



Working in a dispensary can be fast-paced and demanding, with a constant flow of tasks that require attention to detail, accuracy, and patience. Whether it's managing prescriptions, helping patients, or maintaining stock, dispensary teams often face ongoing pressure throughout the day. It is easy for stress and fatigue to build up, particularly when there's little time to rest.

That is where *microbreaks* come in. Short, regular pauses that can make a big difference to the well-being and performance of your team. These small breaks can refresh both body and mind, helping your team stay sharp and energised, even on the busiest days.

The Day-to-Day challenges of Dispensary teams

Dispensary work requires focus, organisation, and clear communication. Staff are often on their feet for long stretches, managing everything from handling prescriptions and stock to patient queries. Over time, this can take a toll, leading to fatigue, reduced concentration, and an increased risk of errors. Supporting the team with regular opportunities to rest can help reduce these pressures, ensuring they remain focused and able to provide high-quality care.

Why Microbreaks work

Microbreaks are short, frequent pauses taken throughout the working day to recharge and reset. While they may only last a couple of minutes, their impact can be significant. A study published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* found that even brief breaks as short as 2-5 minutes can improve mood, boost mental focus, and enhance productivity.

By breaking up long periods of concentration or physical activity with these short pauses, dispensary staff can avoid the build-up of mental and physical fatigue, which

often leads to errors or burnout. Microbreaks offer an easy, cost-free way to maintain high standards of accuracy and attention to detail.

How Dispensaries can introduce Microbreaks

Building microbreaks into the working day doesn't require a major overhaul. It is about encouraging short, intentional pauses that give team members a moment to breathe, reset, and stretch.

Regular short breaks throughout the day

Encouraging team members to take a microbreak every hour or so - just for a couple of minutes - can prevent the fatigue that comes from long, uninterrupted shifts. These breaks can be as simple as standing up to stretch, grabbing a drink of water, or stepping outside for a breath of fresh air. The key is consistency: regular, brief pauses help maintain energy levels without disrupting the flow of work.

Promoting a supportive environment

It's important that dispensary staff feel comfortable taking these small breaks. Managers play a crucial role by setting an example and encouraging a work culture where microbreaks are seen as a normal part of the day. By creating an environment where these short pauses are valued, the team will feel empowered to step away when needed without feeling pressured to work through fatigue.

Breaks between tasks

In addition to regular microbreaks, it can help to encourage staff to take a brief pause between tasks. For example, after completing a large batch of prescriptions or finishing a particularly challenging patient interaction, even a 1-minute break can help reset focus before moving on to the next task.

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Benefits of Microbreaks for patient care

Looking after your team’s well-being isn’t just about them-it directly affects patient care. When dispensary staff are well-rested and energised, they’re more likely to stay focused, reduce errors, and handle tasks with care and precision. In turn, this leads to a better experience for patients, who receive a higher standard of service when the team is operating at its best.

Microbreaks also help maintain a positive work atmosphere. Staff who feel supported and less stressed are more likely to engage positively with patients, offering them more time, empathy, and attention-particularly during busy periods.

Conclusion: Small pauses, Big impact

The demands of working in a dispensary aren’t going to disappear, but with regular microbreaks, your team can manage these pressures more effectively. Short, regular pauses help reduce stress, maintain focus, and prevent fatigue from building up, all while improving job satisfaction.

By encouraging microbreaks throughout the day, dispensary managers can create a healthier, more productive environment where staff feel supported and able to perform at their best. In the end, small pauses can make a big difference, both for the well-being of the team and the quality of care they provide to patients.

Reference : Fritz, C., & Ellis, A. M. (2016). Microbreaks as a way to boost work engagement: The role of recovery experiences during daily work tasks. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 101(10), 1131-1142.

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