

Editorial - Healthcare Industry

Dental Forum 2020

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Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government has made it easier for healthcare providers to service and invoice for telemedicine services. Under the circumstances, patients have been more open to treatment options that allow a medical visit from the comfort of their own home. With an influx of patients interacting with customer service representatives, it is critical that patients feel their experience was easy and helpful. Customer service teams are granted first-hand insight into unique patient circumstances, characteristics, and history—the ultimate opportunity to give patients exactly what they need and to enhance relationships.

Today's patients want customer service representatives to meet their unique needs and provide them with answers that serve as an extension of their medical providers' offices. When a question needs to be answered, patients want assistance at their fingertips. To meet this need, healthcare providers are leveraging highly sophisticated customer service technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), self-service and new, advanced chat bots to provide a resolution-centered, stress-free solution.

During this time, tools that allow self-service customer response techniques are more important than ever. Expanding online options can help alleviate healthcare facilities' high call volumes. Self-service is a rapidly growing customer care pathway that can make a significant impact on workforce load for hospitals and healthcare facilities.

Self-discovery tools such as interactive tutorials, adaptive FAQs, interactive guides, and videos that contain the simple, DIY answers many patients are looking for reduce contact center volumes, reserving agents to address more complex customer inquiries. These tools allow the patient to solve most of their needs themselves, putting the power back into their own hands. A patient can tap into multimedia-support materials for productive learning that mimics the experience of chatting with a live agent. Self-service tools such as interactive tutorials and videos can also aid patients in their customer care journey by visually showing them how to resolve a problem.

In a fully AI-enabled customer support environment, not only are patients relying on self-service and FAQ tutorials themselves; contact center agents can also retrieve AI-curated content from the same source materials, creating a fast and personal experience for the patient versus agents relying on scripts. And in some instances, patients are seamlessly redirected from a chat bot to a live agent on more technical questions where a higher skillset level of expertise is required to field questions.

In a time where the pandemic has propelled healthcare-centric operations into overdrive with far fewer customer servicing centers to be opened, AI-driven chat bot technology and selfdiscoverable information can fill in the gaps and augment the work of contact center agents to healthcare operations and ensure quality patient care.