

“CLINICAL MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES”

Scientific Case Study



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“Clinical Management and Organization Strategies”

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Abstract - The main aim for writing this research paper is to evaluate and improve current underserved hospital/health facility managerial practices, as well as patient centered approach to the general care. This paper discussed personally tested details of the modern marketing methods, best managerial practices and new pipeline of patient services that were created, during the time in the medical facility as an executive marketing manager. This paper will be an excellent source for physicians, administrative staff as well as clinical managers interested in improving overall healthcare facility and driving higher return on investment (ROI) by implementing the given strategies.

Methods - A qualitative research on efficiency of clinical operations of multispecialty and underserved medical facility in U.S has been

performed. Observation of operation area and flaws found within, were noted during the duration of 4 months. According to the findings - a thorough marketing business development plan has been drafted and implemented, which is discussed in details below.

Keywords: Clinical Management, Clinical Organization Strategies, Hospital Management, Improving Health Facility, Patient Centered Practice.

Introduction

Management of healthcare facility could be a challenging mission in XXI century - the computer era, when patients use smartphones, tablets and computers in general in order to asses and choose which hospital or clinic they would like to receive

care. The research was begun by identifying the 3 main points where all decision makers must pay attention to, these points are: general branding and how patients perceive your clinic, - pre and - post care impression and decision for further care at your healthcare facility. By exploiting these points, you will understand the practice's Strength, Weakness, Opportunities that lie within and Threats such as competition or refusal of care in your healthcare facility (SWOT Analysis).

General Branding or First Impression

Brand or image of the healthcare facility is a complicated thing and it doesn't only include your image and design, but also doing, acting and providing a unified branding experience is what sets you apart from everyone else. As soon as the patient steps into the healthcare facility, they are vulnerable to your decision making and first impression you provide to them. If you step into the patient's role, you will understand that you would like everything at your convenience. Little things like navigation; reception area and exam rooms must be clearly

marked in order for patients to understand which directions to follow. Many hospitals still miss those things and patients end up wondering throughout facility, in hopes for finding the right door.

In this case rule number one, will be clear mark signs where reception area is located or better yet a patient relation officer who could greet them in front, by creating a more personal approach to the overall firsthand experience. This is a very first task that we had to implement in order to change the attitude of patients towards the overall facility. This simple tweak in engagement - within a month created word-of-mouth marketing for us in the neighboring cities. To continue conversation on first impression a very interesting point has been noted; we had regular banners inside and we had HD flat screens installed in the lobby area, where different branded and health related messages were shown. And after interacting with several patients of different age groups, we learned that they didn't care about traditional marketing messages anymore, rather, they preferred a dynamic graphic on HD

screens. So we designed a various promotional messages about specialty doctor services we offer, free monthly screenings and overall branded messages of the facility; and introduced a new engaging program when the patients could see 2 doctors in a single visit. Being an underserved medical facility, we also were able to showcase the videos in support of the said population such as “refugees are welcome here” etc. This simple trick of various on screen messages re-engaged our old patients and brought new patients from the patient referral source. Since digital era plays a huge role in our lives, regardless the age of patients, my conclusion will be that, modern patients are more adapted to the digital engagement rather than old school paper signs or traditional in-house marketing materials.

The next critical point in healthcare branding is a customer service. It is very imperative to note that regardless of how good or bad the health facility is, you are bound to provide an excellent customer service. The administration of this healthcare facility decided to implement an updated customer service

manual for the entire medical and managerial staff. The main points of this manual were: navigating angry or upset patients, no show message follow up and insurance claims. Previously, the facility didn't have a set standard of rules on how to handle these difficult situations, but after implementation of semi-annual customer service program - it led to better reviews online and better brand positioning of the clinic in the five-borough area. Also, the front desk/registration flow became better and more professional, as they tend to handle majority of the load of incoming patients. Annual or semi-annual revisions of customer service programs must be in place in order to provide a unified customer service/patient care experience. The customer service program must always include the topics on how to address difficult questions; navigation and response to angry patients and post care follow up techniques. These implementations must start from the registration/front desk areas, because if registration area is not properly functioning the entire facility is doomed, as registration is the primary source of triaging and insurance claims.

Methods of Engagement And Participation

- Engagement

Once patient made a first contact with the health facility, he/she slowly moves to the next stage of health journey, and it's called engagement. This is a critical part of win or lose game, because here patient gets to encounter your operation, facility outlook, and most importantly care they receive from the doctors and clinical staff. It is also important to stress the environment of the exam rooms, as some patients feel more comfortable with certain surroundings. For example, dermatology suite should be clean and preferably bright white.

