Atlantic Health System's way forward

A health system's journey to automate authorizations + maximize efficiency

ABOUT

+ Serves 1 million unique patients annually across northern and central New Jersey

+ 17,000 team members and 4,800 physicians across health system

+ 400+ sites of care, including 7 hospitals, 300 physician practices, 16 urgent care centers, home care and hospice services, mobile health, telehealth, and more

FEATURED WAYSTAR SOLUTIONS

+ Auth Initiate + Auth Status
+ Claim Monitoring

WAYSTAR + Atlantic Health System

RESULTS

50%+
reduction in average auth submission time

8
days increase in average lead time for starting auths

<2%
cancellation rate due to denied or delayed auths

97%
DAR clearance rate*

*Percentage of accounts cleared by 11 a.m. the day before service

CHALLENGES: STARTING THE TREK

For more than 25 years, Atlantic Health System has lived by its mission of building healthier communities in northern and central New Jersey. However, when process inefficiencies started impacting staff and patient experiences, their leadership team took action to find a better way forward.

In their previous state, their technology and health information systems (HIS) varied by each practice, creating confusion and communication breakdowns especially in the prior authorization process. Without interconnected systems, staff often ended up duplicating efforts, adding extra strain to an already stretched-too-thin team. This issue was even more pressing as they faced industry-wide staffing shortages.

"Our decentralized workflows created a lot of manual work and caused our team to operate in siloes, which led to duplicative efforts and using valuable time to follow up on the same accounts," shares Danielle Pieloch, Executive Director of Patient Access, Atlantic Health System.

Delays in the prior authorization process had a real impact on the patient journey too. Because each individual location was responsible for submitting authorizations before patient scheduling was completed, patients often had to delay — or cancel — care if authorizations could not be completed in a timely manner.

Atlantic Health System needed to find creative ways to outsmart labor and resource constraints, while increasing efficiency. To overcome these complex challenges and ensure their patients receive the best care experience possible, Atlantic Health System partnered with Waystar.

> "With the overarching labor shortage in healthcare, we were put in a place where our team had to do more with less. We had to look at our current processes and tighten them up to enable our staff to be as productive as possible."

**Danielle Pieloch,
Executive Director of Patient Access,
Atlantic Health System**

WAYSTAR + Atlantic Health System

ACTIONS: LIGHTING THE WAY

Together, Waystar and Atlantic Health System began their journey to transform the organization's RCM workflows.

The easier way to automate auths

Using smart technology to unify information in one place has improved visibility and productivity.

"With Waystar Auth Initiate going out and checking statuses, it helps us be able to handle more quantity. Pulling that information into our Epic® system helps cut down time so we can produce more," says Melinda Colombo, Supervisor of Pre-Certification & Insurance Verification, Atlantic Health System.

"The bot will go out and pull the NPI, diagnosis code, and CPT code, and my team can watch the bot go," says Colombo. "It will stop when they need to answer questions and filter through. They're able to produce a lot more because of that."

The simpler way to work

Creating a centralized team has sped up the prior authorization process, minimized manual work, and decreased duplicate efforts.

"The goal was to allow technology to take care of tasks that were low-hanging fruit and busy work so our staff could focus on what matters most, such as resolving issues or working high-dollar accounts," explains Pieloch.

The smarter way to stay ahead

The proper solutions have helped their team remain agile amid resource challenges — and make a strong case to get more support.

"Because the AI was such a success, we've been able to get more buy-in on additional technology and manpower to expand our capabilities," says Pieloch.

"With Waystar, we've seen an increase in patient care and quality of care. We can turn around accounts quicker, so patients are able to be seen quicker. That makes the process better for our team to meet goals as well as the patient getting the best outcome from Atlantic Health."

**Paula Garcia,
Manager of Pre-Services &
Insurance Verification,
Atlantic Health System**

WAYSTAR + Atlantic Health System

RESULTS: REACHING THE SUMMIT

Since leveraging Waystar's purpose-built software, Atlantic Health System has seen powerful results.

Instead of being in a constant holding pattern with prior authorizations, their team can jumpstart the process right away after a patient is scheduled, helping to prevent delays in clinical care. In fact, they have a 97% DAR clearance rate and less than 2% cancellation rate due to denied or delayed authorizations.

"Our patients used to wait for the authorization to be done to be scheduled. Now, we authorize to cut back time for the patient waiting and they're able to get in sooner," says Colombo. "As soon as a patient is scheduled, it hits our work queue."

With this proactive strategy, staff are no longer bogged down by repetitive tasks or time-consuming phone calls to complete authorizations. Their optimized workflows function under an exception-based model, prioritizing the right tasks and eliminating cases that don't require an authorization from their queue.

Empowered by Waystar's authorization tools, Atlantic Health System has increased the average lead time for starting authorizations by eight days and seen a 50%+ reduction in the average authorization submission time.

Through it all, having a revenue cycle partner that understands their challenges and goals has helped Atlantic Health System reach peak performance.

"Waystar shares our expectation for high performance and excellence," shares Pieloch. "We're working at the same pace to get to the same place."

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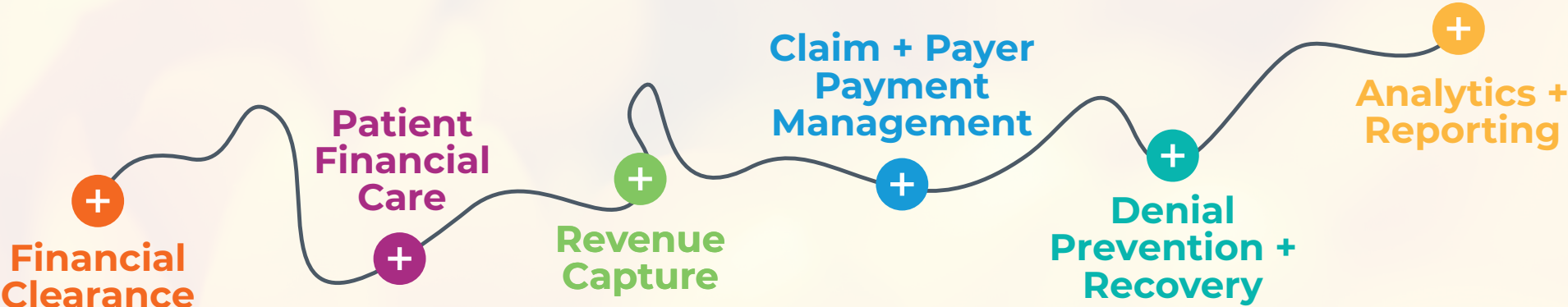cancellation rate due to denied or delayed auths

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◆ WAYSTAR + Atlantic Health System

EXPLORE OUR COMPLETE PLATFORM

Financial Clearance

Patient Financial Care

Revenue Capture

Claim + Payer Payment Management

Denial Prevention + Recovery

Analytics + Reporting

WAYSTAR + Atlantic Health System

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