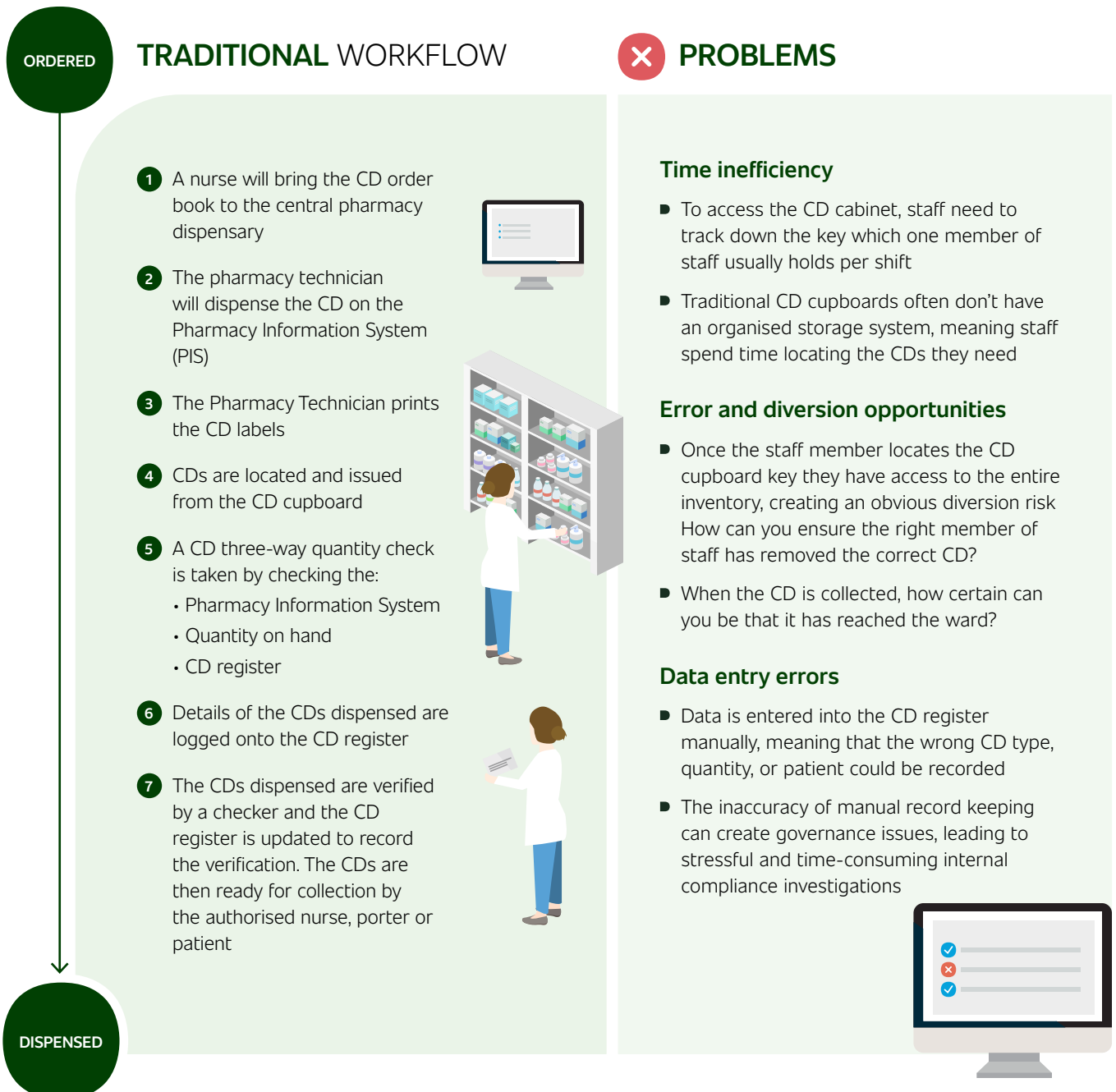