After surveying dermatologists and PAs on duty in our suites, most of them told me that patients in cosmetic medicine such as dermatology prefer a brighter and more esthetic rooms than per se a regular family medicine suite. The same goes for technology and anatomy models in the suite. A neurosurgical suite should have models of brain and spinal column in order to better engage patients with the certain surgical procedures they might face. This

will be easier for non-medically oriented patients to understand complexity of procedure and any additional questions they might have. It is very important to talk to your healthcare providers in order to identify their weak points, so you could visualize the overall picture and certainly do better on a long run.

- Participation

After every specialist visit, it is becoming harder and harder to keep up with the – post care patients. There might be a clerical error, where a telephone number is no longer in service or patient moved from the residence etc. In this case, it is very advisable for healthcare facility to utilize a patient care portal. Living in a smartphone-centered millennium, it couldn't be easier to reach your patients right at their fingertip when you need them. Various mobile friendly applications will help your providers to stay in touch with patients wherever they are, and most importantly at patients' convenience. What the healthcare facilities can do is to encourage doctors and staff to talk to their

patients and make them understand the benefits of having this portal. Usually a trained staff such as patient relations/navigator in the waiting area can easily explain the platform to patients in line waiting to see a doctor, while minimizing the overall wait time and improving customer service. If the healthcare facility would like to be on the edge of technology and really dive into the modern patient care engagement, there are numerous telemedicine applications for the IOS and Android phone users to participate in. Applications such as American Well, Virtual Health Partners, InTouch Health etc. are all HIPAA compliant applications that can benefit your practitioners to reach patients remotely without visiting their office. It provides an active interface similar to the patient's visits electronic health records (EHR) but everything is built in one, 2-way (doctor-patient) encrypted communication system. These applications also provide flexibility to your on-call physicians, staff and patients –at the cost-effective manner. Administration can charge its patients for these telemedicine services by hour or per-diem basis, while minimizing the cost of paying

physicians working in the facility during off-hours. When a knowledgeable person was introduced to the clinic, in order to help us showcase the patients - how to use patient portal and all the benefits they will have, it helped us improve patients' health on a long run; as patients became more open about their symptoms and they could always ask a doctor questions they weren't comfortable to ask during their initial visit. Also, all their lab results were at their fingertip and could be accessed on demand by a medical provider.

Digital Media as -Pre and -Post Care Impression

Since the era of TV and newspaper is disappearing, every single healthcare facility regardless of its size, small or big ones must have online presence. It is very important for people to find your facility online, as it brings most of the new patient's traffic to your doors. So the very first step in establishing online presence should be a multiple device - search engine optimized (SEO) website. Meaning that your website should be scalable from computer to mobile devices and searchable on top three search

engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing. It's important to note that, not only your website should be SEO optimized, but it also has to be user friendly. At the facility where this marketing plan was implemented, by fully re-designing the website and moving a platform the website is hosted on, we were able to save close to \$6,000.00 annually on online marketing spend. The second step of digital media is to establish online presence, by setting up your social media channels, including reviews websites such as Yelp and Google business. It's very imperative to note that, if you don't own your social media channels, then someone else will. And if it's out of your hands, then you are vulnerable at the mercy of public or person who owns it; as majority of healthcare professionals and facilities are already listed online by yellow page services.

In the previous research paper E. Zhalmukhamedov "The Modern Marketing Methods Of Improving Healthcare Facility" IJSRP, Volume 7, Issue 4, April 2017 Edition [ISSN 2250-3153]; you can find the comprehensive strategies on how to properly implement digital marketing and promotional plans

for healthcare facilities. Any manager of the health facility must understand - more and more patients rely on reviews left after visiting your facility. If you have 1-2 stars out of 5, you will certainly lose the competition/money to the neighboring facility that has 3-5 stars on search engine reviews. So by paying a close attention to the reviews and feedbacks left for your facility you can negotiate, oppose and even report negative comments.

