How Swiftqueue is transforming the consumer lifecycle

ADVANCEMENTS IN HEALTHCARE PLANNING TECHNOLOGY

During the first two decades of the new millennium, many medical centers and healthcare organizations embraced a new approach to healthcare with Hospital 4.0. Hospital 4.0 describes a new era of smart, connected healthcare services. It encompasses the use of several innovations including integrating artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), Big Data, and the Internet of Things (IoT). Together, these help providers significantly improve experiences for both healthcare professionals and their patients.

Equally as important as advancements in technology, are advancements in finding and planning care. Many consumer-physician interactions include scheduling appointments, referrals, check ins, follow ups, lab work and other critical clinic workflow processes. Despite current technology advancements, it's still difficult for consumers to find and schedule an appointment with a physician, let alone access healthcare innovations of the 21st century.

To help solve this problem Swiftqueue by Dedalus provides healthcare departments, hospitals, and hospital groups with an online healthcare appointment platform. Swiftqueue serves all aspects of scheduling including referrals, booking, at home care management, capacity planning, and patient flow.

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THE CHALLENGE OF LEGACY SYSTEMS

The 21st century ushered in incredible medical advancements such as artificial organs, enabled breakthrough HIV treatments, and saw the mapping of the human genome, all promising longer, healthier lives for millions of humans. Undoubtedly, healthcare has made leaps and bounds.

Yet, some challenges remain. One in particular relates to efficient healthcare planning. Legacy planning systems have not kept pace with influxes in the number of patients, appointments, procedures, record-keeping, and data-gathering needs. Some healthcare organizations continue to rely on on-premise systems, in-house teams, and analog documentation. While many organizations understand the benefits of digitizing operations, the time and budget required to make the digital transformations hinders progress. However, in the long term, cloud-based, digital systems have the potential to result in improved consumer and clinician experience. By automating processes, healthcare staff can save precious time and reduce the risk of human error at every stage: from referral management and scheduling to real-time clinic management and patient engagement. The benefits far outweigh the growing pains of progress. Additionally, the risk of human error is mitigated at every stage, from referral management and scheduling to real-time clinic management and patient engagement. The benefits far outweigh the growing pains of progress.

FINDING BALANCE

Uneven distribution of consumers across healthcare facilities can result in one hospital exceeding capacity on a regular basis, while another hospital nearby is consistently under utilized. Ideally, a medical network would reroute patients from one hospital to another, evenly distributing urgency and consumer demand with the availability of the care teams for a better experience.

A similar issue is the tendency for patients to visit acute hospitals for non-acute services. For example, a large general hospital is not the place for a service like a blood test, diagnostic imaging, or other non-urgent, routine checkups. Yet, because hospitals offer these services and are often the closest medical facility, people travel to them for non-acute services. This results in long wait lists, with the next available appointment showing up three or four months in the future. At one site in Canada, the next available appointment at the nearest hospital was in 290 days. Meanwhile, the next available appointment at a medical facility an hour away was just 10 days. Without cross-system communication, the nearby hospital remains overwhelmed with demand, and patients can go nine months without the necessary healthcare services they need.

Load balancing distributes non-acute services–like phlebotomy, medical imaging, and physical therapy–to more appropriate and available locations. At the University Hospital of Coventry in Coventry, England, Swiftqueue rerouted 6,000 appointments per month into community clinics and facilitated a 20% increase in network capacity. This solves simple issues like limited parking capacity, that can also create a complex challenge in more urban settings. It's a tremendous relief for the clinical staff to be able to avoid burnout and administrative overload.

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PATIENT FLOW EFFICIENCIES

Walk-in appointments appeal to some medical centers because they reduce the need for a scheduling service. However, what is saved by avoiding a scheduling service is lost when staffing isn't tied to demand. Imagine scheduling staff for a facility without a forecast of how many patients need care on a given day. Staff rosters become inefficient when facilities can't anticipate how busy any given day will be.

BACKLOG RECOVERY IN A POST-COVID WORLD

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected nearly every aspect of life, but its effect on the healthcare system is perhaps most significant. As a result of Covid-19 cases placed on hospitals and doctors, many people were unable to receive scheduled care or address new medical issues. Covid-19 significantly reduced healthcare capacity and busied many medical professionals for more than a year with testing, vaccinations, and medical care. The lasting effect of this shift in medical attention is massive backlogs for even routine health assessments, like vision and hearing tests for school children. In one instance, Swiftqueue managed and caught up with scheduling thousands of school children's routine exams in just three weeks.

