

Showcasing Your Call Center's Value

How NorthEast Medical Center's call center used Centramax™ to show their value throughout the entire organization and dramatically reduced cost per call.

McKesson Health Solutions

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CALL CENTER BUSINESS ISSUE

In 1998, the biggest challenges of NorthEast Medical Center's (NEMC) call center were proving its value internally and cutting costs. When the call center first opened, it was intended to make customer contact to the organization simple, while helping internal departments improve their customer relations and the services they offered.

Unfortunately, due to lack of communication, many of these internal departments were unaware of the call center's capabilities. For example, some departments began making their own survey calls. This proved to be unsuccessful due to insufficient data collected and lack of time to analyze the results.

Another key issue that impeded the success of the call center was that it averaged nearly \$35.00 per call. This was a huge expenditure for the department, and was difficult to explain to executives.

departments to measure the quality of their services. By providing customer satisfaction surveys to the out-patient surgery, pulmonary and maternity departments, the call center's data allowed the departmental managers an opportunity to address specific customer-related issues immediately. These results helped the three departments increase patient satisfaction, while measuring the quality of their services.

The call center also began to make outbound calls for the radiology and endoscopy departments to remind patients of their pre-scheduled appointments. These reminder calls ended up reducing no-show patient appointments from 10% to 5% in a matter of six months.

Final Results

By reducing the cost of each call, expanding the call center hours, and helping other departments, the NEMC call center was now an integral part of the entire hospital. Other departments soon began to depend on the call center to handle follow-up calls and confirm appointments or registrations.

Centramax had been underutilized when the call center first opened because the capability for running reports and surveys was overlooked. Once the call center staff was fully trained on the many functionalities of the program, Centramax was able to provide all the reports, statistics and data needed at a moment's notice.

With such positive results, the call center had greatly improved its image to both internal departments and the local market. No longer was it troublesome to contact the call center — it was now an automatic response with positive results.

NEMC's call center reflects the organization's mission statement and can now help other departments do the same. Today, the call center completes on average 12,000 outbound surveys and treats nearly 1,000 triage calls each month.

Desired Outcome

When Gayla Spears, RN — a long-standing NEMC employee — became the call center manager, her biggest task was to show the call center's value to the entire hospital. This meant not just in financial terms, but also how it could support other departments and lessen their workloads.

Ms. Spears also needed to reduce the call center's cost-per-call to avoid budget cuts or worse, closure of the call center.

How They Did It

The first strategic action was to alter the staffing requirements and direction of the call center itself. Before Ms. Spears became the manager, the call center was primarily marketing-focused, yet staffed with RNs who worked Monday through Friday, with weekends and holidays off.

Non-clinical workers were hired to handle marketing-type calls during regular business hours, which freed RNs to focus on triage calls during the regular and expanded call center hours. This simple change cut the cost of each call from a staggering \$35.00 to nearly \$3.50, thus relieving heavy financial pressure.

The next step was to train the call center staff to fully understand Centramax's reports and surveys. They could then assist other

“By fully using Centramax and all its functions, we are able to easily meet our organization's mission and goals.”

Gayla Spears, RN
Call Center Manager
NorthEast Medical Center