Open Communication

While observing the entire operation of the healthcare facility, it was noticed that 2 way patient communications are not effectively implemented. For instance, some patients quickly became angry of long wait time to be seen, or they simply didn't realize that doctor was having a lunch break. It's very crucial to point out, that front desk staff should clearly communicate with patients - on every step of the healthcare journey they take. A simple explanation "*we are taking our time to evaluate patient thoroughly in order to provide the best medical care possible*" drastically changes attitude

towards the wait time. Once again - an open communication starting from the reception area and addressing the patient needs first, creates a patient centered environment where both parties are satisfied, this paragraph could be referred back to the customer service section.

Monthly Meetings

An importance of monthly meetings with different departments could not be overlooked. As some questions and concerns could be brought up in a timely manner. Also, continuing education and improvement should be the main topic of conversation, as more and more department of health regulations are being released every quarter. By having a set meeting agendas, we were able to achieve PCMH (Patient Centered Medical Home) recognition by addressing physicians' needs in primary care section.

Results

To finalize findings of this research paper on "Clinical Management and Organization Strategies",

it's very important to point out that online presence, facility operations and medical staff - should have a unified, patient centered system in place. As soon as the patient steps into the clinical doors, he/she starts experiencing a patient/customer service pipeline. Every step of that pipeline from impression to treatment and to post-treatment periods should be thoroughly planned and executed. After understanding the main pain points of the medical facility, the business development execution has brought the following results:

- Increase in patient satisfaction and newly signed up visits of specialist physicians by 30%.
- Implementation of user-friendly online properties such as website and re-engagement with patients on social media reduced cost of reaching more patients and decreased wait time by 20 minutes, as patients clearly had an idea of what to expect and how the practice operates.
- Precise re-designing of the website, which is tailored directly to patient-centered needs -

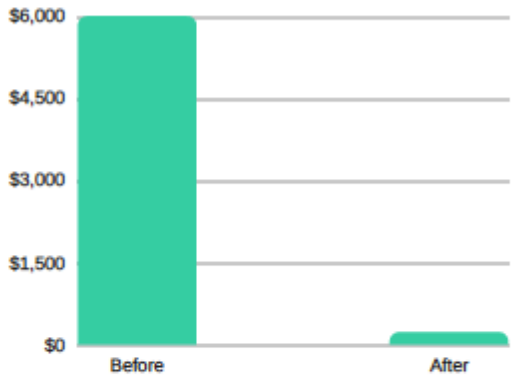
increased new patient requests from 5 to 40 per month and lowered the cost of online spend by 96.4% decreasing from \$6,000 to \$216 annually.

- Internal engagement of patients with advertised material on HD screens brought awareness about additional services the facility provides, and remarketed a brand message the saw online.
- A patient-centered approach has been positively instilled with the help of patient portal/telemedicine engagement.

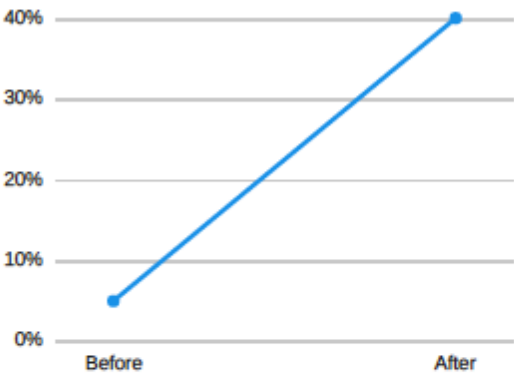
- A unified customer service experience increased patient referral from the patients themselves.
- A positive online review has gone from 3 to 4.5 stars, which created a better trust in the medical services we provide locally.

By understanding what your patient needs are first, then by addressing the difficulties of internal work – will certainly result in improved, patient-centered facility and increased return on investment, as it's showcased in this example.

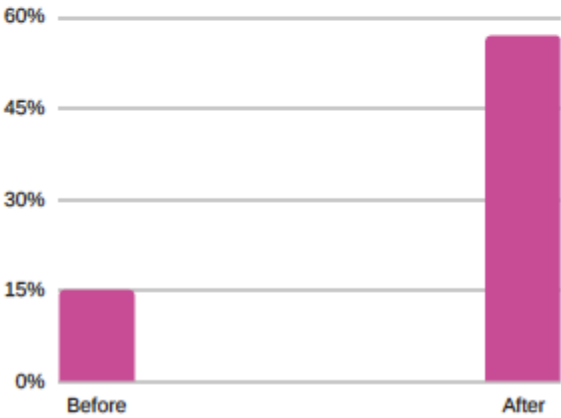
STATISTICS



Marketing Spend



New Patient Visits



Patient Satisfaction

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