RelateCare
Communicating Better Health

# The Centralization of Primary Care Scheduling

**A leading healthcare provider in Omaha, Nebraska**

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## A leading healthcare provider in Omaha, Nebraska

### The Client:

This large regional health network headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, consists of several hospitals, and more than 150 employed physician practice locations in Nebraska. It has about 12,000 employees and is licensed for over 2000 beds. It is among the largest health systems in Nebraska, and serves residents of Nebraska, southwest Iowa and northern Kansas.

### Client Challenge:

The client first engaged with RelateCare with concerns of their decentralized and siloed patient scheduling operations. Each Primary Care Clinic had their own separate scheduling team and appointment scheduling system, which led to operational inefficiencies in the organization. These inefficiencies contributed to a diminished patient experience, the wrong patient scheduled with the wrong provider, low quality scores and incorrect staffing levels, costing the organization unnecessary dollars. With no set of standardized scheduling policies and protocols, schedulers were required to memorize or reference documented protocols per each physicians preferences. This lack of standardized scheduling created an environment prone to errors with dissatisfied patients and providers.

### RelateCares Solution:

The first step in RelateCares suite of solutions was to perform a Current State Assessment of the clients Contact Center and Clinic scheduling operations, including the use of Epic (Electronic Health Record) during the scheduling process. The assessment itself involved the consultancy team spending a total of six days on site in Omaha with leadership to determine strengths and weaknesses.

The findings of this report and its recommendations formed the basis of an elevated Contact Center Vision, the optimization of their EHR scheduling functionality and a future planning strategy document.

*This resulted in the development of the following work-streams:*

**Centralization of Clinic Scheduling**: The standardization of all scheduling and appointment protocols under one system.

**Implementation of Guided Scheduling Questionnaires (GSQs):** GSQs are a standardized, rules-based, decision-tree appointment logic that contains a series of questions to assist in the scheduling of appointments.

**Implementation of Workforce Management (WFM)**: A systematic staffing solution to ensure that employees are engaged and productive and the right people are doing the right job.

**Creation of a Quality Assurance (QA) Program**: The establishment of a Service Excellence culture with enhanced skills and procedures to improve customer and patient interaction.

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## Impact on Business:

The **Centralization of Clinic Scheduling** had a direct impact on **contact center efficiency** which led to less waste, and **better patient experience** with **significant financial savings**.

- Increase in number of calls converted to an appointment: 18% increase in scheduled appointments leading to return on investment (ROI) of $100,000 per month since centralization.

- Increase in Answer Rates leading to cost savings of $36,209 per 400,000 calls.

- Decreased Abandonment Rate from a high of 21% to a low of 3% post-centralization.

- Decrease in Average Speed of Answer from a high of 160 seconds to a low of 35 seconds.

- Increase in Calls Handled from a low of 79% to a high of 95%.

The Implementation of **GSQs** helped the client to gain significant savings.

- Number of Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) required reduced by ten, which equates to annual savings of $362,090.

The implementation of a **WFM Program** ensured the right staffing levels were matched to the volume of calls and interactions. WFM had an immediate impact on the **Service Level** and **Abandon Rate.**

- Service Level: 72% to 83%.

- Abandonment Rate: 3%

The Creation of a **QA Program** led to more caring, confident and assured scheduling agents, and hence a better patient experience.

- Over a four month period, Quality scores increased from 60% to 87%.

## Key Industry Metrics

**97% Calls Handled**

**35 secs Average Speed of Answer**

**87% Quality Assurance score**

**83% Service Level**

**3% Abandonment Rate**

**18% ↑ in Appointments = ROI of $100,000 per month**

**FTEs required reduced by ten, annual savings of $362,090**

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## About RelateCare

RelateCare began as a joint venture between the Cleveland Clinic and Rigneydolphin. By combining Rigneydolphins excellence in contact center management and Cleveland Clinics expertise in healthcare delivery, RelateCare is uniquely positioned to provide the very best in patient access, telehealth, contact center and outsourcing solutions to healthcare organizations around the world.