U.S. Pharmacy Chains Take on Cancer

Pharmacies across the country are expanding beyond primary care and prescriptions to help tackle cancer.

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Most Americans associate pharmacies with prescription drugs, vitamins and other over-the-counter remedies. But over the past few years, pharmacies have increasingly been including cancer care and prevention among their services, signaling a trend that could disrupt health care industry.

Forbes reports that Walgreens has announced a first-of-its kind program called Feel More Like You, which targets oncology patients, survivors and caregivers who have undergone physical changes associated with cancer and its treatment. Crafted with help from the advocacy group Cancer Support Community, the campaign launched this week.

The objective, the company says, is to combine the beauty departments and pharmacy departments in 3,000 of its stores in order to promote both physical and mental health in the cancer community. Participating stores will have specially trained aestheticians on hand to provide cancer-specific consultations, advice and makeovers to patients and their caregivers. Consultations can be scheduled in advance or on-site.

This isn't the first time a U.S. pharmacy has doubled down on cancer treatment and prevention. Last summer, CVS Health committed $10 million to the American Cancer Society in support of cancer patient services and breakthrough research. A few years back, the pharmacy chain Rite Aid partnered with the Skin Cancer Foundation's annual Road to Healthy Skin Tour to offer free full-body skin cancer screenings out of an RV making its way across the country to encourage skin cancer awareness.

With an estimated 1.7 million Americans newly diagnosed with cancer each year and growing research showing how much more effective holistic cancer care can be, it's no wonder that more and more providers—from hospitals to pharmacies—are developing new ways to reach and service patients beyond diagnosis and treatment.

To learn more about the benefits of holistic cancer care, click here.

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