

Focusing on Consumer Experience:

How Chartis Helped Southcoast Health Develop Advanced Service Center Capabilities for Exceptional Consumer Experience



The Client Challenge

Southcoast Health, a mid-sized health system in New England, realized that the experience patients, care givers and providers received when interacting with the system did not align with its mission or quality of care. Consumers primarily used the phone to interact with the health system, but its model for managing inbound calls was highly distributed, with more than 36 “call centers” and no standard expectations for performance or service.

Navigating to Next: The Solution

Southcoast Health partnered with The Chartis Group to evaluate existing call functions, technologies, and operations; to develop near-term, quick solutions that could address immediate pain points; and to establish a vision for future consumer experience and access. Through visioning exercises and functional workgroups, Southcoast decided that their new service center would strive to consolidate the 36 existing call centers and serve as the front door and communication hub for all consumers. The service center would provide personalized and frictionless experiences, through which consumers feel welcomed, known, and well cared-for.

With the vision confirmed, Chartis worked with leadership and other stakeholders to develop a roadmap to achieve its vision. The first priority was to transition scheduling and registration from the practices to the new service center, once the foundational elements were in place. Those included a central management structure to support performance, automated scheduling protocols to guide accurate and efficient scheduling, and change management approach to engage front-line staff and providers in the transformation.

CHALLENGES OF THE EXISTING CONTACT MODEL:

- 36 call centers resulted in inconsistent performance and experience
- 105,000+ callers waited longer than leading practice to reach an agent each month
- 34,000+ callers hung up before an agent answered their call each month

NAVIGATING TO NEXT: KEY COMPONENTS



DEFINE

the vision for consumer access



DEVELOP

a case for change for the service center as a key enabler



BUILD

the necessary infrastructure to support advanced capabilities and performance



DEVELOP

a recruiting and staffing approach in partnership with HR



PREPARE

providers and practices for the transition and impact



DEFINE SUCCESS METRICS

and collect feedback to monitor progress and continuously improve

Client Impact

With the vision in place, Southcoast developed the necessary infrastructure, including designing Epic decision trees to support scheduling and launching external recruitment for service center advisors (call agents) with both technical and soft skills for exceptional customer service. Beginning in December 2021, Southcoast began to onboard clinical specialties into the service center for call management. The significant improvement in call performance and minimal disruption to the practices has increased buy-in and increased requests to accelerate onboarding timelines.



How We Are Making Healthcare Better

“We knew we needed to perform better for our patients and for our health system. For the early-adopter clinics supported by the new service center, we more than doubled performance.”

—Jim Feen, Chief Digital & Information Officer

In less than a few months, the new service center greatly improved the consumer experience with the health system’s “front door.”

90%

of calls answered within 30 seconds, up from 69% in the previous year

50%

reduction in consumer phone call abandonment

5

clinical specialties supported by centralized call management and scheduling

NEXT INTELLIGENCE:

Critical elements to support an advanced service center include:

An effective governance and leadership model with defined accountabilities and decision-making processes.

A shared vision for consumer access and experience that can drive change.

Robust communication strategy and change management approach that engages all key stakeholders, including front-line providers and staff.

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