INTEGRATED CALL MANAGEMENT

Efficient Patient Care

AdvocateAuroraHealth
Advocate Health Care Aurora Health Care

"We are executing on an incredible task: modernizing to meet the needs of a demanding market, while self-funding these investments through efficiency gains. There is no other platform like Health Desk – it addresses our needs now as well as our future growth."

*- **Dr. Jennifer DeBruler**, VPMM of Patient Access, Medical Director, Advocate Contact Center*

Executive Summary 1

Through implementation of Health Desk, Advocate Healthcare realizes the following ongoing efficiencies:

- Reduced total handle time by 34%
- Streamlined workflow complexities and reduced training time
- Drill-downs on user and team performance with near real-time online dashboards & self-service data analytics
- Customized to client needs and facilitated patient self-service
- Standardization of all communication, including documentation, messaging, and paging
- Integration with EHR, scheduling, and telephony software

About Advocate Nursing Contact Center

Established in 2002, Advocate's clinical call center has consistently grown every year. Today it is the largest of its kind in the Chicagoland area.

Nurses: 80
Calls: 155,000/year triaged

Challenges

The Advocate call workflow used to be quite complicated. Every call was documented inside the triage software, but nurses had to navigate six different applications to do other things. For instance, viewing the patient's health history and sending provider messages was done in the EHR while second-level triage and collegial consults needed paging software. Appointments were scheduled in yet a third application…and the list goes on. Because these applications were not tightly integrated, the workflow suffered inherent delays and required double or sometimes triple data entry of basic patient information.

When faced with a particularly complicated or site-specific process, nurses typically consulted with a nurse colleague, referenced an online document repository, or just relied on their best recollection. In addition, practice sites sometimes required custom workflows which required deviation from standard. With complex processes and custom workflows, error rates increased and, with it, provider complaints.

The training required to become proficient across all the applications and workflow variations typically took six months. The mean nurse handle time for the department was nearly twenty-two minutes.

Errors, physician complaints, user frustrations, long (expensive) handle times and a sub-optimal patient experience – perhaps the result of using siloed systems.

Health Desk

Health Desk integrated the contact center apps to bring the call-related information into a single platform. Health Desk facilitated single sign-on to EHR, triage system and SharePoint knowledge base to shows nurses what they need, when they need it. Integration into the telephony system nearly eliminated patient searches and allowed for auto-loading of site-specific special instructions. Appointment system integration made scheduling as easy as a few clicks and EHR integration allows charting to be saved in a consistent, approved format back to the patient's chart.

Results

In the first six months after Health Desk went live, department mean handle time went from nearly **twenty-two** minutes down to **fourteen-and-a-half** minutes.

Contributing factors

- Complexity decreased and adherence to policy increased.
- Business rules embedded in Health Desk guide users through workflows customized for each site (e.g. second level triage, medication refills, or custom assessments for OB providers) Second level triage adherence, a particularly complicated case, went from less than 10% to over 90%.
- Up-front training time decreased and ongoing training became much more effective.
- Real-time transparency from analytics allows leaders to have conversations with staff around individual and group performance trends. Anatomy-of-a-call performance drill-downs allow supervisors to identify individual nurse call component opportunities and review them in weekly coaching sessions.
- Practice sites enjoy self-service options, which make them co-owners of the process. This, along with increased transparency, improves buy-in among the clients.

"I've been doing telephone triage for 15 years. When we first started configuring Keona, I had a long list of wants and needs. I have to say that there isn't anything on my list that they haven't been able to deliver."

*- **Timothy Ogrentz, MS, BSN, RN**; Manager Contact Center Nursing, responsible for Health Desk implementation*