

CASE STUDY

Facility
OTTAWA UNIVERSITY

Location
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

EHR Vendor
TELUS PSS

Size of Business
500 patients a day

Cliniconex Services
Patient Reminders & Notifications

ABOUT

On any given day, 500 patients visit the University of Ottawa Health Services (UOHS) clinics. A range of services – family and specialty medicine, mental health services, physiotherapy, sports medicine and more – are offered to students, faculty, staff and the general public. In 2015, that added up to 175,000 visits, 96,000 outbound emails and 24,000 phone calls to reminding patients of those appointments.

IMPROVING PATIENT INTERACTIONS

When a patient misses an appointment, it impacts staff productivity, patient care and the Health Centre's bottom line. "We are always looking to improve the efficiency of our service model," says Chris Fisher, Executive Director at University of Ottawa Health Services. "When the providers are here, they're here to see patients. Reducing no-shows and streamlining staff time is critical to providing better patient care."

"The thing that tipped it for us was the ability for patients to instantly respond on line."

- Nathalie Laforest
Senior Manager Medical Records & Registration

Photo: UOHS



TWO WAY COMMUNICATION

In 2010, UOHS implemented an email appointment reminder system, but there was no way of knowing if the email was received and whether the patient would show.

When Nathalie Laforest, Senior Manager, Medical Records & Registration Services, learned that Cliniconex's Patient Engagement solution featured automated two-way communication, she wasted no time getting in touch.

Today, Cliniconex's fully automated reminder system contacts patients about upcoming appointments and lets them immediately confirm or cancel with the click of a button. Through seamless integration with their EMR, Cliniconex automatically sends what had once taken up so much staff time. Medical forms are emailed along with the automated reminder, so patients now arrive with completed forms in hand, saving everyone time and helping keep the clinic running on schedule.

THE NUMBERS

- Largest Cliniconex implementation to date
- 25+ templates developed
- Bilingual reminders sent 7 days a week
- Serving 75 health care professionals

THE CHALLENGE

The UOHS requirements far surpassed any Cliniconex implementation to date. Nearly 250,000 charts reside in UOHS's EMR system. Dozens of templates were built to accommodate different types of appointments and different types of specialists.

Bilingual reminders are sent three days prior to appointments to allow time to fill in gaps when an appointment is cancelled. For UOHS, that includes Saturdays and Sundays. "We have staff in on the weekend, and anything we can do to even out the Monday morning heavy inbox load helps increase our efficiency," says Chris.



THE BENEFITS OF AUTOMATION

Internal buy-in by the 40 administrators was a no-brainer. "Zero training required!" enthuses Nathalie. Staff immediately felt the benefits of a decrease in call volume. Patients find the system user friendly and love the ability to confirm and cancel right away.

The technical implementation was smooth for such a large clinic. "Ours is a very complex process," says Nathalie. "The Cliniconex team showed a great deal of flexibility and versatility dealing with all the things we wanted to do. They worked with us side-by-side prior to going live, and still do as our needs change."

REMOVING THE STRESS OUT OF CALL-OUTS

"Cliniconex has freed up time for staff to complete other tasks by taking over confirming appointments," explains Dara. She was impressed by Cliniconex's flexibility, stating that the customer service team "worked to understand our clinic needs, customized the templates, and installed overnight. Whenever we had questions, they had the patience to explain how things work."

Dara's response to the no-training, zero-effort service is echoed by Kathleen. "Staff spend more time booking new appointments instead of confirming them, which is great."

"The Cliniconex team has been great to work with. They're very responsive, always kept me in the loop, and they rose to the occasion with our technology demands."

- Nathalie Laforest
Senior Manager Medical Records and Registration Services

