

Roy-Heart Pharmacy Keeps Their Legacy Alive

Roy-Heart Drug is a legacy pharmacy in every sense of the word. Partner Casey McDaniels grew up in the Sheridan pharmacy that his father, Sparky McDaniels, joined as a partner in 1985. When Casey graduated pharmacy school in 2009, he became a partner in the business too.

In its 125 years in operation, however, the pharmacy had never seen anything like COVID's total lockdown. Keeping the legacy alive quickly became a challenge for the Roy-Heart team.

"As a large independent store with 10,000 square feet and being in the middle of a shopping center, we have high foot traffic. Shutting down the store was an immediate challenge." Casey shared. COVID required the pharmacy to rethink its entire strategy. Not having a window to use, the team decided to craft a makeshift drive-through using canopies in the parking lot. They hired nine high school student "runners" to move back and forth between the pharmacy register and the parking lot. To maintain relationships with patients, which were strained by the physical distance, the team turned to social media and phone conversations.

Medical synchronization was key to having productive communication with patients. Enrolling patients in the system meant minimal interaction, fewer patient trips, and fewer deliveries. This made it easier to enforce safety protocols for staff and patients visiting Roy-Heart. The pharmacy went from having 150 patients enrolled in the synchronization system in January 2020 to 1400 by the end of the year.

The impact has been measurable. "It's not cumbersome like it was," Casey told us. "We're filling scripts on our terms. When we have lulls, we are filling synchronization meds instead of trying to do that while we're trying to do it for ten patients who are waiting. It's benefiting our patients immensely and it's doing great for our pharmacy."

As they overcame their challenges, Sparky made sure the pharmacy did their part to support other local businesses that were struggling during the pandemic. Everyday, he bought lunch for the entire team from a local establishment and brought the food back into the store to ensure everyone stayed safe.

Casey and especially Sparky continue to give back to their community in more ways than just quality healthcare and eating local. At Thanksgiving, Sparky gave out hundred-dollar bills to all of the employees with the condition that 10% be donated to charity and the other 90% be spent at local businesses. It won't come as a surprise that Roy-Heart won the Good Neighbor Pharmacy of the Year Award in 2020.

Having successfully made it through the worst of the pandemic with their legacy intact, Roy-Heart is ready to expand and extend care further into the community. Another local pharmacy recently closed and the team jumped on the opportunity to open a second location to serve more patients. The new, smaller location is the exact opposite of the original store

and includes a drive-through. "All the things that we couldn't be here, we're using that second store for," Casey said.