

Online engagement delights patients and boosts revenue

Cincinnati Children's Hospital engages patients online, increases collections, and reduces statement costs

Challenge

Cincinnati Children's Hospital (CCH) had been using a basic online bill pay solution for the past five years with very low adoption rates. Only 900 families were using the portal despite ongoing efforts to encourage adoption.

Instead, patients families relied on paper statements that ran two to four pages. Any informational updates or message changes were time-consuming and becoming increasingly expensive. Changing something as simple as a phone number or office hours would take weeks and cost thousands of dollars.

Solution

CCH was introduced to Experian Health at an Epic user group meeting. They were intrigued by the capabilities of our **Patient Self Service** online business office and liked how our **Patient Statements** could accelerate their statement changes and reduce their mailing expenses.

After numerous demonstrations and on-site visits, CCH's team agreed to implement the online patient portal and upgrade their paper statements.

In May 2012, CCH launched Patient Self Service using its intuitive interface to give their patient families a full picture of their up-to-date hospital and professional services account information and insurance EOB data.

The portal's self-service tools allowed patient families to email questions, change insurance, set-up automatic pay plans, apply for charity care, request estimate and go paperless.

CCH's Customer Service team was very excited about the portal's elegant design and talked it up with their patient families. To make it easy for families to enroll, a help video was created to show families how to link multiple guarantor accounts together allowing each sibling patient to appear under a single login.

Results

Without any marketing promotion (only a note on the hospital's revamped paper statement) the new portal was an immediate success. **In the first year, adoption rates increased more than ten-fold!**

“Since we began using Patient Self Service, enrollments increased from 900 to more than 10,000 and our online payments increased from \$200,000 to more than \$800,000 per month. We now can do real-time statement changes free of charge. With our previous vendor, we could get charged \$1,400 for a basic phone number change.”

—Chris Lah, Senior Director of Customer Service, Cincinnati Children's Hospital

Increased Revenue

CCH **collected more online in the first six-weeks than they did in six months** with previous bill portal.

Lower Costs

In the first year, CCH saved \$70,000 in their monthly invoicing for patient statements due to lower printing & mailing costs, reducing the statement size from two pages to one and paying \$.35 postage for their 5-digit mail.

Going forward, CCH will embed a link to Patient Self Service in their Epic MyChart and install **Patient Gifting**, a solution which allows patient families to raise money to pay their medical bills via social media.

Cincinnati Children's Hospital

Unexpected benefit

Six weeks into the statement conversion process a customer actually took the time to comment on the statements via CCH's Voice of the Customer service. It was the first time anyone had ever commented on their paper statements:

“My name is Erika... I just wanted to comment on the actual appearance of the statements. The new statements categorize a service date having both the office and the physician fees in one area with the pharmacy, and the actual amount that you owe is clearly seen. I appreciate that. It's definitely a much easier to read statement. Thank you very much.”

About

Cincinnati Children's Hospital (CCH) a nonprofit academic medical center established in 1883, is one of the oldest and most distinguished pediatric hospitals in the United States. With nearly 600 registered beds, it had more than 1.1 million patient encounters in 2013 serving patients from all 50 states and 53 countries.