

Access Redesign: I Want To...



Reduce System-Generated Demand and Improve TNAA

- Allow patients to call in to schedule their next appointment instead of automatic scheduling.
- Extend follow-up appointment intervals, when feasible.
Example: Instead of automatically scheduling a patient 3 months out, extend to 6 months.
- Use different methods/technology for meeting patient needs like phone, email and text messaging.
Example: Leverage/build a notification system that will alert your patients when it's time to be seen.
- Remove unnecessary or duplicate visits from the schedule.
Example: If a patient is being seen on Tuesday but has a previously scheduled appointment for Friday, consult the patient and remove the Friday appointment.



Implement and Improve Same-Day Access

- Perform a demand study to determine the number of daily requests for appointments by provider (for routine and urgent care).
- Based on results of the demand study, identify the number of appointments to reserve on daily provider schedules.
- Block the number of same-day slots in the schedule.
- Give these slots a new label (e.g., "same-day") to allow you to easily monitor and run reports for that appointment type.

Avoid reserving these slots for "urgent" requests only. Patients seeking routine care should also have access to same day appointments.

- Train staff on the use of same-day appointment slots. Monitor slots to ensure they stay open.
- Determine availability and utilization, then adjust the number of same-day slots reserved based on demand.



Improve Telephone Access

- Monitor response times to clinical advice calls.
Establish protocol and track the provider response time.
- Perform a 'Secret Shopper' call on your practice.

**How many times did the phone ring before the call was answered?
How helpful was the person that ultimately answered the call?**

Were you placed on hold? For how long? Was the phone initially picked up by an auto attendant, a person, or were you placed on hold immediately?



Decrease Total Cycle Time

Consider Your Space

- Bring as many services as possible to the patient instead of moving them around.
- Have 2 exam rooms for each provider and allow providers to move from room to room.

Work as a Team

- Leverage the full clinical capacity of each team member.

Example: Use non-physician members of the care team to communicate test results, Rx refills, referrals and forms.

- Establish broad work roles and focus on workflow development for additional responsibilities.

Example: Assign specific staff to do SDoH assessments.

Manage Your Time

- Monitor patient flow and react/adjust accordingly.
- Measure both the cycle time and the idle time during visits.
- Communicate in real time with patients and staff.

Be Prepared, Work Smart

- Prepare for the day and anticipate needs beforehand. Leverage technology when it is available.

Example: Utilize population management software to set-up the next day's tasks at the end of the day.



Improve No-Show Rate

Before the Visit

- Schedule patients ASAP when they call.
- Provide a printed appointment reminder card.
- Use an automated system to send reminder calls or texts.
- Don't just remind patients - confirm appointment details with them.

Example: You are scheduled for Tuesday at 9 a.m., are you still able to make it to your appointment?

During the Visit

- Thank patients who keep appointments and arrive on time.
- Monitor and track the historical no-show rate by patient. This allows for strategic double-booking instead of guessing whether or not a slot should be double booked.

After a No-Show

- Call patients and track responses for why they did not show.
- Be careful of creating implicit biases against patients when profiling them as a "chronic no-show."