IQVIA

Providing a Pathway to Patient Connectivity and Adherence

New digital technologies, combined with the right staffing model, increases program efficiency and improves patient experience

JENN MILLARD, Vice President and General Manager, U.S. Patient Support Services, IQVIA

MARK JANIAN, Vice President, U.S. Patient Support Services Solutions & Offerings, IQVIA

Situation

Today, gaining consistent access to life-saving medications can be a significant hurdle that many patients must learn to navigate. This issue can be further exacerbated when their condition is rare and/or their prescription is for a high-cost specialty drug.

During the past five years, specialty medications have accounted for the largest proportion of newly launched drugs, and today, account for more than 50% of all industry spending.[1] And yet many patients are left waiting too long to receive these drugs due to inefficiencies that cause delays in time-to-fill and/or drug delivery.

As the world population grows and medical science advances, more specialty medications hit the market. Consequently, there's a rising need for access solutions to manage prescriptions. These solutions create a network between patients, providers, and pharmacies, streamlining communication, drug accessibility, and patient adherence. However, a poorly designed patient program that doesn't align people, processes, and technology may lead to inefficiency, complexity, and confusion. For example, a multinational pharmaceutical manufacturer needed support to reduce the prescription wait time and improve access to medications for a cohort of maternal health patients who required an injection to be delivered by a healthcare provider.

Challenge

The original solution was built on a "first-in, first-out" (FIFO) model producing inefficient and inconsistent results because patients were having their services coordinated among multiple representatives. As each new patient entered the system, a case manager who was "next in line" would be assigned to the intake, as opposed to patients being able to rely on one dedicated individual to manage the entire process. It took approximately four weeks to deliver medications to patients after their prescriptions were written. Furthermore, a group of nurses made outbound calls to patients to make sure they were prepared for their scheduled appointments. The nature of these calls was not clinical.

Solution

To increase the efficacy and efficiency of these services we implemented:
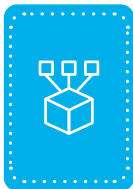
A shift in the service program's model to streamline communication while progressing patients through the backlog that had formed because of the FIFO model.

To cut costs without compromising the quality of service, the responsibility of making pre-appointment calls to patients was shifted to non-clinical personnel who possess the necessary skills and training.

Our IQVIA Patient Support Services team worked with the customer to create a model that appropriately leveraged new digital technologies combined with the right staffing model to increase efficiency and improve the patient experience. Patients were matched with case managers in their region who were experts on local health plans and payer changes and acted as a single point of contact for the patients.

A groundbreaking Patient Relationship Manager (PRM) platform enabled technology and digital solutions to provide better communication and enhance connections. For example, an automated SMS text messaging opt-in program was created to remind patients about their appointments and follow-up calls to reduce staffing costs. The PRM alleviated inaccurate data ingestion and input by creating additional agent capacity in the workflow all while protecting the data integrity throughout the entire process.

Results

Case managers were trained and evaluated to ensure they had the necessary skills and background to assist patients. A real-time dashboard was implemented to monitor patient data, leading to a 16-day reduction in prescription filling time.

The implementation of a single, regional point of contact allowed for more direct interactions that identified communication issues that delayed access to therapy. The patient support hub has experienced increased productivity in the processing of high-volume intakes. Since launching these solutions, we have received overwhelmingly positive feedback focused on the improved outcomes compared to the prior model. Additionally, patient satisfaction scores have continued to increase month over month after refocusing to the regional model of care.

Metrics have also shown that lower rates of abandonment and better efficiency in answering phone calls have both occurred following the training of case managers. Overall outcomes for the hub have increased while staffing has decreased by 30%. The patient population also proved to be an appropriately targeted demographic for the automated texting technology, with opt-in rates increasing to more than 60%. Improved methods of communication with non-adherent patients have also led to a better rate of attendance of in-office appointments for drug administration.

Are you interested in driving down abandonment rates, increasing efficacy, and reducing unnecessary spending on your access services?

Where do you see opportunities for your patient support solutions to drive more consistent and efficient results?

IQVIA Patient Support Services offers tech-enabled services to help you align people, processes, and technology to connect patients, providers, and pharmacies for a seamless patient experience.

References

1. The Use of Medicines in the U.S. IQVIA. 2021. Available online: https://www.iqvia.com/insights/the-iqvia-institute/reports/the-use-of-medicines-in-the-us

CONTACT US

iqvia.com/contact