



Case Study

## Streamlined Referrals Improve Practice Efficiency





Thousands of patient referrals are made each day. Patient health, and in some cases their lives, depends on this care being coordinated correctly and quickly. Yet, the vast majority of physician practices rely on inefficient, unreliable and un-trackable methods to communicate this important information.

**Streamlining the referral process benefits the referring physicians, the specialists and the patients.**

A Tennessee-based internal medicine & pediatric clinic boasts a team of board-certified physicians who offer patients attentive, personalized care. The team aims to build lasting relationships with patients and their families. They often serve multiple generations of the same family, offering expert care to improve and protect their health and wellness. The clinic helps patients reduce their risk of injury and disease with customized preventive care. In addition to preventive care, the clinic offers chronic disease management for common health issues, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes.



**?** Providers undergo rigorous training that allows them to provide outstanding, customized care for patients from birth and into their golden years.



### The Challenge

Historically, referrals were managed by the practice's nurses, requiring them to fax multiple forms and spend an average of 1.5 hours on the phone each day. This cumbersome process was keeping the nurses from providing face-to-face patient care and was simply ineffective. Each specialist required different forms, faxes got lost, and oftentimes, it took 5-7 days to secure a patient's appointment with the specialist.

### Patient Referral Breakdown



2 Locations



13 Providers



5,000 Patients  
per month



600 Referrals to multiple  
specialists monthly



The practice administrator wanted a solution that would streamline the referral process to improve efficiency and help their patients get the care they needed as quickly as possible.

## Practice saves \$30-40K and stacks of sticky notes annually

### The Solution

In 2017, the practice began using referral management. At the same time, they consolidated management of the referral process with a dedicated referral specialist, alleviating the burden on nurses. According to the Practice Administrator, "If we didn't use referral management we would have to hire an additional full-time referral specialist. That would cost the practice \$30,000-\$40,000 per year."

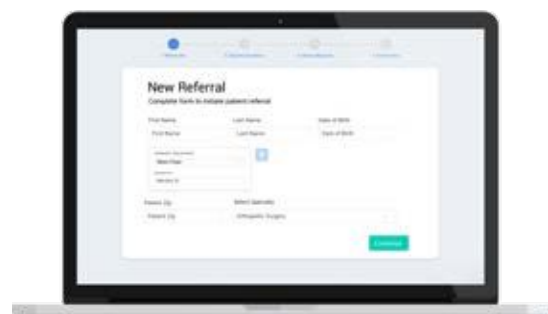
The benefits go beyond the time and cost savings. The platform helps practices send accurate referrals, which enhances patient satisfaction. With built-in logic, the solution allows staff to route referrals using insurance information and care needs, matching those against the specialists' capabilities and accepted list of payers.



**?** Go into any referral specialist's office and you'll see 50 sticky notes with patient referral information on them. Being able to communicate with specialists in a secure way is a valuable, continuity of care issue. Without referral management, it's hard to manage referrals without paper and the more paper you have, the bigger risk.

Practice Administrator, Internal Medicine & Pediatric Clinic

"Referral management allows us to hand the baton to the specialist. We send the referral through the portal. Within minutes the specialist receives it and can contact the patient directly to schedule an appointment. We always do what is best for the patient. But, if I have the choice between two specialists and all things are equal, I go with the one who is on referral management."



REFERRAL MANAGEMENT FOR CLINICS

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