EFFICIENT PATIENT FLOW FOR HOSPITALS AND CLINICS

Patient Flow
Waits, delays and cancellations have almost become an accepted part of receiving and providing healthcare. Healthcare providers are expected to deliver more and better care with budgets unaligned to growing demand. Blockages in the flow of patients are noticeable in outpatient clinics as well as in emergency departments where staff struggle to care for and where necessary, efficiently admit patients.

The consequence is diminished service capability and higher costs, even when capacity is available in other parts of the system. Paradoxically, the solution is not as simple as increasing capacity at the blockage points. Instead smart, targeted, integrated solutions are required to address the workflows and processes that impede patient flow, limit capacity utilisation and ultimately reduce revenue.

End-to-End Management of Patient Flow
Inpatient scenario - public hospitals (example: Victoria)

1. Patient is registered and pre-admitted
2. Health fund and Medicare checks are carried out
3. Bed is located and allocated to patient
4. Pre-admission tasks are managed
5. Patient is admitted
6. Stay and procedures are scheduled
7. Patient discharge is planned
8. Discharge is carried out
9. Invoicing, claiming, payments, debt follow up
A holistic view of managing patient flow

In managing the flow of patients and information within hospitals and clinics, there are many non-clinical administrative tasks that need to be executed and tracked across multiple touch points; before, during or after a care episode.

Consider a patient being admitted for treatment followed by an overnight hospital stay – here are just some of the activities that need to be managed and coordinated:

• Book appointment with hospital
• Carry out eligibility checks with Medicare and health funds
• Provide out of pocket expense estimate prior to the admission
• Locate and allocate bed
• Remind the patient of the appointment
• Admit the patient to the hospital
• Allocate a bed to the patient
• Manage bulk billing to Medicare
• Discharge the patient

To manage and where possible automate these administrative tasks, CSC has developed, or partnered with best-of-breed vendors, to offer a set of patient flow modules which integrate with CSC’s Patient Management solution i.PM.

The solutions assist the entire care team to improve patient flow in Inpatient and Outpatient as well as Emergency Department settings.

Examples showing how the activities and modules operate hand-in-hand are shown for the Inpatient Scenario on the opposite page and for the Outpatient Scenario on page 6.

The benefits are many ...

CSC’s patient flow solutions are designed to improve patient throughput, organisational efficiency and revenue by optimising information flow and views, billing and administrative tasks, resource coordination, as well as appointments and scheduling.

Benefits include:

• Enhanced patient experience by optimising the care journey for outpatients and admissions
• Increased patient throughput and maximised episodic care revenue
• Convenient access to patient and hospital information
• Enhanced operational efficiency and streamlined administrative workflows
• Shorter emergency department wait times and compliance with target timelines
• Appropriate and timely care - the right care at the right time and place
• Reduced appointment “no-shows” to enable full capacity utilisation
• Improved staff satisfaction through fewer delays and improved workflows
• Optimised and automated billing to reduce debtor days

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CSC’s Patient Flow and Patient Management solutions are integrated.

To find out more please turn to the following pages:

p3 • Patient Management  A central hub for patient information
p3 • Bed Management  Maximise bed occupancy and decrease waiting times
p4 • Notification Manager  Reduce appointments ‘no-shows’ by up to 37%
p4 • Billing  Claim online, provide immediate out-of-pocket estimates and increase cash-flow
p5 • Mobility Suite  Access clinical patient information anywhere and anytime
p6 • Queue Management  Improve patient flow and resource allocation from check-in to check-out (clinics)
CSC Patient Management
A central hub for patient information

At the heart of managing the flow of patients and their information lies CSC’s Patient Management solution (i.PM), which is installed across both public and private sector health networks in both Australia and New Zealand.

i.PM offers the flexibility and functional breadth to extend beyond traditional care boundaries to support acute care, community care, mental health, child health, aged care and social services. Within the context of managing patient flow, i.PM represents the centrepiece where integrated patient information is stored. It supports all healthcare professionals involved in the delivery of care with the same accurate, timely information to enhance performance and improve communications.

