

Disrupting the Disruption: Making Convenient Care Even More Convenient

Kristene Diggins 11 January 2017

At the heart of the convenient care industry is the core competency and value of quality and ready access for each and every patient. The understanding that time is money is essential for successful healthcare delivery. In most industries, patients are seen as consumers whose time is a commodity. In fact, in much of today's healthcare delivery, the time-consuming nature of care is often a deterrent to health promotion and access. It is often this lack of access that makes managing acute and chronic conditions a challenge for healthcare providers. The healthcare industry has recently been evolving to envision the patient as a consumer first and foremost. At MinuteClinic, we are continually looking for new ways to increase access to care, and place convenience back in the hands of the consumer. While this is a daily challenge, a willingness to change and address the needs of patients is pivotal to ensuring success. Access to healthcare providers is the core value of the convenient care industry, and one that has led to many innovative changes in this arena.

With the patient in mind, MinuteClinic reviewed what

convenience means in healthcare delivery, specifically to understand what patients and their families value most. What has become clear is how important it is for the patient to have a clear understanding of wait times and access to providers in their communities. Because of this, MinuteClinic has recently implemented a new method for patients to be able to seek care on their own time and availability, through an innovative application known as “Hold My Place In Line” (HMPIL). This service allows the patient and family to determine the best time to be seen through an online directory of expected clinic wait times, allowing the consumer the choice of when and where best fits their need. HMPIL literally holds the patient’s place in line, factoring for time to drive to the location, integrating the current wait time in their planning.

Once the patient arrives in the waiting room, the patient is then prompted to sign in by the kiosk. The sign-in process triggers an electronic health record to be initiated for a new patient or continued for a returning one. In some cases, this information is then immediately transmitted to a computer terminal inside the treatment room, where an NP is notified that a patient is waiting to be seen. Once the patient is escorted to the exam room, the NP validates the information provided by the patient at sign-in and enters additional medical information about the patient’s symptoms and conditions, as well as any pertinent medical history.

The HMPIL function represents the innovative approach to

consumers being front and center of delivering convenient care to all. The very essence of convenient care is spurred by patients' desire for more convenient, affordable healthcare. Convenient care clinics nationally put the power of time back into the consumer's hands. As we look to the future, we know that this is truly where value is met in healthcare; allowing for accessible, quality care in a customer-focused approach for communities!

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