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Q&A

with Josh Marx, Managing Director, Medical Service Company

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Managing Director, Medical Service Company

Medical Service Company (MSC), a sleep and respiratory-focused disease management company in Cleveland, Ohio, shares advice and best practices for providers interested in rolling out a patient engagement app.

The family-owned and operated organization has over 20 care sites throughout the Midwest and the Northeast and has experienced excellent efficiency gains since implementing the Patient Hub by Brightree in 2019.

Q. **What are some of the challenges that lead you to a patient engagement app?**

A. We continue to think about common challenges in our operation and then look through the lens of: "if" and "how" technology can help.

One of the challenges that we had was reaching our patients, and the traditional phone call, voicemail, telephone tag just wasn't getting orders out the door and patients taken care of fast enough.

We also wanted to update demographic and billing information whenever something changed with our patients. Today, you end up finding out when supplies are returned because they were sent to the wrong place or when you get a denial for an insurance change in the beginning of the year. Finally, we wanted to be able to ping the patient when something was happening in their account that they were unaware of or that we wanted them to know.

So, a couple of those key challenges or bottlenecks that we had at our organization, we stepped back and said, "How can we leverage the Patient Hub to help streamline those pieces?"

Q. **Why is using technology like the Patient Hub by Brightree app important for your business and your patients?**

A. We look at it from "What's in it for me?" for our three stakeholders involved.

The first is the obvious one: the patient. Our patients want to order supplies and new equipment. They want easy chat functionality to get in contact with someone without being on hold. And they want to update changes to their personal information when things change.

From the team members' perspective, they want to reach a patient and process orders faster; they want to get an updated doctor to send the CMN out to the right place; they want to update insurance information if we get an insurance denial.

And then when you take a step back and think about the organization as a whole, we want less canceled orders, faster set up time, fewer denials and, ultimately, an improved clean claim rate.

Q. **How did you get started implementing Patient Hub with your staff?**

A. The first thing we wanted to do was make sure that the team understood the "why?" And the answer is: it's a faster and easier way for us to connect with our customers.

Then we put together some challenges to drive adoption internally, including contests around who could enroll the most patients over a certain timeframe. Entering their name into a hat and raffling off small incentives like gift cards not only drove enrollment but created a level of competition, which was very effective for us.

Q. **How did you get your patients engaged and signed up?**

A. We've started to incorporate discussing the Patient Hub in our CPAP scheduling script. The goal is to talk to the patient about the platform as early as possible, explain the value, and set an expectation early on that the app is the best way to communicate with us to get your care needs accomplished.

If we set the expectation from the beginning that this is how you reach us, and why, the customer often doesn't know anything otherwise, and it ends up being a flawless interaction. That's the direction that we're going.

Q. **What efficiency gains have you seen using the app?**

A. Messages are securely communicated through the app that would've ended up being a game of telephone tag, either outbound to the patient or inbound to our team. I also know that it takes us about two-and-a-half attempts to reach a patient on a return call. The time that we save without those outbound attempts allows our team to focus on the next patient that needs our care. That was a key objective that we were able to accomplish.

Another simple framework of the platform is that each patient that enrolls immediately verifies their demographic information for us. To have the patient themselves be that second set of eyes allows us to safeguard from things like mistyping or getting incorrect information from a hospital face sheet. We've seen a lot of value in just the table-stakes application of Patient Hub.

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