

Caret Health & A Large West Coast Health System

Learn how a large west coast health system reduced Rx caller wait times, shortened the average handle time, and lowered abandoned call rates to two percent by partnering with us.

Background

Located on the west coast, this large health system is a not-for-profit network of hospitals, physicians, clinics, home health, and affiliated health services. Approximately 120,000 internal call center agents support over 50 hospitals, 1,085 clinics, and a comprehensive range of health and social services across the United States. Its internal call center has also partnered with us since 2021, supporting live voice scheduling.

The impact of COVID-19, coupled with staff shortages and the call center's migration to EPIC's electronic health records (EHR) scheduling system led to a significant increase in call volume. Patients expect to receive timely attention and service when they

contact a medical call center – short wait times and quick resolutions are paramount to meeting these expectations. The issue of increased call volume reached crisis level when patients were experiencing overly long wait times to speak to an agent. Many patients abandoned their calls in frustration.

Challenge

Alleviate the Burden of Prescription Related Calls

The health system's internal call center was experiencing several challenges that were affecting patient satisfaction, including a steep learning curve with its migration to EPIC, the ongoing impact of the pandemic, and staffing shortages. The call center reported that calls for prescription (Rx) refills alone were reaching a volume of 22,000 per month. This led to increased wait times, patient frustration, call abandonment, and complaints. In extreme cases, patients visited their doctors' offices to demand prescriptions be filled, straining relationships between patients and providers.



Solution

Inbound Rx Calls Were Outsourced to Carenet Communication Solutions

Since we were familiar with the EPIC platform, the strategy for inbound prescription call support was quickly developed and implemented using five key steps:

- 1 Identify Areas Needing Support:**

Although Rx support was only one pain point, these calls added to the existing call volume because patients were calling multiple times for refill requests and updates to refill statuses, which could be remedied efficiently. We audited the health system's processes and identified opportunities for improvements in efficiency and patient experience.
- 2 Form a Client Partnership:**

Establishing a mutually beneficial partnership allowed us to manage call-center agent responsibilities and take on the Rx refill calls, documenting the message in the system's EHR, and forwarding the message to the appropriate entity to refill the prescription per protocol. This allowed the health system's call center agents time to focus on other medical, referral, and scheduling calls.
- 3 Conduct Training:**

Agents were trained to take over the Rx calls. Training included two weeks of intensive classroom instruction, plus additional training once agents were fielding calls.



“The training went so well. The team asked all the right questions. Working and collaborating together delivered outstanding results. We saw an immediate decrease in call handle time, more calls fulfilled, patient prescriptions filled, and issues resolved.”

Customer Service Quality Auditor

- 4 Provide Prescription Call Support:**

Support included sending messages to different resources, connecting callers to the nurse advice line, and confirming prescription status.
- 5 Update Metrics and Protocols:**

We helped review and update existing workflows and documentation for refill calls to improve internal efficiencies and caller experience. These workflows continue to be regularly reviewed.



Results

By handling prescription calls, we were able to:

Shorten the time patients had to wait for their calls to be answered by more than a minute.

Leverage knowledge of EPIC to ensure messages were sent to appropriate resources and that callers could speak directly with a nurse to confirm prescription status.

Train scheduling agents to handle prescription refill calls for one call resolution, resulting in refill requests forwarded to the right team.

Exceed the agreement expectation of 80% of calls answered in less than 30 seconds. Within three months of launching, this increased to 90.39%.

“Caretnet is part of our team—not simply a company we offload and outsource calls to. They built trust with us and lifted the burden so we could apply resources from Rx to other callers. Our shared work is deeply collaborative,” commented a Director from the health system.

Caretnet’s Health & Wellness Campaigns offer a flexible, straightforward way to manage complex and personalized campaigns for organizations, which lack the time and resources to manage high call volumes. Carenet offers multilingual, clinical, and non-clinical live voice services for inbound calls. We can also provide information on services, care, and pharmacy instructions as well as ongoing patient communication through proactive outbound calls and messages, online chat, and answering inbound calls.

Rx Inbound Call Metrics

Abandoned call rate before partnership: **11%**

Abandoned call rate since partnership: **1.89%**

Call Abandon Rates Improved By:

83%

About the Client

This Carenet client is a comprehensive healthcare system, that serves vulnerable and low-income patient populations by advancing best practices, and continuing a 100-year tradition of providing access to the latest technology, equipment, facilities, and research — delivering a high standard of healthcare in communities from rural areas to large cities.

At-A-Glance



Offloaded **22,000** monthly Rx calls.



Significantly **reduced** caller wait times.



Trained agents to handle prescription requests and document the request for resolution with **no transfers**—single call resolution.



Enabled in-house call center agents to focus on patients' other essential medical needs.



Dramatically improved patient experience, feedback, and satisfaction.



“I felt confident working with their team based on their ongoing working relationship with another department in our organization. They were able to jump in quickly and help us move towards the right direction. Their knowledge of Epic made the transition smooth and seamless.”

Supervisor Centralized Rx Refill

Carenet Health

Learn More

Carenet Health is the nation's premier healthcare clinical and consumer engagement partner—providing 24/7 telehealth, engagement, clinical support and advocacy solutions on behalf of 250+ health plans, providers, health systems and Fortune 500 companies. More than 65 million healthcare consumers have access to our teams of engagement specialists, care coordinators, RNs and other licensed healthcare professionals each year.

How Can We Help Your Organization?

Contact us today at +1.800.247.2762 or learn more at [CarenetHealth.com](https://www.carenethealth.com)



© Copyright 2023, Carenet Health.