SWIFTQUEUE SOLVES YOUR ORGANIZATION'S PLANNING CHALLENGES:

◊ Online and centralized booking

◊ Referral management

◊ Self-referral pathways

◊ Waiting list management

◊ Patient flow management

◊ At home care

◊ Improved demand capacity planning

◊ Integration PAS/EMR diagnostic systems

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ECONOMIC AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES WITH ENTERPRISE SCHEDULING

Enterprise scheduling includes an automated appointment manager that features a centralized view of all events in your organization. Swiftqueue's enterprise scheduling platform communication optimizes the experience for everyone, including patients, practitioners, and administrators. With Swiftqueue, you can decrease wait times from hours to minutes, increase efficiency of scheduling, plan resources to match demand, lower costs, and improve communication between healthcare providers and the public. Key outcomes of these benefits are reduced stress on the care team and the patient, less clinician burnout and better quality of service. Swiftqueue's enterprise scheduling solution integrates with crucial hospital information cloud systems, and can be implemented in just days or weeks.

Amazon Web Services and SwiftQueue: Better Together

Using the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Cloud, Swiftqueue's clients benefit from enhanced scalability, agility, and security. By managing storage and operations in the AWS Cloud, Swiftqueue gives its healthcare providers the bandwidth to focus on other projects.

AWS offers an impressive array of tools and services to support the virtual environments required by different organizations. AWS's key value to Swiftqueue is its secure, connected availability zones. An availability zone is a collection of data centers with redundant power, networking, and connectivity in an AWS Region. By placing availability zones in every continent (except Antarctica), AWS clients can operate more highly available, fault-tolerant, and scalable applications and processes than would otherwise be possible. In-country virtual servers adhere to security policies and government regulations, where applicable.

The AWS Cloud provides safe, secure access to IT resources including computing power and storage with a scalable model. In addition, each AWS Region consists of multiple availability zones that connect via redundant, ultra-low-latency networks and feature the highest levels of security, compliance, and data protection.

BENEFITS:

A CLOSER LOOK AT ONLINE AND CENTRALIZED BOOKING

Before significant advancements in communication, data management, and connectivity, people would contact their doctor's office by phone to schedule an appointment. If the line was busy, a desk clerk might put them on hold, or ask to leave a message, which would often lead to a game of phone tag, possibly delaying the patient's access to healthcare. The problem with this outdated system is it requires both parties to have simultaneous availability – just to schedule the appointment. Today, this type of synchronicity simply isn't a reasonable expectation and unnecessary.

With Swiftqueue, consumers have the ability to schedule their own appointments on their own time. There's no more waiting on hold or trying to coordinate with other family members with the doctor's office on the line. This online and centralized booking system benefits not only the consumers, but also the clinic and provider. Automated booking reduces the need for a human scheduler, freeing the administration team to tackle other projects and optimize their time. It also results in a smoother, less stressful scheduling process. Healthcare organizations make appointments available online and consumers choose what works best for them.

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> *"The platform features demand analysis and predictive analytics to manage resources and avoid bottlenecks."*

BENEFITS:

OPTIMIZING AT HOME CARE

For patients who benefit from home care, it's not the facilities or medical equipment of a hospital they need, it's the clinicians. In fact, making the journey from home to hospital can put some patients at unnecessary health risk. It also ties up essential resources for non-emergency travel, such as ambulances and transportation staff. In some instances, home care is the best option.

One challenge of home care is still, however, scheduling. To deliver quality healthcare to the most patients, home care needs efficient planning and execution so time is not wasted. Swiftqueue provides home care services with precise scheduling tools, like the ability to share information centrally, fast and easy communication, and automated processes to optimize operations. The solution includes automated reminders, preparation instructions, and notifications so patients have the information and time they need to prepare for an appointment. It's also simple to set up. The platform features demand analysis and predictive analytics to manage resources and avoid bottlenecks.

BENEFITS:

REAL-TIME CLINIC MANAGEMENT FOR A SMOOTH CARE JOURNEY

Everyone knows what a stressful place waiting rooms can be. Predicting wait times is often difficult and frustrating. Meanwhile, clinicians do everything they can to see patients quickly while delivering care.

Moving someone through an appointment requires a lot of steps. There's check-in, alerting the doctor, selecting the exam room, booking the proper facility, calling the person in, collecting payment, and check-out. By automating many of these steps, patients can rest assured efficiency is on their side, ushering them through an organized, intuitive experience. Swiftqueue's real-time clinic management is simple to set up, use, and offers automated reporting and predictive analysis to avoid pileups.

To learn more about how Swiftqueue can support consumer lifecycles at your organization, click here.