



Physician-Led Network's COVID-19 Response with Communicator

Background

A physician-led network of 2,500 healthcare providers serving more than 500,000 Medicaid beneficiaries in immigrant communities in New York was awarded by the Governor of New York State a delegated responsibility to implement and oversee COVID-19 Testing at the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic in addition to COVID-19 Vaccination Sites as they became available. They spread across boroughs on the front lines of churches, community centers, New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) low-income housing centers, the MTA, and pop-up sites. The responsibility to mass manage and distribute the vaccines came immediately as New York was the epicenter for the highest COVID-19 rates and hospitalizations.

Situation

Thus came the need to communicate quickly, competently, and effectively with the New York population. Since this customer was serving the general public, the population under management was in the hundreds of thousands. Due to the array of sites, uncontrollable circumstances such as winter blizzards, and a large population that needs administrative oversight, the customer had reached a barrier in effective mass communication. Turning to EMRs for support in COVID-19 vaccine and testing appointment-related reminders and cancellations was a barrier. EMRs required the patient record to exist, the communication had to be tied to an encounter, had limited templates, and sometimes had a cost associated with the texting functions. Other communication platforms failed to meet their needs as all refused to sign a BAA with the customer to protect their data as a partner. Any other solution found wasn't cost effective for implementation. The customer's Call Center was unable to use telephonic methods to reach its population for COVID-19 related matters based on sheer volume. A need for a tool that is compliant, scalable, can outreach mass populations, and uses a popularly accepted by general population method of communication, texting - gave opportunity for Garage to support this population health initiative.

Solution

BlazeCare Communicator was stood up in under a week to meet these urgent needs. The Communicator has allowed the customer's Call Center representatives and leadership to reach out to thousands of patients at the same time via text. The ability to provide immediate information, without the dependency of e-mail, phone calls/voicemail, at the hands of a simple text message,



has guaranteed a higher chance of patient response and awareness. The tool allows for any patient lists to be loaded, customizable text, and tracking of campaign success metrics.

Outcome

Due to severity of Winter Storm Orlena in January 2021, the customer was able to last-minute cancel more than 1500 vaccine appointments in a matter of minutes using the Communicator tool. This has prevented confusion for the public whether someone should stay at home during the storm or make the trip for something as critical as this vaccine. In another instance, a set of appointments were cancelled at a NYCHA site due to logistical issues with vaccines. As vaccine efforts continued, the demands from government partners of tracking vaccine appointments became greater. The NY Governor and his staff were always looking at this customer to provide more information to understand if appointments are being honored and tracking systems were in place. The Communicator allowed the customer to feel relief in this compliance requirement in a scalable way. This customer continues to use it to today with engaging non-users and follow-ups post the COVID-19 pandemic.

“My sincerest thanks to The Garage team for standing this platform up in a very short period of time. It has been a great way to communicate with our patients, especially when news (and the logistics that are impacted) changes by the minute. Your platform allows us to scale communication and deliver it in a timely manner.”

– CIO

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