

Care Management Case Study

Rocky Mountain Cancer Center - Lakewood



ABOUT ROCKY MOUNTAIN CANCER CENTER

Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers (RMCC) is Colorado's leader in cancer care, serving patients at **20 different sites** across the state. RMCC formed when multiple independent practices came together in 1992, and later joined the US Oncology Network in 2016. They serve thousands of patients each year across Colorado. To provide compassionate and personalized care to each patient, they leverage the newest technology to meet patients where they are.

THE SITUATION

Healthcare across the United States has had to adapt and evolve to the ever changing financial, staffing, and technological trends. Cancer care feels these growing pains even more acutely, as a patient's cancer journey is an extremely vulnerable phase for them and their loved ones. This makes it all the more important for clinics to keep the care process as easy and as personalized as possible. Given cancer care involves numerous appointments throughout a patient's journey, clinics deal with extremely high phone call volumes. Timing these appointments is critical to keep a patient's care moving forward. Staffing and financial challenges have made it difficult for clinics to respond to patients in a timely manner.

THE CHALLENGE

Rocky Mountain Cancer Centers serves thousands of patients per year, which in turn creates a high volume of phone calls for their scheduling team.

Schedulers were spending hours each week calling patients to schedule appointments and gather information for new patients. Staff were calling patients that didn't answer and had voicemail boxes that were full or not set up. Patients would then call back while staff were busy talking to other patients; creating a cycle of phone tag where it would take 2-3 attempts to finally connect.



THE SOLUTION

Rocky Mountain Cancer Center decided to test whether two-way SMS text messages could reduce the number of attempts needed to connect with patients, thereby **enabling the team to handle higher volumes of patients without sacrificing patient experience due to extended callback times**. As cancer care is an especially vulnerable process, RMCC wanted patients to have a convenient and personalized way to communicate that was as frictionless as possible. If texting was going to be successful, it had to mimic texting friends and family - no special apps to download and no portal logins. Staff would also be able to reach out on their own time, which meant they had more flexibility without having to spend time on the phone. RMCC heard about the work Kipsu was doing with HIPAA compliant texting, building off of their 15+ years of experience in hospitality and creating personalized communication between guests and hotels via text.



Together, RMCC and Kipsu worked to create message templates and workflows that would create a personalized experience for the patients, while also creating a more efficient and timely process for the staff.

RMCC identified **two areas to start texting patients** at their Lakewood location to validate:

My scheduling team absolutely loves using Kipsu! It has become the standard for communicating with patients - especially for our remote schedulers.

-Alicia, Scheduling Lead

Return to Clinic: schedule return visits with existing patients. They wanted to open up texting numbers to current patients for scheduling office visits, labs, and any other return appointments they may have.

New Patient: communicate when the best time to call them for their roughly 20 minute new patient calls would be. This would help reduce phone tag and make it easier for the team to reach the new patients in one call. They also wanted to capture insurance information during this stage and wanted to give their patients the option to provide the information over text.

Our motto has been "Kipsu first!" when scheduling with patients.

-Jeanne, Practice Manager

*Kipsu has transformed how we communicate with our patients, allowing our teams to **reach more patients while reducing the response times** and maintaining a positive patient experience. Our staff and our patients love it, and we're not going back!*

-Joey, Practice Administrator

THE RESULTS

RMCC's vision to improve patient communication via texting became reality and their Lakewood pilot was extremely successful. **They cut their time to resolution from 11 days to 11 minutes, communicating with over 2,300 patients over the past 5 months.** This pilot proved that texting patients throughout their cancer journey is a viable means to communicate with them and dramatically reduces the level of effort required to keep their care moving forward. Not only did they alleviate some of the burden on staff, they also kept personalized communication while creating a more convenient channel for patients going through an extremely vulnerable time. RMCC has since deployed Kipsu to the rest of the Northern Colorado division, and is actively expanding to their three other divisions.

