



Blue Cross  
Blue Shield  
Blue Care Network  
of Michigan



# Patient Experience: Convenience tops expectations in dynamic health care environment

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# Why is Patient Experience important?

***Covid-19 has rapidly changed the “normal” patient experience in the provider office***

- Patient Loyalty: today patients have more options for seeking and receiving health care services
- Positive patient experience is linked to better health outcomes and patient adherence to protocol
- Patients today post, read and use reviews online of provider/offices to make choices
- Staff burnout, stress and turnover is decreased



# Let's Play... "Patient Experience" Jeopardy



600  
1



800  
2



400  
3



1

CLUE



**Clue:** The # 1 most reported reason  
for patient dissatisfaction with provider  
offices

**Answer?**



# ANSWER:

## What is waiting to see the doctor in waiting/exam rooms?

- 30% of patients will switch providers if forced to wait “too long”
- Patient satisfaction with their provider experience drops if wait time exceeds 22mins



2

CLUE



**Clue:** 80% patients report they have or will take this action for more convenient service

**Answer?**



# ANSWER:

## What is switch providers or provider offices?

- New research: 80% of patients reported that they'd switch providers for "convenience factors" alone
- 51% said convenience and access to care followed by cost are the most important factors in choosing a provider office
- 67% say their standards for good service are higher than "ever" and they would pay more for a better, more convenient experience



3

CLUE

**Clue:** Patient use of these services has increased 500% in past 3 years.

**Answer?**







The care ♥  
you need  
on your  
schedule 📅

Welcome to Minute Clinic.



## ANSWER:

### What are retail medical clinics?

- By 2018, there were 2,800 retail clinics in the US. 14x times higher than a decade before.
- CVS creating 1500 HealthHUBs in their stores with 20% of dedicated store space
- 30% of patients report using a retail clinic when not able to get an appt as needed with primary care
- 30% of patients use them as primary care for convenience of better hours and wait times



4

CLUE

**Clue:** @ 50% of millennial aged patients claim these as their primary care

**Answer?**





# ANSWER:

## What are urgent care clinics

### Millennials prefer quick service provided for the cost

- # of Urgent care centers in US tops 9,000
- 92% urgent care users report wait times < 30 minutes on average
- Avg days wait for a provider office appointment = 30+
- 2 of 5 patients report having looked for and switched providers to get an appointment sooner
- Patients report high satisfaction with the convenience of urgent care



5

CLUE

**Clue:** This option to receive medical service requires no travel or in office visit.

**Answer?**





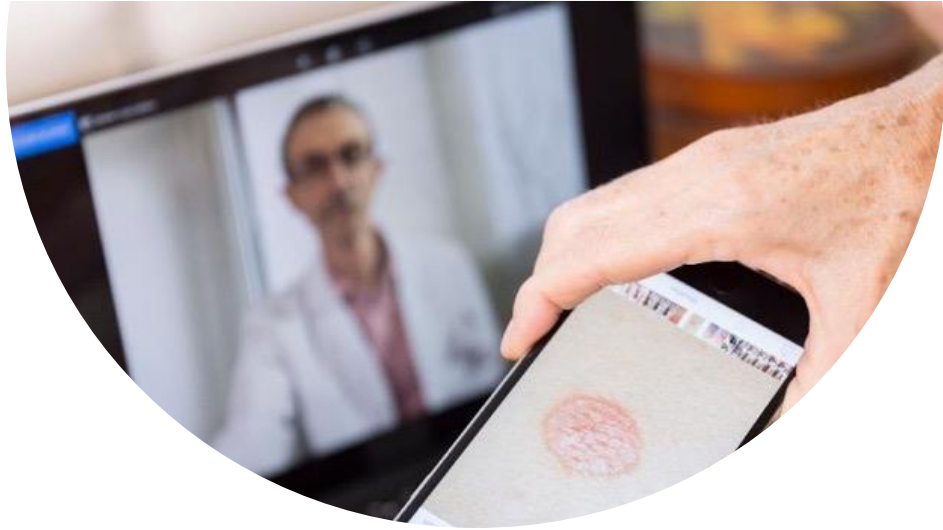
# ANSWER:

