The White Bag Dilemma

“Imagine a restaurant where everyone with a reservation has sent bags and boxes of raw food and ingredients from numerous vendors for the restaurant’s staff to prepare and cook.”

– Rita Shane, PharmD, FASHP, FCSHP

The White Bag Problem

- Medications used to treat patients with **cancer and complex diseases** are no longer permitted to be acquired by hospitals and clinics that provide care for these patients
- Health plans require that medications come from designated pharmacies that send the medications to the hospitals and clinics
  - **Source of medication and temperature stability cannot be verified**
- Medications needed for **urgent treatment are unavailable**
- Medications that require **dose changes cannot be made** resulting in delays in care
- Patients do not know that these medications, primarily being given intravenously, and at times, by an injection, aren't being dispensed from the hospital or clinic where they receive care
- **Medications need to be prescribed twice**: once in the electronic health record and then another time to be sent to the outside pharmacy.

The Whitebagging Process

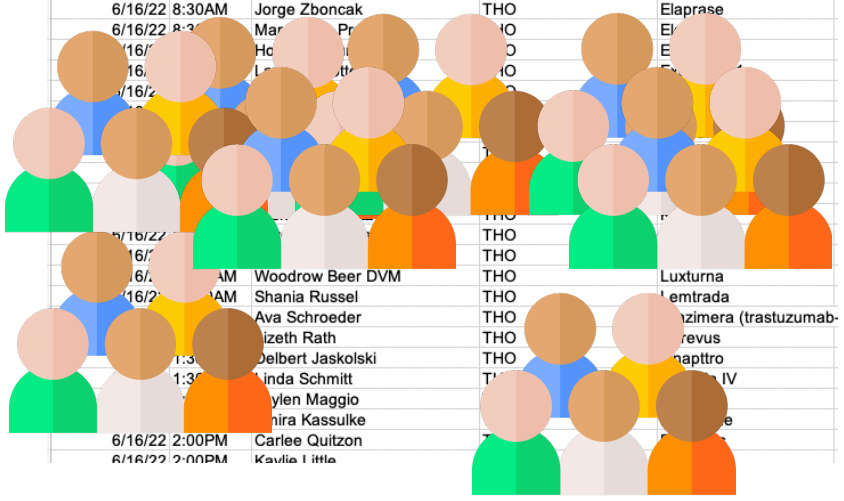
One bag for each patient

Whitebagging At-a-Glance

Daily Patient Schedule

Approx. 200 cancer and infusion patients/day across 4 sites

Visit Date	Time	Patient	Provider/Resource	Appt Notes
6/16/22	7:30AM	Dr. Modesto Russel	THO	Acterma
6/16/22	7:30AM	Norbert Gu[a]ann DDS	THO	Adakveo
6/16/22	7:30AM	Mr. Ettie McCullough	THO	Aldurazyme
6/16/22	7:30AM	Cathryn Johnston	THO	Amondys-45*
6/16/22	7:30AM	Kaleigh Ratke	THO	Avsola
6/16/22	8:00AM	Ima McCullough	THO	Benlysta
6/16/22	8:00AM	Lillie Thompson DVM	THO	Brineura
6/16/22	8:00AM	Aron Keeling	THO	Cerezyme
6/16/22	8:30AM	Jerad Farrell	THO	Cimzia
6/16/22	8:30AM	Jorge Zboncak	THO	Elaprase
6/16/22	8:3	Mar Pr	HO	El
/16/		Ho	O	E
16/		L tt	HO	
/16/				
			THO	
16/			THO	
/16/	AM	Woodrow Beer DVM	THO	Luxturna
/16/	AM	Shania Russel	THO	emtrada
		Ava Schroeder	THO	zimera (trastuzumab-
		izeth Rath	THO	revus
	1:3	elbert Jaskolski	THO	apttro
	1:3	inda Schmitt	T	IV
		ylen Maggio		
		hira Kassulke		e
6/16/22	2:00PM	Carlee Quitzon		
6/16/22	2:00PM	Kaylie Little		