CSC Bed Management
Maximise bed occupancy, decrease waiting times and increase cash-flow

Effective bed management plays a crucial role in providing the right care at the right time.

Poor bed management can bring a hospital to a grinding halt as patients accumulate in the emergency department, leading to long delays, poor care, increased clinical risk and reduced revenue. Research indicates that emergency department overcrowding is linked to patient mortality.

CSC’s Bed Management is designed to address these problems by enabling staff to: allocate beds, proactively ‘pull’ the right patients to the ‘right’ place, know the status of patients and beds at all times, and manage changes quickly.

Fully integrated with i.PM, the solution is not just a viewer, it provides users with standard data entry as well as drag-and-drop capability to manage beds and allocate patients.

CSC’s Bed Management caters for real-time information updates before and during admission, transfers or discharges, keeping care providers informed at all times.

CSC Bed Management empowers users to allocate and manage beds for improved bed occupancy and patient flow across hospital departments.

Benefits and pay-back

- Improved bed utilisation leading to increased patient throughput and greater hospital efficiency
- Streamlined booking processes to avoid access blockage
- Real time reporting of patient status and bed conditions maximises bed occupancy rates
- Estimated pay-back on initial investment: approximately 6 to 12 months

1 Source: The association between hospital overcrowding and mortality among patient admitted via Western Australian Emergency Departments, Peter Sprivulis, MJA. March 6, 2006
Benefits and pay-back

• Saves time and improves attendances by automating appointment reminders
• Patients are able to remotely cancel and, in some cases, to reschedule appointments without staff assistance
• Efficient way for clinic to reschedule appointments and update patients for greater satisfaction
• Estimated pay-back on initial investment: approximately 6 to 9 months

Effective appointment scheduling is a key requirement common to all care systems. On average, 15-20% of clinic appointments are ‘no shows’, due to patients either forgetting or cancelling their appointment. For healthcare providers the financial impact is two-fold: first, resources are consumed but not utilised and second, billable revenue is reduced.

CSC has partnered with MessageMedia, a leader in SMS solutions, to provide clients with a two way messaging service fully integrated with i.PM. The solution enables healthcare providers to send appointment reminders. When an appointment is cancelled, patients are prompted to reschedule. Messages can be sent by text to mobile, or through notification via voice messages to a dedicated landline.

The messaging solution offers health providers an immediate, yet non-intrusive way to connect with patients to ensure the right care at the right time, increasing patient satisfaction and operational efficiency. Compared to reminding patients by phone, email or ‘snail-mail’, the CSC Notification Manager is a more convenient option which significantly reduces communications and administrative costs.

CSC Notification Manager enables healthcare organisations to operate more efficiently, reducing the rate of costly failures to attend by up to 37%.

CSC Billing

Claim online, provide immediate out-of-pocket estimates and increase cash-flow

Benefits and pay-back

• Manual processes can be automated freeing up staff to focus on patients
• Real time validation of patient details reduces claim rejections and increases cash flow
• Electronic claim submission provides faster payments
• Out-of-pocket estimates can be provided rapidly in line with legislative requirements
• Estimated pay-back on initial investment: approximately 6 to 9 months

Recording and verifying patient Medicare numbers is an essential billing task. Claims submitted with incorrect Medicare numbers will be rejected. Through electronic management of claims, processing speed is improved and payments received 7 to 10 days faster compared to paper based submissions.

In the private hospital sector, to meet Informed Financial Consent laws, patients need to be provided with accurate and timely estimates of out of pocket expenses before admission.

When expenses are not presented prior to or during the admission process, the financial impact can be significant for both, patients and hospitals.

The CSC Billing is fully integrated with i.PM and supports online claiming via Medicare ECLIPSE, providing real time transactional and financial information. CSC’s Billing solutions can be integrated with CSC Claim Manager to validate a claim or verification request in accordance with Medicare’s acceptance criteria.

