



Dent Neurologic Institute

Practice

- Dent Neurologic Institute
- Large physician group & diagnostic center member of an ACO
- Located in Western New York
- Specializes in Neurology, Diagnostic Imaging, Psychiatry
- Physicians: 50 providers
- EHR: eClinicalWorks

Challenges

With the rising cost of care, an outdated and inadequate reminder system, diverse patient groups and appointment types, Dent Neurologic Institute needed to make the best use of staff time and resources.

ACO requirements:

- Cost savings
- Patient satisfaction

Solution

A highly flexible, fully customizable engagement program.



Practice

Dent Neurologic Institute celebrated its 50th anniversary of serving patients in Buffalo and Western New York in 2013. Dent is a large multi-specialty practice and diagnostic center with 50 providers, 25 physicians, and 25 physician extenders. The total number of patient visits per year exceeds 150,000, with 95,000 in the medical practice and the remainder in the diagnostic centers. Dent's diagnostics services include a large imaging service with MRI, CT and vascular ultrasound. They also have an electro-diagnostic center, which includes EEG, EMG, and sleep diagnostics and infusion. Dent sees patients with a wide variety of conditions, including: brain tumors, headache and concussion, MS, neuromuscular disease, dementia, dizziness, sleep and memory disorders.

All of Dent's physicians have admitting privileges with the two major health systems in Western New York (Catholic Health System and Kaleida Health). Following the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010, CHS successfully applied to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to become one of the select U.S. healthcare organizations to participate in the Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Pioneer Program.

"We're not only keeping our physicians happy and satisfied that we're supporting their practice in a unique way, but we're accommodating the unique needs of their patients as well."

Darryl Ernst, Chief Operating Officer Dent Neurologic Institute

DENT NEUROLOGIC INSTITUTE

Results

- Efficient staffing model
- Better use of physician and staff time
- Reduced no-shows
- Increased cost savings
- Complete customization
- Real-time synchronization
- Met ACO objectives
- Lowered cost of care
- Increased patient satisfaction

Challenges

Dent Neurologic Institute faced a number of challenges, including the rising cost of care and the new requirements for being a member of an organization in the ACO Pilot Program. With reimbursements decreasing and the cost of care increasing, it was imperative that Dent optimize its most important resources: staff and physicians' time. The practice's outdated TeleVox system had serious limitations that were proving to be a drain on staff resources and failed to reduce its costly no-show rate. Dent aimed to do more with less staff, which proved to be difficult because each subspecialty required its own customization for appointment types, procedures and physicians' preferences. Similarly, with diverse sets of needs among the patient groups (e.g. patients with brain cancer, multiple sclerosis, and sleep disorders), there was a need to tailor the messages accordingly. As part of an ACO, Dent also needed to lower the cost of care.

Solutions

Dent reached the point where continuing with its outdated TeleVox system was unsustainable. "We had to decide whether to invest in a new TeleVox system—whatever their latest technology was—or look at other programs," says Darryl Ernst, Chief Operating Officer at Dent. Because of the size and scope of Dent's patient communication needs, the company started looking elsewhere. Ernst looked to the PatientPrompt staff, who worked closely with Dent to form the best set of protocols to meet the organization's demands. In the end, it was clear that PatientPrompt was the right solution for this large practice and ACO Pioneer.

Results

When Dent Neurologic implemented the PatientPrompt technology and best practices, the organization experienced:

- Better use of physicians' time
- Highly efficient staffing models
- Increased appointment confirmation rates
- Reduced no-shows
- Reduced cancellations
- Better use of staff time and resources
- Lower cost of care
- Improved patient experience and satisfaction

Dent used email, voice, and text messages that were customized by appointment type, physician preference, and specific patient population needs. This resulted in better communication that played a key role in the significant reduction of cancellations and no-shows.

“PatientPrompt allowed for a tremendous amount of customization that fit our practice.

We have seen a reduction in our cancellation and no-show rate, which was costing the physicians income and the practice revenue and efficiencies. PatientPrompt helped us achieve an efficient staffing model.

Our staff love PatientPrompt. Reports come in overnight, and when the staff arrive in the morning, the color-coding in our EHR immediately alerts them of any cancellations so they can act quickly to attempt to recover lost appointments.”

*Darryl Ernst, Chief Operating Officer
Dent Neurologic Institute*



Utilizing Texting & Best Practice Protocols

Dent Neurologic Institute has implemented a number of PatientPrompt’s best practice protocols, including the use of a text message on the day of an appointment to supplement the email and voice reminders sent out one week before and two days before, respectively. The text reminder provides an additional opportunity for appointment confirmation. Additionally, PatientPrompt can determine whether or not a phone number is SMS-capable (able to receive text messages), which is a feature Dent’s built-in EHR reminder system did not have.

Highly Efficient Staffing Model – “Our most valuable resource is the physician’s time,” says Ernst, whose goal is for all appointments to be both efficient and productive. “If a patient isn’t in the time slot we’ve reserved for them, the physician becomes non-productive. If we have high no-shows or cancellations, not only do we have physicians who are sitting idle, but our cost model becomes much more expensive, because we’re staffing based on [the number of patients] we’re anticipating to be seeing, not based on what we actually see. We have seen a reduction in our no-show and cancellation rate [since adopting PatientPrompt], which was costing the physicians income and the practice revenue and efficiencies. PatientPrompt helped us achieve an efficient staffing model.”

Unparalleled Message Customization – The appointments at Dent range in preparation requirements and how early patients should arrive. PatientPrompt allows for protocols to be set for individual appointment types so that each patient will receive the set of instructions that is unique to their appointment and/or procedure. PatientPrompt has also enabled Dent to customize its communication to the needs of specific patient groups within its diverse patient population and their medical conditions. “We’re not only keeping our physicians happy and satisfied that we’re supporting their practice in a unique way, but we’re trying to accommodate the unique needs of their patients as well,” says Ernst.

Significantly Improved Efficiencies – The outdated TeleVox appointment reminder system that Dent had been using required staff intervention in order for it to function. “Once you rely on a human to do something,” says Darryl Ernst, “there’s always the possibility that it’s not going to get done, or not going to get done properly.” TeleVox required someone to remember to load a schedule each day. TeleVox’s system also did not provide the type of reports and information Dent needed to run their practice; staff had to go into each file to retrieve certain information that was needed. According to Ernst, once PatientPrompt was implemented, “we were able to re-use those staff hours to focus on other things in the practice.”

Dent Neurologic is member of a Pioneer ACO that uses PatientPrompt to help lower the cost of care and to improve the patient experience.

PatientPrompt is the ideal automated patient communication solution for Accountable Care Organizations.

Many of PatientPrompt's day-to-day benefits carry over to the requirements under the Accountable Care Organization (ACO) Pioneer Program, specifically, lowering the cost of care and improving the patient experience. Reduced no-shows allowed Dent to more efficiently staff the organization, minimizing wasted provider time and maximizing expensive infrastructure. Dent no longer experienced lost revenue due to high no-shows. The cost savings resulting from the PatientPrompt system delivered an exceptional ROI and allowed the organization to pass on cost savings to their patients. PatientPrompt improved the patient experience by giving Dent Neurologic a connection with its patients before and after visits. Sending patients reminders that included the time, the location, and prep instructions reduced the chance of an appointment being rescheduled, and reduced long wait-times due to late or unprepared patients. Patients also appreciated when reminders were delivered in their preferred language and contact method.

PatientPrompt is a product offered by Stericycle Communication Solutions

stericyclecommunications.com

Contact us for more information regarding PatientPrompt

patientprompt.com
info@patientprompt.com

1.800.417.9486

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