This year, PP&P defined distribution models so that survey respondents no longer self-define their model. The marked trend toward decentralized distribution persists and is expected to continue. Because of its declining usage, the decentralized approach is expected to surpass the centralized model next year. Hybrid models also showed a decline, probably due to the newly defined terms. For more information on medication distribution vendors, circle reader service numbers 902, 914, or visit www.findit.pppmag.com

**Definitions:**
- **Centralized**—80% or more of inpatient beds receive medications from the central pharmacy and/or a robot/carousel is the main dispensing platform to unit dose carts.
- **Decentralized**—80% or more of inpatient beds receive medications from satellite pharmacies and/or ADCs.
- **Hybrid**—A combination of centralized and decentralized dispensing of medications to inpatient beds, meeting neither of the conditions above.

**Current Distribution Models**

- **Centralized** 38%
- **Decentralized** 37%
- **Hybrid** 25%

▲ The trend toward decentralized distribution continued this year, jumping from 20% in 2008 to 37% of all facilities in 2009.

**Distribution Models by Facility Size**

- **Centralized**
  - 1-100: 38%
  - 101-200: 38%
  - 201-400: 38%
  - 401+: 24%
- **Decentralized**
  - 1-100: 14%
  - 101-200: 20%
  - 201-400: 24%
  - 401+: 41%
- **Hybrid**
  - 1-100: 51%
  - 101-200: 38%
  - 201-400: 38%
  - 401+: 24%

▲ The largest hospitals (401+beds) are more likely to take a hybrid approach and the centralized model is most common amongst the smallest hospitals (less than 100 beds). However, significant movement toward the decentralized model was seen across facilities of all sizes.

**Devices Used for Medication Distribution**

- **Automated dispensing cabinets**
- **Medication carts**
- **Couriers**
- **Pneumatic tube**
- **COWs**
- **In-room medication cabinets**
- **Automated computerized medication carts**
- **Robotic delivery**
- **Other**

▲ A variety of methods are used within most facilities to distribute medications. Interestingly, more facilities report using couriers and medication carts this year versus last. COWs remained in fifth place this year, however, their usage jumped to 31% from 24% last year, making this a product class to watch. Device usage is relatively similar across all facility sizes, although COWs and pneumatic tubes are more prevalent in larger institutions and smaller institutions are somewhat more likely to use in-room medication cabinets.

NOTE: Totals exceed 100% as most facilities use multiple devices.
Medication Distribution Models

**Satisfaction by Distribution Model**

- **Centralized**
  - 11%
  - 38%
  - 35%
  - 13%
  - 3%

- **Decentralized**
  - 16%
  - 67%
  - 36%
  - 14%
  - 3%

- **Hybrid**
  - 11%
  - 42%
  - 38%
  - 8%
  - 1%

**Distribution Models in Facilities Using BCMA**

- **Centralized** 30%
- **Decentralized** 42%
- **Hybrid** 28%

*Reflecting the trend toward decentralized distribution, facilities with BCMA are most likely to use this model.*

*Facilities taking a decentralized approach are the most satisfied with their distribution method: 83% rate their method as good or excellent. Those with hybrid and centralized models were somewhat less satisfied, just 53% and 49% respectively, rated their approach as good or excellent.*

**Trends in Distribution Models**

- **Centralized**
  - '07: 31%
  - '08: 25%
  - '09: 22%
  - In five years: 19%

- **Decentralized**
  - '07: 36%
  - '08: 37%
  - '09: 44%
  - In five years: 55%

- **Hybrid**
  - '07: 20%
  - '08: 14%
  - '09: 38%
  - In five years: 41%

*The marked trend away from centralized distribution has continued, in fact the centralized approach is projected to be the least common distribution method by 2014. Both hybrid and decentralized models are projected to grow with decentralized distribution becoming the most commonly used model in five years. This is a change from last year when hybrid models were projected to grow at a faster rate than decentralized, which is most likely due to the new definition of terms provided in this year’s survey.*

**Forecasted Distribution Models by Facility Size (in number of beds)**

- **1-100 beds**
  - Centralized: 34%
  - Decentralized: 47%
  - Hybrid: 19%

- **101-200 beds**
  - Centralized: 22%
  - Decentralized: 52%
  - Hybrid: 26%

- **201-400 beds**
  - Centralized: 26%
  - Decentralized: 40%
  - Hybrid: 34%

- **400+ beds**
  - Centralized: 17%
  - Decentralized: 41%
  - Hybrid: 42%

*Centralized distribution is projected to become the most common model of distribution, although the largest facilities will be more likely to take a hybrid approach, and the smallest facilities will be slower to move from decentralized models.*