie. "What we found almost right away was that regular refrigerators and freezers do not maintain a consistent enough temperature to store our medication."



TransTracker shipment indicators monitor medication temperature from the time it is shipped from the pharmacy until received by the patient



TransTracker F monitors medication for heat excursions and provides a visual indication for the patient on receipt

CASE STUDY



W-200 electronic temperature and humidity sensors monitor the pharmacy refrigerators and freezers

Verifying medication package performance

Another component to URAC accreditation is Package Performance Qualification (PPQ) testing, which confirms that pharmacy packaging for patient shipments is keeping medication at the appropriate temperature range. To earn accreditation, pharmacies must provide documentation for bi-annual or seasonal testing on packouts. This includes testing for packouts used to ship frozen, refrigerated and room temperature medication for each different geography.

“Temptime was an important part of our accreditation. All the reports are easy for us to generate and easy for URAC to read; they loved them.”

After consulting with Katie, Dottie’s Pharmacy chose Temptime’s M-300 for their PPQ testing. The M-300 is a portable, Bluetooth®-enabled, reusable sensor that monitors and records temperature data. Like the W-200, the M-300 comes with a free mobile app to program preferences including alarm limits and reading intervals as well as a web-based dashboard to view data and run reports.

“Beyond URAC accreditation, we’re committed to making sure our packouts do what we need them to – not just that they’re performing in a laboratory setting,” explains Dottie. To do that, they send packages to family members in the different shipping zones they cover and include the M-300 in each package. They can then view the data to see how the packages performed during transit. “We spend a lot of money on cold chain shipping,” says Scott. “We have to know our packouts are effective.”

End-to-end temperature monitoring for URAC accreditation

As a result of all the thoughtful steps they took, Dottie’s Pharmacy achieved 100% compliance on their first application to URAC and earned their accreditation.

The pharmacy also earned its reaccreditation in 2019. “The beauty is how well these solutions all work together,” says Scott. For example, when the pharmacy lost power in the middle of the night during hurricane season – they were alerted by the W-200 sensor that temperatures were rapidly decreasing but still safe. This gave them time to transport medication to a powered refrigerator. “We used the M-300 to confirm that the medication stayed in range while we were moving it,” says Dottie. They also put the M-300 in the backup fridge with the medication as an extra precaution. “Knowing when there’s a problem is critical,” says Scott. “Getting alerts during off-hours has saved us.”

The product is superior, but Dottie and Scott agree that it’s the customer service where Temptime really excels. “When we have an issue or a question, we know we can reach out and get the answers we need right away,” says Dottie. “We’re very busy; we can’t sit around waiting on hold,” Scott adds. “The fact that you can get someone on the phone immediately is important to us.” Dottie agrees, saying she sends anyone asking who they should turn to for temperature monitoring right to Temptime.

To learn more about Temptime PPQ Testing visit temptimecorp.com/ppq

Put your medication packaging to the test

Meet new URAC standards for CRT and refrigerated package qualification

With expert third-party Package Performance Testing (PPQ) from Temptime, you'll get the detailed time and temperature data you need to meet pharmacy network and accreditation requirements. That includes summer and winter PPQ testing for all your medication packouts – including CRT shipments, a new standard in URAC 4.0. The result is critical insight into how packages perform, as well as peace of mind knowing you're delivering the best care to your patients.

Rely on Temptime's more than three decades of experience in temperature monitoring solutions.

Get started with today: temptimecorp.com/ppq

