



## Improving Patient Engagement through the Communicator Application for 3 of The Garage's Customers

### Background

Healthcare has become more consumer-oriented than ever before, which means that methods of communication must grow with the demands and habits of current times. Texting has become a modernized method of communication as opposed to traditional mailers/cards or phone calls/voicemails across various business enterprises. A poll in 2020 found that "patients wanted more regular and immediate interactions with providers", as well as their providers' to be more engaged in their overall healthcare and wellbeing. Nothing is more effective for that kind of communication than text." Data suppliers estimated that the U.S. had approximately 280 million smartphone users in 2020, making up 87% of the U.S. population.

Texting can be used for patient engagement in multiple ways:

- **Preventive Care:** 25% of providers say their practice does not proactively recommend preventive services to patients.
- **Disease Management:** 87% of patients wish their providers would engage between visits to support chronic disease management.
- **Non-Engagement/New Patient Adoption:** Payers and Value-Based-Care arrangements often reward for ensuring attributed panels are seeing their PCP.

Adopting texting methods can help engage existing patients, drive progress on care gap closure, improve your bottom line with appointment reminders and no-show follow-up, streamline communication, and ultimately keep patients healthy.

### Problem

Although EMRs/EHRs offer texting solutions, they are often an expensive additional cost package. Despite the continued drop in the cost over the last few years, one significant barrier that will always be limiting when it comes to texting from the EMR is the need for the text to be tied to an encounter and existing patient record. For example, if you have 30 new patients on your panel this quarter who are not picking up their phones, your EMR will not allow you to text them without the extra work and administrative stress of creating a convoluted way to make it happen. When looking at standalone solutions available in the market, they often refuse to sign BAAs with healthcare organizations and do not provide a clear data management structure. To fully support a value-based population, organizations need to have a strategy outside of their email to close the gap in patient outreach.



## Solution

BlazeCare Communicator was developed to take our partners into the new era of patient engagement. Communicator is an all-in-one, HIPAA-compliant text messaging service that enables easy, secure, and fast SMS campaigns or 1-on-1 bi-directional conversations with patients. A seamless campaign function allows immediate access to text delivery and subscription reports. The Communicator offers full compatibility with all mobile devices with unlimited recipients & messaging support. **In this storyline, we will spotlight three different organizations that have used the Communicator for different initiatives: A multi-specialty physicians' group in New York, an MSO and ACO of 2500 independent physicians, and a IPA that is a behavioral health-focused group of FQHC's covering Upstate New York.**

## Outcomes

### Multi-Specialty Physicians' Group Customer:

This Multi-specialty Physicians' Group customer has used the Communicator application for various population health engagement projects. The team has found that texting patients for scheduling AWWs and follow-ups for missed appointments resulted in a higher rate of responses and scheduling appointments than calling. This customer has also used the Communicator to drive focused Care Gap initiatives that get patients to participate in actionable follow-ups and referral action, as necessary. The customer worked on a pilot project for patients who have mental health and chronic diseases who have not seen their PCP and achieved a **35% capture rate** with those becoming compliant with appointments and check-ins.

### MSO Customer:

This MSO Customer provided required onsite COVID testing for approximately 700 schools located in 5 boroughs of NYC under a Department of Education requirement for testing based on vaccination status or symptoms. Although laboratory results are provided via an app built by The Garage for the customer into the hands of the patients, the customer came to Garage to solve the need of immediate notification to a patient when their COVID test results become available. With timing being of the essence, lab results have implications for school staffing, teacher availability, and families to determine whether their child can attend school. Communicator was configured to automatically text the patient or guardian of the child with their lab results as they're immediately available within the customer's application. As of May 2022, the Communicator sent out almost **65,000** notifications the Department of Education staff and their students with their COVID results. This removed massive administrative burden and provided relief to this MSO Customer and Laboratory agencies for manually managed calls and notices.

### FQHC Customer:

An FQHC, part of our customer's network, was tasked with engaging individuals who have not utilized any Medicaid services in over 12 months to increase provider visit engagement to achieve better health outcomes. One of the customer's VBP arrangements has an add-on that is tied to being able to drive down those rates. At the beginning of 2021, 25.35% of the FQHC's patients were considered part of this patient cohort. Actively engaging patients using traditional methods became an overwhelming task for the already busy administrative staff at the FQHC, while producing minimum results. Adopting the Communicator allowed them to seamlessly deploy the



outreach, schedule, and reminders of upcoming appointments. This simple outreach made a significant difference in connecting with those unengaged with primary care. They were able to reduce their population who had not utilized any Medicaid services in over 12 months engagement **rate to 16.01%** as of December 2021.

Interested in learning how The Garage can empower your organization?  
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