## What telehealth or telemedicine?

- Telehealth up 53%, growing faster than any other place of care
- 7 million U.S. telemedicine patients in 2018 – a 19,000% increase in 5 years!
- Avg time to connect with physician = 5 mins\*
- Avg time of medical appointment = 6.6 minutes vs 121 minutes in office visit\*

\* Telehealth visits have skyrocketed and wait times have increased accordingly





## Telehealth per COVID-19: Changing the meaning of convenience

- 2020 prediction: 200 million – 1 billion telehealth visits
- Cleveland Clinic- 60K telemedicine visits up 50% in March
- 25% patient consumers used telehealth pre Covid-19, 59% report used during COVID-19 and will continue to use telemedicine and 33% said they'd leave provider for one who offers telehealth
- Jump in tech offerings: HeyDoctor, 98point6, One Medical, HIMS, K Health and more
- In MI providers report telemedicine making up 50-90% of visits during COVID -19 time period





# ***What healthcare consumers want:***

***Easy Access  
Just in time access  
Flexible options for access  
= Convenience***

- Convenience to patients = easy, quick, responsive accessibility
- 51%+ patients say convenience and access to care are the most important factors influencing their decision-making!

**Appointment availability, wait times and access options top the list**



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# Convenience factor and wait times

Strategies, Tips and Tactics for improving the inconvenience of waiting...

- 01** Eliminate or Reduce wait-times
- 02** Change the Perception of wait-times



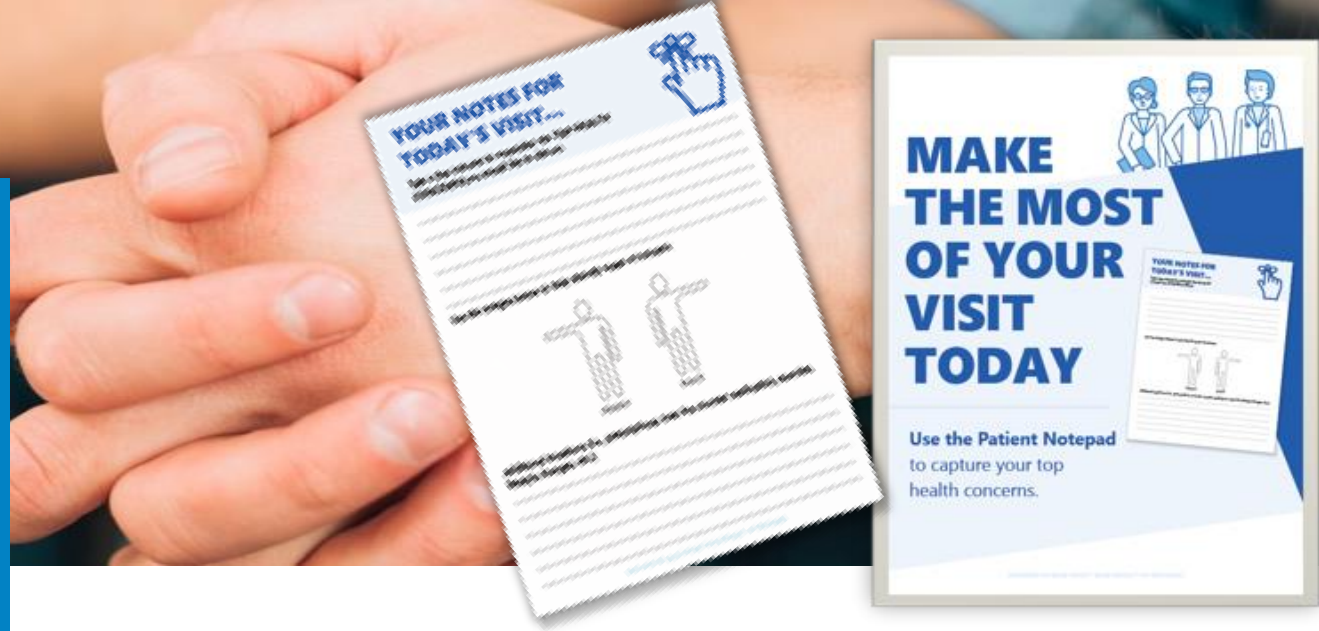
# Tips / Tactics to Reduce Wait Times



- Track and be aware of waits in office, holding on the phone or virtually for telehealth
  - Use EMR features or exam room door timers to track actual time
  - Do periodic tests to know average wait time using post it notes, timers, EMR systems and discuss with staff, physicians
- Offer care option to see other providers in office e.g., NP, PA
- Use auto text message, email or call about appointment reminders and delays
- Offer the option to schedule and check in ahead of time online
- Get insurance, referrals and other info in advance, have payment options like card on file and automated payment plans
- Have patients capture key notes to cover with doctor ahead of time
- Familiarize medical staff of patient record and complaint ahead of time
- Inject a little buffer time into the schedule, don't overbook



