

CASE STUDY

Reducing colonoscopy cancelations and increasing efficiency

44%

DECREASE
in cancelations

99.8%

PATIENT
ADOPTION

96%

RATED
Twistle helpful
in follow up
survey

CLINICAL PRIORITY

Swedish Health Services provides over 7,000 colonoscopies annually at their Issaquah location. While their cancelation rate of 7.57% is below the national average, they believed that there was still an opportunity to optimize resource utilization, improve appointment availability, and decrease average patient wait times.

Swedish sought to ensure that patients schedule their appointment in accordance with national cancer screening guidelines, adhere to colonoscopy preparation protocols, communicate issues that would prevent a successful test as early as possible, and arrive on-time.

Reducing the number of no-shows and cancelations had the potential to impact over 500 patients and increase the availability of this potentially life-saving screening procedure.

APPROACH

Swedish engaged Twistle by Health Catalyst in May of 2017 to deploy a 14-step communication pathway that guides patients throughout their colonoscopy experience. Secure messages provide gentle nudges to keep patients on track, confirming appointments, ensuring proper bowel preparations, and promoting timely arrival through reminders, educational videos and coaching.

The colonoscopy pathway provides important guidance from reminders about why the procedure is necessary, to what to expect in those potentially stressful final steps of preparation.

Appointment confirmation messages are delivered well in advance of the scheduled procedure, and check-ins throughout the preparation process help identify cancellation risk while there is still time to backfill the schedule.

“Our patients really like the coaching and support they receive throughout the bowel prep process, and we appreciate having enough advanced notification about cancelations to be able to service our waiting list.”

Dr. Amir Bastawrous, MBA
SWEDISH MEDICAL CENTER

* Source: Patient satisfaction survey in May 2018; N=258

“This app really helped me get through a terrible experience - getting ready for a colonoscopy and drinking the meds. It was like having a friend beside me helping me along the way. I love this app and highly recommend it!”

Swedish Colonoscopy Patient
TWISTLE USER

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Swedish launched the Twistle colonoscopy pathway at its Issaquah location. Over the course of the pilot, 720 participated in this program, accessing messages and replying when appropriate.

At the conclusion of the pilot, the program was expanded across all Swedish facilities to become the standard of care.

RESULTS

Swedish recognized an opportunity to impact patients who may be at risk for developing colon cancer and help patients through a potentially overwhelming experience, realizing great results:

- By the end of 2017, the number of no shows and late cancelations decreased by 44% in the Twistle cohort of patients. Proactive communication ensures that when cancelations are unavoidable, they are made with enough time to backfill the vacated appointment.
- 99.8% of patients adopted the technology.
- Throughout the pilot period, patients read or responded to 78% of all messages.

CONCLUSION

Swedish successfully decreased their colonoscopy no-show and cancelation rates, improving their ability to screen more patients and improve operational efficiencies. They continue to iterate and optimize the pathway to further improve service.

In light of recent guidance from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommending that screening for colorectal cancer should start at age 45, not 50, there may be even more value in maximizing Swedish's capacity to provide colonoscopies.



ABOUT SWEDISH

Swedish was founded in 1910 and is the largest nonprofit health care provider in the greater Seattle area with five hospital campuses. They also have ambulatory care centers in Redmond and Mill Creek, and a network of more than 100 primary care and specialty clinics throughout the greater Puget Sound area. Swedish's innovative care has made it a regional referral center for leading-edge procedures such as robotic-assisted surgery and personalized treatment in cardiovascular care, cancer care, neuroscience, orthopedics, high-risk obstetrics, pediatric specialties, organ transplantation and clinical research.

ABOUT TWISTLE BY HEALTH CATALYST

Twistle automates patient-centered, HIPAA-compliant communication between care teams and patients to transform the patient experience, drive better outcomes, and reduce costs. Twistle offers “turn-by-turn” guidance to patients as they navigate care journeys before, during, and after a care episode. Patients are engaged in their own care and follow best practices, communicate as needed with their care teams, and realize measurably better outcomes. Twistle integrates sophisticated automation with multi-channel communication, engaging patients through secure text messaging, interactive voice response, patient portals, or the health system's digital applications.