CSC’s Billing solutions reduce manual administrative processes and improve cash flow as claims are paid earlier.
CSC Mobility Suite
Accessing patient information anywhere and anytime

Benefits and pay-back

• Improved information flow and coordination resulting in improved patient flow
• Convenience of real-time access to clinical information from virtually any location for efficient and accurate clinical decision making
• Reduced delays and errors caused by inaccessible or uncoordinated data collection
• Improved patient safety as clinicians have a complete up-to-date view

The ability to provide seamless, organisation wide access to patient information via mobile devices is critical in today’s environment. Especially important for multi-campus organisations, mobility solutions support improved clinical decision making and efficient patient flow, which in turn saves healthcare organisations time and money, and ultimately improves patient care.

The CSC Mobility Suite makes clinical data from patient and clinical management solutions available via iPads and iPhones. This enables clinicians, unit managers, clerical staff and after hours coordinators alike, to conveniently access real-time information from virtually any location. The solution is configurable to allow secure access via the Intranet or Internet.

The CSC Mobility Suite makes clinical information available to clinicians at the point of care to make timely, informed decisions.

End-to-End Management of Patient Flow
Outpatient scenario - public hospitals (example: Victoria)

1 In case of referral, health fund and Medicare checks are carried out
2 Patient is registered
3 Appointment is booked and letter with barcode sent to patient
4 SMS reminder is sent to patient who confirms attendance
5 On arrival, patient scans in at queuing kiosk
6 Appointment and patient departure is managed
7 Managers analyse patient stay and data
8 Invoicing, claiming, payments, debt follow up

powered by CSC
CSC Queue Management
Improve outpatient flow from presentation to check out

Benefits and pay-back
- Improved patient experience due to greater transparency of visit schedule and shorter waiting times
- Full service utilisation and high patient throughput for increased revenue
- Clinicians have visibility of patients waiting and delays
- Convenience of directly referring patients from rooms to departments such as radiology and pathology
- Estimated pay-back on initial investment approximately: 12 to 18 months

The process of patient care often involves services from several departments and multiple steps for a single episode of care. If not accurately scheduled, the experience can be negative for all involved. Patients are overwhelmed and confused while staff are frustrated and delayed. The organisational impact is reduced patient flow resulting in higher costs and reduced revenues.

CSC has partnered with Qmatic to provide integrated scheduling solutions for outpatient departments, private clinics, accident and emergency departments and primary care practices. This flexible solution can be tailored to meet the needs of an individual organisation and can be fully integrated with i.PM.

The solution manages the flow of patients and their associated information from check-in to check-out. The system can call a patient in the waiting room to the doctor, track their status and provide information about the entire visit including treatment and waiting times. Monitoring clinic use can assist in decisions about services offered and resource planning.

Patients check themselves in and out of appointments using what is now familiar kiosk technology. This frees reception staff to devote more time to patients who need extra help. The solution improves workflows and increases efficiency for a more streamlined, satisfying and informative patient experience.

CSC Queue Management enables managers to efficiently organise staff and resources so that patients receive the right care at the right time.

CSC is unique in the breadth and depth of its expertise in the design and development of healthcare solutions across the Australian healthcare continuum. The solutions described in this brochure target patient flow problems in hospitals and clinics.

Please contact us to find out about other CSC solutions covering Health Information Exchange, Laboratory, Medication Management and Interoperability capabilities.
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About CSC
The mission of CSC is to be a global leader in providing technology enabled business solutions and services. CSC makes a special point of understanding its clients and provides experts with real-world experience to work with them. For 50 years, clients in industries and governments worldwide have trusted CSC with their business process and information systems outsourcing, systems integration and consulting needs.

Healthcare Group of CSC
Healthcare is a key part of CSC’s global business. It has a strong track record of delivering successful government health programmes across Europe and in both the public and private healthcare sectors in the US. CSC has been providing IT solutions to healthcare organisations for 30 years, from public health departments to major public and private organisations working in healthcare provision, insurance, life sciences and pharmaceuticals.

For more information, visit www.csc.com/health_au.