# Delays happen... *strategies on changing perception of wait time*



- Set the expectation for the wait
- Continually inform patient of wait status in office or via virtual telemedicine
  - Provide updates on virtual platforms to avoid patient from signing out and back in again
- Provide diversions
  - Use the time to have patient complete a spot survey
  - Have patient document items to review with provider
  - Provide informational videos
- Inform patient of delay before they get to office
- Offer options: Give them option to leave and come back at xx time. Text them they are “next in line”
- Apologize, apologize and offer options: reschedule, telemedicine



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# Tips to Reduce wait times for Telehealth


- Develop **simple instructional communication** for first time telemedicine **patients**
- **Ensure technical equipment is properly set up** and test sound, camera, internet prior to doing appointments
- Engage and use queuing capabilities that track next in line & provides for updates on wait times for patients
- Track opt outs, **no shows** or sign offs to determine if patients are leaving the queue and why
- Train **multiple medical staff** to use the virtual technology
- **Determine criteria for in office versus virtual visits and train staff for making appropriate type appointments**
- **Triage appointments** to assign medical staff and to allow appropriate virtual visit time
- Use text or email capabilities to provide reminders, obtain insurance and medical record updates and take payments prior to the virtual visit



# Strategies and Tips to improve accessibility

- **Measure Access-** know how long patients wait to get a routine or urgent appointment at your practice and track over a time period to determine **peak and variation in times**
- **Monitor** and track appointment requests denied and the reason for their appointment request
- **Implement** to improve access:
  - Schedule staff around the peak times for appointments
  - Reserve 4 appointments on daily schedule and open the blocked appointments each morning (PCMH)
  - Develop scripts so the schedulers can triage for symptoms and urgency of the appointment
  - Educate about other medical staff and offer appointments with NP, PA
  - Offer options such as telemedicine, schedule telemedicine appointments for after normal hours
  - Use text reminders to reduce no shows
  - Complete all services to minimize return appointments



A blurred background image of a doctor in a white lab coat with a stethoscope around their neck, holding the hand of a patient. The doctor is wearing a grey tie and a white shirt. The patient's hand is visible in the foreground, being held by the doctor's hand.

What do you know  
about your patient  
experiences today?

Why Measure?

*If you don't know where you are going any  
road can take you there. Alice in Wonderland*



# Getting started on measuring patient experience

- Determine **why and what** patient experience is being measured and **how** the information will be used
- Assess whether it would be useful to collect both **qualitative** and **quantitative** data
- Consider whether to **track all** patients using the services or only **a sample** to provide feedback
- Plan for how results will be **compiled**, by **whom** and how results will be shared and **used** for improvements
- Make sure that patients, care givers, and staff are all comfortable with why feedback is being collected and how it will be used. Staff need to **be on board** as well as patients
- Ensure that patient experience measures are seen as one component of a **broader framework of measurement**





# Tips and tools for spot surveying

- Determine **what** patient experience you want feedback about
- Use the **EMR capability** for email or text surveying or **create or use BCBSM** provided survey **templates**
- Keep it simple – minimum # of questions
- Train all staff to promote survey
- Make survey available in multiple locations and times during patient visit
- Compile survey results regularly and share with staff for feedback



# More tools for measuring patient experiences

## Identifying Gaps in Patient Experience:

- Use **secret shopper** patient and document the steps, the timing, the interactions of a patient journey
- **Track and compile patient call drivers or complaints for gaps in patient experience**
  - **Check sheets** for tracking types of calls e.g., for Rx or test results



**INBOUND CALL TRACKING FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Extension: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Place a tick mark "✓" for each call in the proper category. If the patient calls BACK, place a DOT on the tick mark "•". You only want this survey information to be gathered only at the point of the practice's first live contact with the patient's inbound call.

