experian™
health

Automation and efficiency are the secret to faster patient collections

Novant Health sees impressive return on investment after implementing Collections Optimization Manager to automate workflows and increase patient collections

Client

With over $6.7 billion in net patient revenue and 6.8 million patient encounters logged in a single year, Novant Health needs patient collections processes to operate smoothly. The organization works hard to deliver remarkable patient experiences, and the patient finance team saw automated patient collections as a way to ensure better financial experiences for their growing consumer base following mergers.

- 19 MEDICAL CENTERS
- 722 CLINICS
- OVER 39,000 EMPLOYEES

Challenge

Novant Health wanted to automate their healthcare collections to reduce the need for staff intervention, using a wide-ranging platform that would easily integrate with Epic® and provide robust reporting and insights. At one point, Novant Health was managing 21 different collections agencies, and compiling performance reports manually was a drain on staff resources. It was important to find a partner that could help to monitor and improve agency performance while driving operational efficiency.

Resolution

To achieve these goals, Novant Health sought a strategic partner who would provide a dedicated, experienced consultant to understand Novant's unique needs, to help optimize their efforts and to track Novant's ROI.

"We wanted a system with proven results in back-end automation, operational improvement and analytical performance. Novant was looking for a partner who would help to propel our patient experience to the next level."

— **Wendi Bennett,** Director of Patient Finance at Novant Health

With Collections Optimization Manager, Novant could access industry-leading automations, integrated digital tools and real-time data insights for more efficient patient collections. They also received direct support from Cari Cesaro, Senior Director of Enterprise Healthcare Consulting at Experian Health, who has been working with Novant Health to implement and optimize Collections Optimization Manager as their collections consultant.

Results

Novant Health can now quickly identify patients with the highest propensity to pay in-house, thereby lowering agency costs. They can also identify patients with presumptive charity eligibility and those whose accounts may need to be written off to bad debt, allowing them to offer specific assistance to those who are eligible for charitable support or need alternative payment plans. This has afforded Novant to facilitate efficient workflows and execute faster collections, along with providing compassionate financial conversations with patients.

Novant Health has also been able to track and improve collections agency performance. With support from their collections consultant, Novant Health can monitor agency

performance, check agency compliance and keep agency costs in check. Wendi Bennett says that the agency scorecard has been one of the biggest successes so far, and her executive leadership team has welcomed the ability to see agency performance in real time through a customized dashboard.

Results post-implementation of Collections Optimization Manager:

- 5.8% YOY in unit yield
- 6.5% recovery rate
- 8.5:1 rolling average ROI
- Improvements in real-time agency performance

As Novant Health continues to grow and new facilities come on board following mergers, the team wants to make sure that all solutions work cohesively and integrate within the Epic® environment. This includes an agency payment plan analysis to assess each agency's inventory and performance. Additionally, Compliance Manager will be implemented to track potential compliance and reputational risks associated with Novant's collections agency partners.

Collections Optimization Manager — a targeted approach for better collections

Collections Optimization Manager helps healthcare organizations improve patient collections through a targeted approach using data analytics. It produces robust accounts receivable insights to determine each patient's propensity to pay and scrub uncollectable accounts.

Automated screening and identification of deceased patient accounts allow Novant Health to focus its collections efforts on accounts with a higher likelihood of payment, improving accounts receivable management. Previously, this task was cumbersome and error-prone due to manual scanning of newspaper obituaries by hospital staff.

Collections Optimization Manager's "route and reconcile" feature generates a daily file with details of every account held by Novant Health. This includes accounts receivable

and bad debt. It knows the status of every single patient account and continuously monitors changes in patients' ability to pay. Experian then sends this information to Novant Health's agency partners. Experian's data-driven rules engine builds routing and recall rules that distribute accounts to the internal and external servicing channels that are most likely to collect the amount owed.

"Customized segmentation provides the ability to better narrow down those accounts that represent the highest potential for payment and match these to their calling capacity in-house. Customized segmentation also gives the client the ability to keep the best, most collectible accounts in-house longer and give the lower yield accounts to their 'early out' agency sooner. We drive revenue back in the door by focusing on these accounts."

—C ari Cesaro, Senior Director of Enterprise Healthcare Consulting at Experian Health

For Novant Health, this means that staff resources can be allocated to the right accounts, which is especially beneficial during a period where staff recruitment and retention has been challenging across the healthcare industry. Less complex cases can be managed through outbound dialer programs. Automated calls can also be made for delinquent payments, 501(r) collections and in specific circumstances, for example, to remind new parents to add their baby onto their insurance plans.

The product also provides real-time reporting, benchmarking and agency management, so providers like Novant Health can optimize their processes and forecast future performance. All these features combine to ensure that accounts are managed in the most efficient way so providers can improve patient collections and provide a better patient financial experience.

Find out more about Collections Optimization Manager.