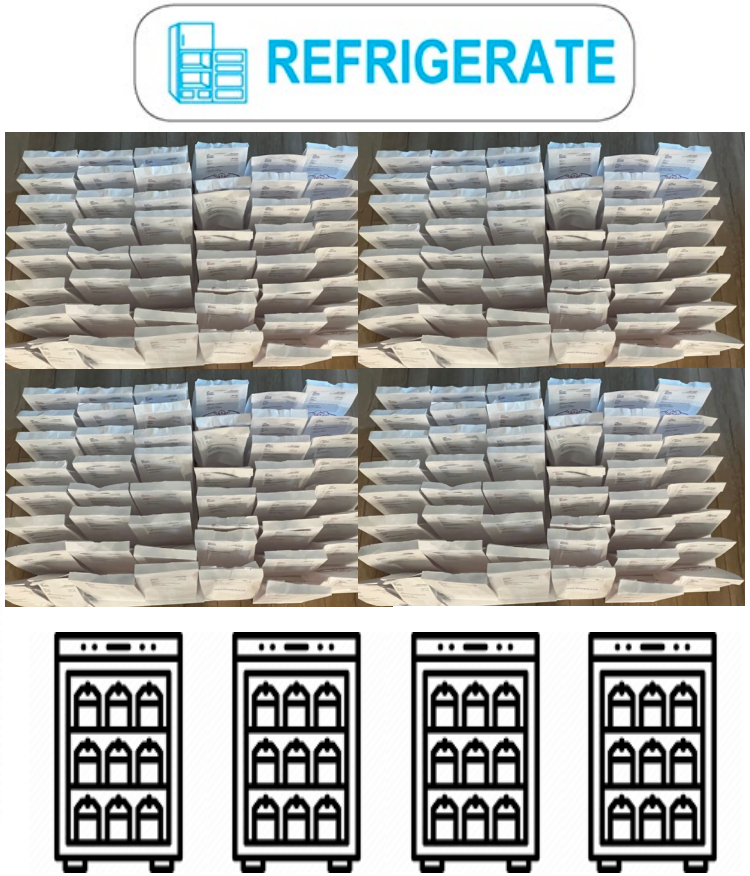


200

white-bagged, patient-specific medications DAILY; many required refrigeration

6,000

white-bagged, patient-specific medications MONTHLY



Behind-the-Scenes: Step 1

Locating the medication

Patient has a white-bagged medication sent for treatment at a health-system

Shipment Arrival

Loading Dock

Delivery

Locate the patient-specific medications in one of these boxes

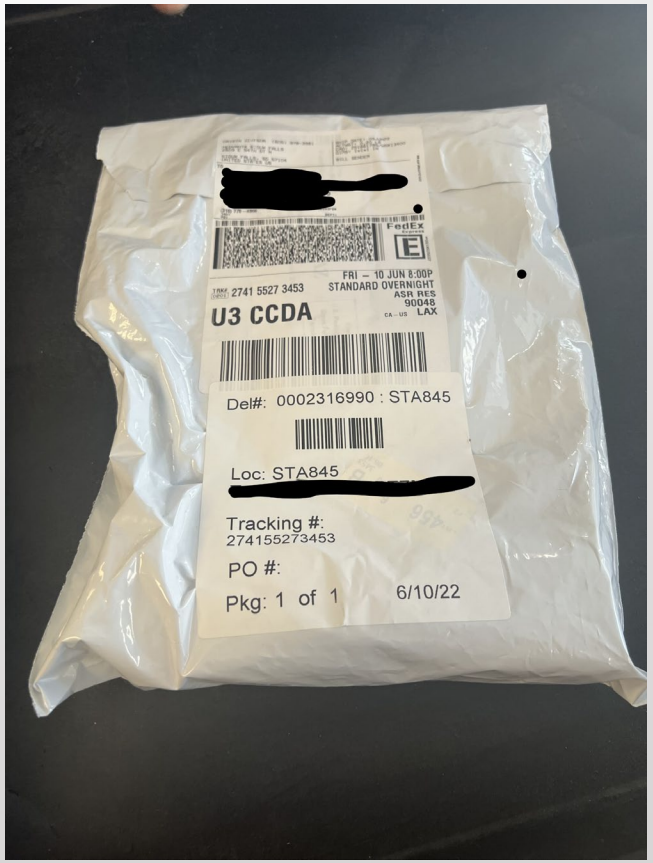
Step 2: Tracking down the medication

Tracking Information

- 10AM: Package was delivered to loading dock without pharmacy point of contact indicated on the package (only patient name).
- 3PM: Pharmacy staff searched through boxes at loading dock to find the medication
- **Impact: 5-hour delay**

This is a refrigerated medication. How do we verify this was refrigerated as required during transit?

How do we know this contains a medication for a patient? The recipient on the bag is patient's name!



Step 3: Inventory Management

Manual daily inventory tracking to ensure drugs available for treatment.

