Optum

Dramatically increase patient volume with payer channel scheduling

Executive summary

St. Luke's Health is part of CommonSpirit Health, a nonprofit Catholic health system committed to creating healthier communities, delivering exceptional patient care and ensuring every person has access to quality health care.

Optum partnered with St. Luke's Health in November 2020 to implement Optum® Patient Access and Engagement platform through consumer channels for its patients. Consumer channel scheduling provides St. Luke's Health patients with digital care access through sites they use and trust, such as patient portals, provider profile pages, social media pages and online business profiles.

In 2022, Patient Access and Engagement expanded the UnitedHealthcare® member portal and app on its platform, in addition to existing payer partners like Aetna. Optum recommended that St. Luke's Health add payer channel scheduling to its digital front door to improve access for UnitedHealthcare and Aetna members within its service areas.

St. Luke's Health

5 markets
16 hospitals

CommonSpirit Health
National office: Chicago

21 states
142 hospitals
700+ care sites
150,000 employees
25,000 physicians and advanced practice clinicians

1

Opening more digital front doors welcomes more patients, filling more appointments

One of the unique elements of Patient Access and Engagement versus electronic health record (EHR)-based scheduling is its use of multiple digital channels to attract and retain new patients. This omnichannel approach to the digital front door meets consumers where they are, helping them easily find and schedule care using one of many available entry points. This is especially useful for attracting net new patients, who may lack a patient portal account necessary to schedule their first visit.

Consumer channel scheduling
Real-time, accurate online appointment scheduling through multiple digital channels, such as health system digital front doors, social media, provider profiles, health plan website/apps and Google.

Payer channel scheduling
Enables patients to schedule appointments through a single health plan's online portal, mobile app and call centers. UnitedHealthcare, Optum® Behavioral Health, Aetna, Highmark Health and others use our solution, providing their members with care access that is integrated right into the payer's digital channels.

Digital Scheduling: Complementary but differentiated from EHR scheduling

Patient Access and Engagement integrates directly with St. Luke's Health's EHR to create a better provider and patient experience. To ensure accurate scheduling, Optum replicates and automates provider-specific scheduling intake rules, protocols and workflows. Patients are matched with optimal care based on clinical needs, care setting, availability and insurance. Appointments are also automatically updated in the EHR, reducing administrative work for support staff.

EHR system alone
- No payer relationship
- One patient access point via provider site
- No insurance-related messaging
- Blank text box for visit reasons
- No data analytics

Assist with new patient acquisition

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Widget on provider website

Integrated with Optum
- Payer relationships (Aetna, UHC, Optum, etc.)
- Multiple consumer access points
- Out-of-network insurance messaging
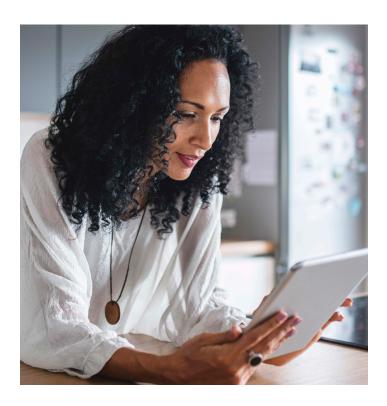- Custom visit reason
- Data analytics

Patient Access and Engagement solution and outcomes

St. Luke's Health adopted Patient Access and Engagement to improve care outcomes by increasing digital access. With online scheduling, patients could self-schedule appointments at their own convenience, including after business hours, with a provider that best suited their visit reason. Almost three-quarters (74%) of consumers say scheduling appointments after hours is important to them.[1]

About 43% of appointments scheduled online were booked after business hours, and 40% of appointments occurred less than 4 days after they were scheduled. Over time, self-scheduling has enabled St. Luke's Health to achieve 8,000+ bookings with net new patients in less than 2 years.

Payer member portals and apps have become a key channel for the St. Luke's Health digital front door. After activating online scheduling via the myUHC.com® member portal, the health system experienced a spike in new patient acquisition.

Appointments booked online include automated email and text notifications to remind patients of their upcoming appointments. Since launching online scheduling, St. Luke's Health has experienced a no-show rate of 3%, roughly half of the national industry average of 5%–7%.[2] Since all visits scheduled were net new patients, each kept appointment represents new revenue for the health system.

St. Luke's Health results

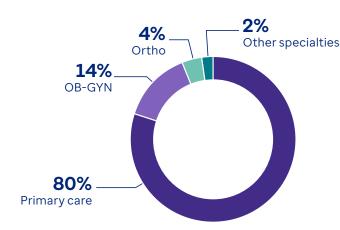# 8,000+
bookings over **160+ providers**

100% new primary care patients

43% of appointments booked after hours

40% of appointments occurred with less than 4 days lead time

Data is from Nov. 19, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2022.

Total booking breakdowns

2% Other specialties

4% Ortho

14% OB-GYN

80% Primary care

287%
increase in bookings FY over FY

3%
no-show rate

Optimize access to care with Patient Access and Engagement

Click here to request a demo.

Optum