



Performance Evaluation of Advanced Unit-Dose Drug Dispensing Machines for Hospital Settings (A Case Study)

Waleed Mohammed Ibrahim ^{1 *}, Kamal Ali Alshehri ², Khadejah Hamed Al Ghamdi ³, Sahar Gharib Al-Ajmi ⁴

1. Pharmacy Technician, Prince Sultan Military Medical City, Riyadh, SA
devil7king@gmail.com ,
2. Pharmacy Technician, Prince Sultan Military Medical City, Riyadh, SA ,
3. Pharmacy Technician, Prince Sultan Military Medical City, Riyadh, SA ,
4. Pharmacist, Prince Sultan Military Medical City, Riyadh, SA

Abstract: Unit-dose drug dispensing machines represent a significant advancement in hospital pharmacy operations, enhancing medication safety, efficiency, and inventory management. This paper evaluates the performance of the latest generation of unit-dose dispensing machines designed for hospital settings, focusing on pills. Metrics such as dispensing accuracy, speed, error reduction, and cost-efficiency were analyzed. Findings indicate that the new machines substantially reduce medication errors and improve workflow efficiency while providing a scalable solution for large healthcare institutions.

Keywords: Unit-dose dispensing machine, hospital pharmacy automation, medication safety, drug dispensing accuracy, PharmaMax 3000, dispensing speed, error reduction, cost efficiency, patient safety, healthcare technology, automated medication management, pharmacy workflow optimization

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INTRODUCTION

Medication errors in hospitals remain a significant challenge, impacting patient safety and increasing healthcare costs. Unit-dose drug dispensing machines are automated systems designed to address these issues by dispensing individual doses of medication accurately and efficiently. This paper focuses on evaluating the latest technology in unit-dose dispensing machines, analyzing their performance in key areas.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Machine Description

The study evaluates the PharmaMax 3000, an advanced unit-dose dispensing machine capable of handling over 10,000 pill varieties. Key features include:

- Automated barcode scanning for real-time verification.
- AI-driven medication tracking for inventory management.
- Integration with electronic medical records (EMRs).

Study Design

The machine was implemented in a 500-bed hospital for a period of 3 months. Performance metrics were

collected and compared with manual dispensing systems.

Metrics Evaluated

1. Dispensing accuracy: Rate of correctly dispensed doses.
2. Speed: Time taken to dispense a single dose.
3. Error reduction: Incidence of dispensing errors.
4. Cost efficiency: Operational costs compared to traditional systems.

RESULTS

Dispensing Accuracy

The PharmaMax 3000 demonstrated a 99.98% accuracy rate, significantly outperforming manual dispensing methods (Table 1).

System	Accuracy Rate (%)
Manual Dispensing	96.45
PharmaMax 3000	99.98

Speed of Dispensing

The average time to dispense a single dose was 3.2 seconds with the PharmaMax 3000, compared to 15 seconds with manual methods (Table 2).

Metric	Manual Dispensing	PharmaMax 3000
Time per Dose (seconds)	15	3.2

Error Reduction

Medication errors dropped from 2.3% in manual systems to 0.02% with the PharmaMax 3000.

Error Rate (%)	Before Implementation	After Implementation
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Manual Dispensing	2.3	N/A
PharmaMax 3000	N/A	0.02

Cost Efficiency

While the initial cost of the PharmaMax 3000 was high, operational costs were reduced by 40% due to decreased errors, improved efficiency, and better inventory control (Table 4).

Cost Metric	Before Implementation	After Implementation
Monthly Operational Costs	\$20,000	\$12,000
Initial Investment	N/A	\$300,000

DISCUSSION

Improved Patient Safety

The reduction in medication errors is a key benefit of the PharmaMax 3000. Automated barcode verification ensures that patients receive the correct medication and dose, addressing a leading cause of adverse drug events in hospitals.

Workflow Efficiency

The dramatic improvement in dispensing speed streamlines pharmacy operations, allowing staff to focus on more critical tasks such as patient counseling and clinical interventions.

Cost Considerations

Although the initial investment is substantial, long-term savings in operational costs, reduced medication wastage, and fewer adverse events justify the expense.

Limitations

- High upfront cost may be a barrier for smaller institutions.
- Requires ongoing maintenance and software updates.

CONCLUSION

The PharmaMax 3000 significantly improves the accuracy, speed, and efficiency of unit-dose medication dispensing in hospital settings. Its ability to reduce errors and operational costs makes it a valuable investment for improving patient care and pharmacy workflow.

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