Need to open each bag to determine:
- expiration date
- recalls
- storage requirements

June 17th, 2022 Appointment Supply Tracker

Site	Patient	Drug	Dose	Vial Size	QTY Received	QTY Pending Delivery
THO	John Doe	Pembro-lizumab	400mg	100mg	4 vials	0 vial
SOCCI	Jane Doe	Pembro-lizumab	200mg	100mg	0 vial	2 vials
THO	Alex Doe	Pembro-lizumab	400mg	100mg	2 vials	2 vials
SOCCI	Tee Nee	Pembro-lizumab	200mg	100mg	2 vials	0 vial

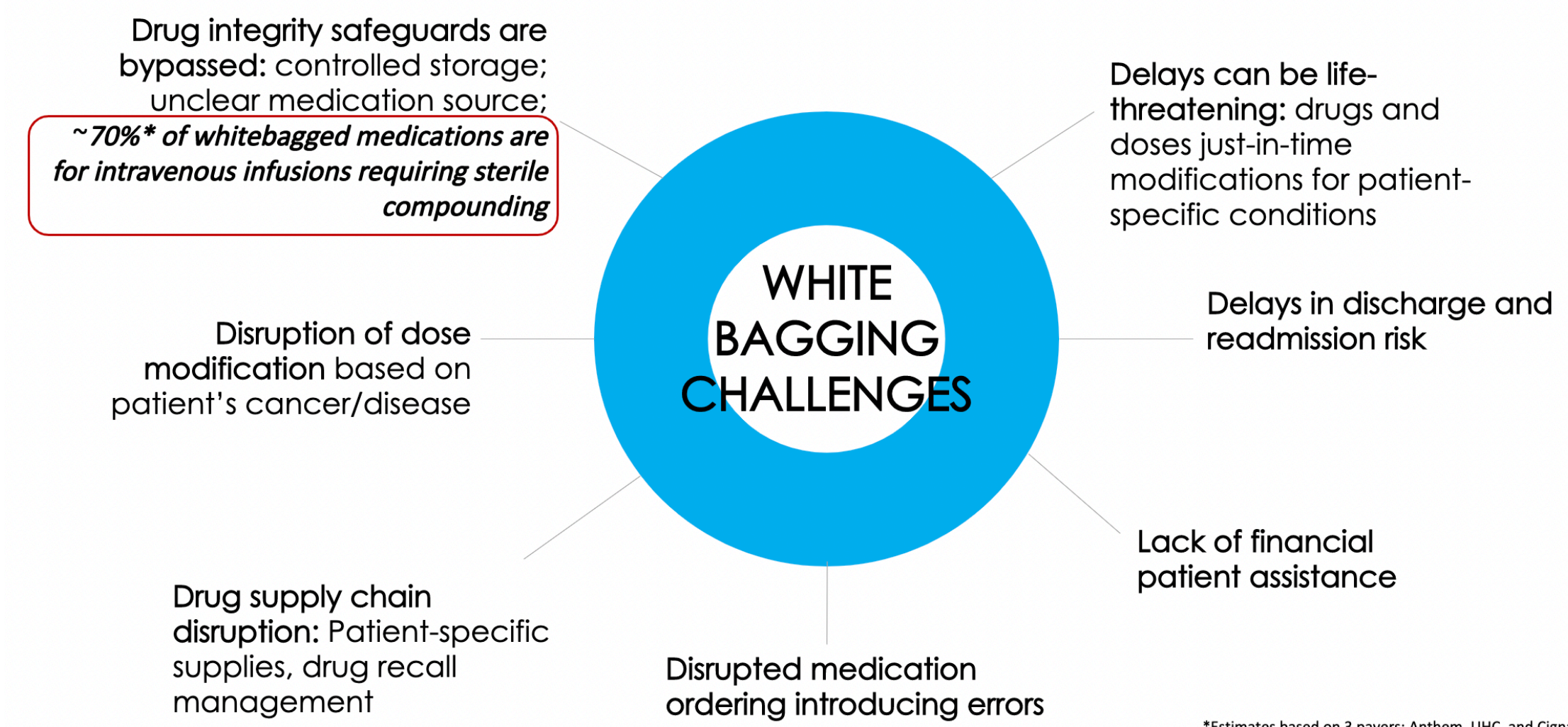
Patient JW has **advanced kidney cell cancer** being treated with *bevacizumab* infusion

1. JW checks-in at clinic's front desk
2. JW undergoes same-day clinical assessment (labs evaluation, etc.):
   - JW's weight has significantly increased since last treatment, necessitating a higher dose
3. JW's final medication dose needs to be **increased** (weight-based dosing)
4. Pharmacist look for JW's white-bagged medication to sterile compound
5. Specialty pharmacy had sent vials based on JW's previously documented weight/dose.
6. Reschedule JW for later infusion date to obtain additional vials of medication for her newly calculated dose

Unclear if drugs were refrigerated during transit

Approx. **70%** of white bagged drugs require sterile compounding

Whitebagging practice adds additional operational burdens on health systems and compromises patient safety



*Estimates based on 3 payers: Anthem, UHC, and Cigna
https://www.anthem.com/docs/public/inline/MSP_Drug_List.pdf (Accessed 3/8/2022)
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