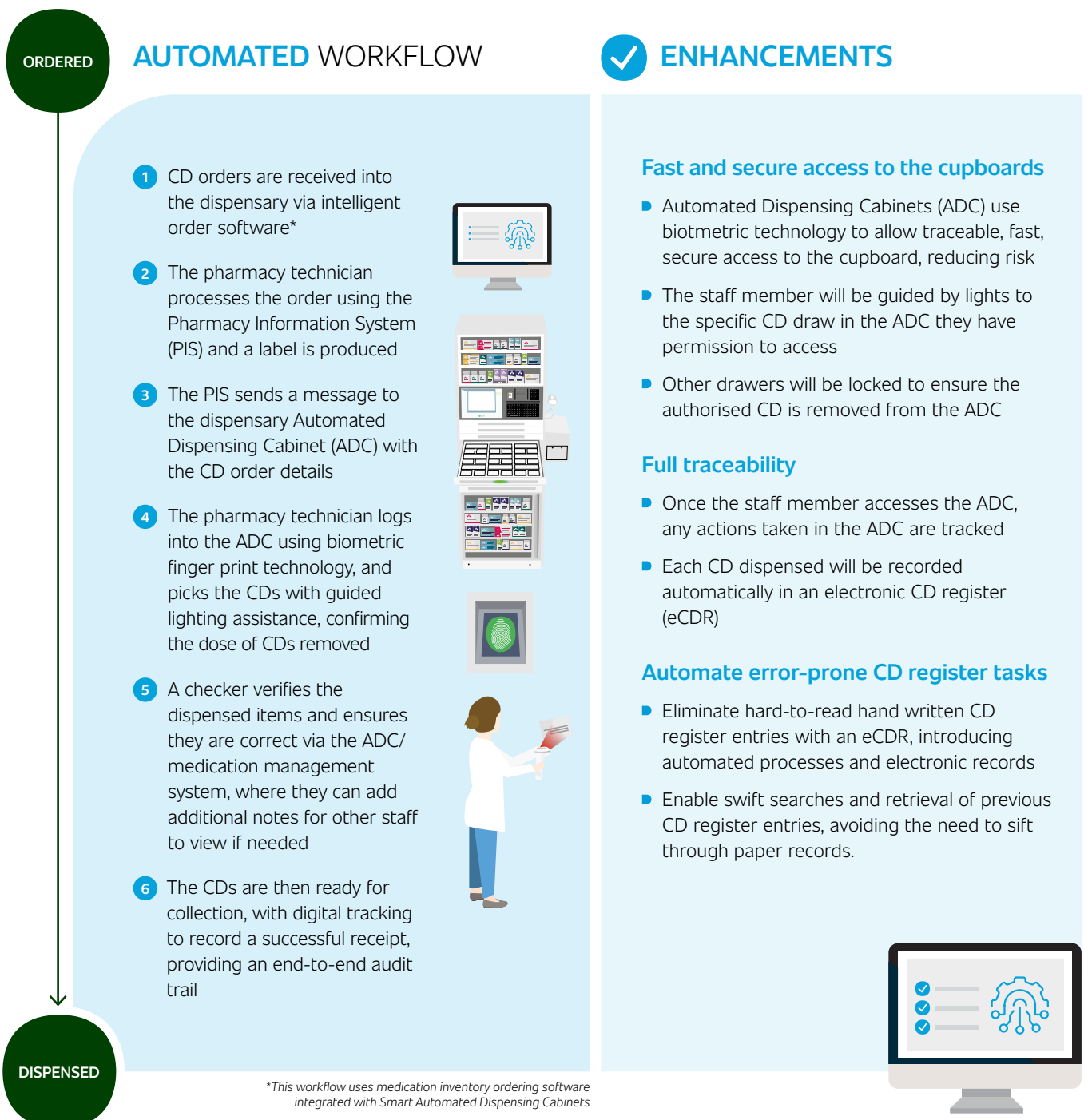**Controlled Drugs Management**