	Scheduling		Prescriptions		Test / Lab Results		Referrals		Prior Authorizations		Nurse / Physician		Billing		Patient Education		Other	Transfers	Total	
	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat	1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat			1 <sup>st</sup>	Repeat
8-9 AM																				
9-10 AM																				
10-11 AM																				
11-12 PM																				
12-1 PM																				
1-2 PM																				
2-3 PM																				
3-4 PM																				
4-5 PM																				
5-6 PM																				
6-7 PM																				
7-8 PM																				

To get a grip on your phone calls, measure the frequency of your inbound calls by type of call for a period of at least five days using this tracking sheet. Be sure to delineate the calls that are repeats. Then, study your findings. Are you receiving a high number of repeated calls in any one category? Do your practice's processes force patients to call your office? Is your staff empowered to handle calls, or just take messages? How many "hand-offs" does each call take? Use the information you've gathered to guide your improvement efforts.

# Tools for measuring patient experiences

## Tracking wait times

- Using **EMR** for tracking in office or virtual appointment related time
- Use **timing post its** for tracking from check in to check out in office to measure wait times



## Turnaround times for labs, tests and follow up info

- Use features in **EMR** to track **lab and test results timing** e.g. from send/receive and circulate for physician review and approval
- Keep copies of order **forms attached to files** with files kept in a “review” area to track timing and response to patients

PATIENT WAIT TIME TRACKING FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Sample:  All Patients:

Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Number or #	Appointment Time	Checked In / Waiting Room	Time in Waiting Room	Placed in Exam Room	Time in Exam Room	Provider / Medical Staff enters Exam Room	Check out Time
#1 Example	8:15	8:05	25	8:30	15	8:45	9:00
#2 Example	12:00	11:45	25	12:10	20	12:30	12:50
#3							
#4							
#5							
#6							
#7							
#8							
#9							
Total / Avg Time			50 / 25		35 / 17.5		

### LAB OR TEST RESULTS

AVAILABLE DATE

Normal results will be available to you via:

MAIL  
 PHONE  
 PATIENT PORTAL

If you don't receive your results by the date above please contact us at:

Required timing for your:	Same Day	2-5 Days	6-9 Days	10-24 Days
Biopsy				
Blood Work				
Bone Density Test				
CAT Scan				
Doppler Ultrasound				
EEG				
EKG				
EMG				
Mammogram				
MRI				
Pap Smear				
Rapid Diagnostic Test				
Stress Test				
Ultrasound				
X-ray   Special X-Ray				

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# Our Resources available now to you:

## Staff training sessions:

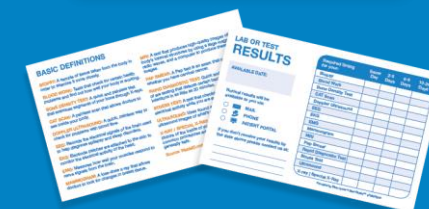
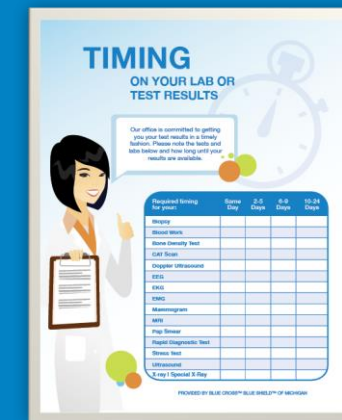
- Courteous and Respectful Service
- Patient Experience 101 Immersion activity

## Staff Working Sessions:

- 5 Step Improvement method with patient experience journey mapping, brainstorming, action planning

## Tactic Kits Materials, communication pieces, tips and ideas:

- Improving wait time (timers, note pads, more)
- Follow up on labs/tests (next steps and reminder communication pieces)
- Med reconciliation ( RX refill reminders, med cards and bags, more)
- More





**Interested in these tools and tips and more available to you? Looking for help in improving patient experience in your office?**

**Contact us for our expert patient experience consultant resources. We will work with you to train and engage your staff, look for improvements, provide tools, and share tips to improve the focus and patient experience ratings in your office.**

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