



Challenges

1. Expedite responses to patient specialty medication questions at their convenience
2. Reduce staff member phone time continuously counseling patients
3. Share resources to educate and help patients reduce drug expenses
4. Increase patient enrollment in copay assistance programs

Solutions

- QliqCONNECT Secure Texting
- Quincy Healthcare Chatbot

Results

- Enrolled 10K patients in copay assistance programs, a 60% to 88% increase
- Reduced staff burden by replacing 30 minutes of phone time
- Provided patients with 24/7 access to complex drug therapy educational materials
- Increased response time on patient directions to complete copay assistant paperwork
- Accelerated time to start drug therapy and improved adherence



Chatbot Use Speeds the Patient Specialty Medication Journey and Reduces Staff Burden

Digital tools provide drug therapy education and affordability options while relieving overworked staff

SUCCESS STORY

Overview



A large practice group network in the Southeast dedicated to treating neurological disorders reaches new heights of digital innovation among physicians and patients.

Over the past three years, the group network made significant advances digitally, transforming its front office onboarding and administration processes. More recently, the network innovated digitally to help relieve their care centers' growing monthly volume of patient conversations concerning specialty medications. Specialty drugs are vastly more expensive than their traditional drug counterparts, costing upward of \$100,000 to half a million dollars and more for a year's worth of treatment. Realizing that specialty pharmacy is also becoming an increasing focus for cost management, leaders looked to scale their investment in artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in a new, unexpected way.

The organization introduced QliqSOFT's QliqCONNECT secure texting and Quincy chatbot to help streamline specialty med processes, boost patient education, and provide funding programs to lower high costs, including home infusion therapy. The digital tools expanded in-house services to ensure market access, affordability, patient support, medication adherence, and better outcomes.



AI-powered chatbots bridge the communication gap with patients through 24/7 availability and personalized assistance. The group network's chatbot offers a tech-driven patient access strategy that:


1. Offers a choice of charity foundations and other public programs to help the patient cover out-of-pocket expenses.
2. Provides educational materials, which are downloaded easily within the chat, including:
 -  Materials and videos on managing drugs requiring special handling and storage needs, step-by-step instructions for administering the drug, and background on ingredients and side effects for a specific medicine, and
 -  "How to" directions to guide patients on completing required paperwork as part of copay assistance programs.

Chatbot Decreases Phone Calls and Patients Waiting Incessantly on Hold

The practice group network's use of chatbots to respond to patients' specialty med queries now replaces up to 30 minutes daily – and sometimes more that can quickly add up to an hour or more – of a staff member's phone time. Staff members track when a patient completes watching a video presentation and then reach out to guide the individual to what needs to be completed next in the specialty med process.

Network leaders credit chatbot interactions for increasing enrollment to 10,000 patients annually in copay assistance programs, a 60% to 88% upsurge that continues to grow. Copay assistance is key in patients being able to afford their specialty medications, as research makes clear that funding programs positively impact adherence.





“...When patients increase their medical adherence, they improve their health outcomes saving the overall healthcare system money by avoiding worse health outcomes and leading to longer and a higher quality of life.”

Tomas Philipson & Troy Durie
University of Chicago Economists

A research paper released in December 2021 by University of Chicago economist Tomas Philipson and analyst Troy Durie explains the full effect of copay assistance programs using data dating back to 2015. The co-authors’ concluding remarks state: “These programs increase the affordability of drugs, especially specialty drugs, for patients who otherwise would not be able to afford them. This affordability increases medical adherence as patients choose to fill their prescriptions and continue to refill them because they now can afford to follow their prescribed amount. When patients increase their medical adherence, they improve their health outcomes saving the overall healthcare system money by avoiding worse health outcomes and leading to longer and a higher quality of life.”

Chatbot Disrupts Specialty Medication Processes for the Better

When patients are prescribed a specialty medication, they are confronted with labor-intensive paperwork, faxes, and phone calls for high-cost, maintenance drugs — and

left to manage their own care in their journey to therapy. From a literacy and time-sensitivity standpoint, patients must overcome many hurdles, from difficulty understanding precise dosages to satisfying prescription enrollment and payment insurance requirements.

Even with the assistance of hub services, complex challenges such as manual processes and a non-existent standards-based infrastructure hinder physicians and patients from effectively navigating the complex specialty approval and fulfillment process.

A CoverMyMeds 2022 report found that 49% of patients in 2021 talked to their providers about medication affordability options. Understandably, patients lean on their prescribing doctor’s office for help. Phone calls take time away from the practice staff’s workflow, resulting in days to weeks of delays for the patient to receive the drug.

Physicians need a timely and efficient digital solution to immediately help their care team, which is stretched thin from extreme staffing shortages and extraordinary work demands.



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Chatbots integrated with secure messaging, virtual visits, and the practice's electronic health record (EHR) provides easy and fast access to clinical intelligence, seamless communication channels, and optimized workflows. Physicians and their dedicated healthcare staff now control an accelerated specialty medication journey. For the patient, this means faster access to therapy, potentially lower costs, and better clinical outcomes.