How automation transforms dispensing from Central Pharmacy

If you work in a central pharmacy issuing and dispensing CDs, you'll already be aware of the challenges you're up against. On top of an already busy workload, you find yourself chasing staff members for the keys to the CD cupboards, rummaging through CD shelves trying find the correct medication, and updating an often disorganised and sometimes illegible CD register. Whilst every Central Pharmacy develops its own CD processes over time, a typical workflow looks like this below.

ORDERED

TRADITIONAL WORKFLOW

1. A nurse will bring the CD order book to the central pharmacy dispensary

2. The pharmacy technician will dispense the CD on the Pharmacy Information System (PIS)

3. The Pharmacy Technician prints the CD labels

4. CDs are located and issued from the CD cupboard

5. A CD three-way quantity check is taken by checking the:
   - Pharmacy Information System
   - Quantity on hand
   - CD register

6. Details of the CDs dispensed are logged onto the CD register

7. The CDs dispensed are verified by a checker and the CD register is updated to record the verification. The CDs are then ready for collection by the authorised nurse, porter or patient

DISPENSED

✖ PROBLEMS

Time inefficiency

- To access the CD cabinet, staff need to track down the key which one member of staff usually holds per shift

- Traditional CD cupboards often don't have an organised storage system, meaning staff spend time locating the CDs they need

Error and diversion opportunities

- Once the staff member locates the CD cupboard key they have access to the entire inventory, creating an obvious diversion risk How can you ensure the right member of staff has removed the correct CD?

- When the CD is collected, how certain can you be that it has reached the ward?

Data entry errors

- Data is entered into the CD register manually, meaning that the wrong CD type, quantity, or patient could be recorded

- The inaccuracy of manual record keeping can create governance issues, leading to stressful and time-consuming internal compliance investigations

Controlled Drugs Management

How automation transforms dispensing from Central Pharmacy

With the installation of smart automation and intelligent order management software, the process can look like this below.

ORDERED

AUTOMATED WORKFLOW

1. CD orders are received into the dispensary via intelligent order software*

2. The pharmacy technician processes the order using the Pharmacy Information System (PIS) and a label is produced

3. The PIS sends a message to the dispensary Automated Dispensing Cabinet (ADC) with the CD order details

4. The pharmacy technician logs into the ADC using biometric finger print technology, and picks the CDs with guided lighting assistance, confirming the dose of CDs removed

5. A checker verifies the dispensed items and ensures they are correct via the ADC/ medication management system, where they can add additional notes for other staff to view if needed

6. The CDs are then ready for collection, with digital tracking to record a successful receipt, providing an end-to-end audit trail

DISPENSED

This workflow uses medication inventory ordering software integrated with Smart Automated Dispensing Cabinets

ENHANCEMENTS

Fast and secure access to the cupboards

- Automated Dispensing Cabinets (ADC) use biotmetric technology to allow traceable, fast, secure access to the cupboard, reducing risk

- The staff member will be guided by lights to the specific CD draw in the ADC they have permission to access

- Other drawers will be locked to ensure the authorised CD is removed from the ADC

Full traceability

- Once the staff member accesses the ADC, any actions taken in the ADC are tracked

- Each CD dispensed will be recorded automatically in an electronic CD register (eCDR)

Automate error-prone CD register tasks

- Eliminate hard-to-read hand written CD register entries with an eCDR, introducing automated processes and electronic records

- Enable swift searches and retrieval of previous CD register entries, avoiding the need to sift through paper records.

Controlled Drugs Management

Automation in action

Here's some examples of how we've helped NHS Trusts transform administration-heavy CD management workflows, to become safer, quicker and more transparent.

How using automation helped
Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The hospital installed ADC cabinets across 4 key hospital areas.

Their system digitises and automates the ordering and supplying of CDs from Central Pharmacy into ward areas.

Using the current technological advancements – ADCs and Medication Inventory Ordering Software – dispensing and issuing from central pharmacy into patient areas become more transparent, less time-consuming, and ultimately safer for staff and patients.

Elimination of top-up visits

TIME SAVING 1 hour per top up

• Pharmacy assistant is no longer required to go to ward for this process
• Order process now only consists of auto-generating a top-up list

Reduced time accessing, recording and reconciling controlled drugs

TIME SAVING 15 minutes per CD transaction

• Nursing time returned back to patient care
• No longer need to use keys to access CD cupboard

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
following the installation of ADCs

• **50%** reduction in time taken to dispense CDs

• **Streamlined dispensing process** reducing from 9 steps to 6

• **Cost-savings** through staffing skill mix changes

• **Time released** for other pharmacy and clinical activities

Royal Derby Hospital after the installation of ADCs

"...there are no more register errors or omissions. Staff dispensing controlled drugs are now able to support other tasks in the pharmacy as all their time is no longer taken up with dispensing controlled drugs. In addition, stock counts and balance checks are a lot less onerous."

ⓘ Let's discuss how we can help improve your CD management processes.

Drop us an email today at **sales-AA@omnicell.com**

Download Now: Why technology is a game-changer in the central pharmacy stocking process