

# Deborah Heart and Lung Center Transforms the Patient and Staff Experience with Artera's Conversational Messaging



Deborah Heart and Lung Center is a renowned specialty hospital based in Browns Mills, New Jersey, dedicated to providing cutting-edge cardiac, vascular and pulmonary care. Known for its commitment to patient satisfaction and exceptional clinical care, the hospital handles 200,000 annual visits with a team of 120 providers.

**Founded in 1922**

**120 Providers**

**120K Annual Visits**

**EHR: MEDITECH Expanse**



## Challenge

Despite its advanced medical expertise, Deborah Heart and Lung Center grappled with outdated communication methods when engaging patients, leading to inefficiencies that strained staff and internal resources.

Outside of an "old, one-dimensional texting platform," the organization relied heavily on a manual process for contacting patients, which involved dedicated full-time staff making individual phone calls to confirm and manage appointments, according to Rich Temple, Vice President and CIO of Deborah Heart and Lung Center. This process was time-consuming, resulting in staff burnout and inefficient resource utilization. Beyond these labor-intensive workflows, other key issues included:

- **Patient No-Shows:** Missed phone calls led to missed appointments, disrupting clinical schedules and driving revenue losses.
- **Lack of flexible communication:** One-way communication channels limited patient engagement, often leading to scheduling conflicts or delays in responses.
- **Limited patient engagement:** The hospital sought to enhance patient interaction and satisfaction but lacked the necessary tools to establish effective, two-way communication.

As Vice President and CIO of the organization, Temple prioritizes harnessing technology to solve daily staff challenges and elevate the patient experience. Recognizing patient communication as a critical area for improvement, Temple emphasized the pressing need for modernization. "We saw the world moving away from outdated manual calls toward real-time messaging, which fosters more meaningful and impactful interactions," Temple explained. This insight sparked the search for a more advanced and effective patient communication platform.

## Solution

After a thorough search, the organization implemented Expanse Patient Connect, powered by Artera, to modernize its patient engagement processes. Since going live in February 2022, the organization has primarily focused on Artera's core functionalities, including conversational, two-way messaging, campaigns and recalls, to enable more efficient patient communication and enhance daily operations.

- **Two-Way Conversational Messaging:** Patients can now respond to appointment reminders in real time, allowing for immediate scheduling updates. This has eliminated phone tag and resolved scheduling conflicts faster.
- **Automated Campaigns and Recalls:** Artera automates recurring reminders, such as pre-op instructions and educational materials, reducing staff workload and ensuring patients are better prepared for appointments.
- **Proactive Notifications:** The organization uses Artera to send real-time, proactive updates to patients, such as information about road closures near the hospital and equipment checks for patients using remote monitoring devices, improving patient satisfaction.
- **Advanced Reporting and Analytics:** Artera's Analytics Plus platform has provided valuable insights into patient engagement metrics – including patient response time – allowing the Deborah team to identify areas for improvement and optimize workflows.

The organization also recently upgraded to Artera Harmony, unlocking advanced features such as Flows Agents and Staff AI Co-Pilot, which the team is excited to explore. This upgrade also provides enhanced visibility into all patient communications, streamlined through a single, centralized hub.

*"Like many hospitals, we've made patient experience and engagement a top priority. Small gestures, like proactive notifications, can significantly enhance patient satisfaction and reduce frustration. For us, Artera plays a crucial role in driving our patient engagement efforts."*

**Rich Temple**  
Vice President and CIO

## Results

While the organization feels they are just scratching the surface in terms of Artera's capabilities, the results thus far have been substantial on both the patient and provider side.

"The system is both powerful and intuitive," Temple shared. "Rather than spending hours calling patients to confirm appointments, our staff now have the freedom to focus on more impactful tasks. On top of that, patients can respond at their own convenience, and we're able to track the entire interaction. That has truly been a game-changer for us."

Director of Patient Access at Deborah Heart and Lung Center, Julie Lennox, says her team lives and breathes Artera every day, and is very appreciative of two-way, conversational messaging with patients. "The generation of employees that I have would rather text than speak on the phone – they're eager and opting into the platform. It's a huge satisfier for them."

Overall, the implementation of Artera has brought significant improvements to Deborah Heart and Lung Center's operations, staff workflow and patient engagement efforts. Notable outcomes in 2024 included:

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**83%****Response Rate**

Deborah Heart and Lung Center has achieved high patient engagement rates, with an 83% response rate and nearly a 60% confirmation rate.

**50%****Reduction in No-Shows**

The organization successfully reduced no-shows by 50%, leading to an estimated **\$215,000** in recovered revenue.

**1,600+****Hours of Staff Time Saved**

Staff saved 1,600 hours via conversational messaging and campaigns, allowing teams to focus on higher-value tasks.

**Staff Satisfaction**

According to Lennox, the switch to conversational messaging has been effortless for the team — so much so, the staff is now eager to use the Artera platform.

*"We have limited space in our clinics and have patients waiting a long time to get in to see us. Artera gives us the opportunity to identify open slots in advance and fill in last-minute cancellations with other patients, which is critical for efficiency. That's huge for us."*

**Julie Lennox**  
Director of Patient Access

## What's Ahead for Deborah Heart and Lung Center and Artera

Through its partnership with Artera, Deborah Heart and Lung Center has successfully modernized its approach to patient communication — and is just getting started.

By replacing manual processes with advanced conversational messaging and automations, the organization has continued to improve operational efficiency while fostering stronger relationships with its patients and staff.

Looking ahead, Deborah plans to harness even more of Artera's advanced features, including virtual agents (Flows Agents and AI Agents), to further streamline operations and enhance patient care.

For other hospitals considering a patient communication platform, Lennox advises, "Don't be afraid to adopt the technology. Even at its most basic implementation, Artera is a game-changer for patients, staff and financial performance."