

WHITE PAPER

More Conversations in Less Time: Improving Member Experience with 1:1 Engagement

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Improving the Consumer Experience

Introduction

Leading healthcare delivery organizations are innovating their call center design to deliver a better consumer experience with significant operational efficiencies. These organizations empower their support staff with 1:1 manual texting to leverage the reach of the SMS text messaging channel and deliver a personalized experience. This white paper will discuss the advantages of this approach as well as provide considerations for incorporating 1:1 manual texting into healthcare call center operations.

Messaging Builds Personal Relationships and Experiences

Today's consumers expect high levels of service and an exceptional experience, and organizations are adapting. Satisfaction surveys have increased for chat sessions for the first time since 2017

to 83%.¹ Furthermore, the importance and convenience of mobile channels is clear, with 52% of chat queries now being initiated from a mobile device, which rose from 8% in 2017.²

SMS boasts the highest rates of adoption out of any channel and is the most frequently used communication method for most individuals. Being able to read a text message anywhere and respond when ready provides healthcare consumers more control and convenience. Keeping a record of the conversation can also be helpful for a patient or member as an easy way to access resources and contact the organization in case of a question or emergency.

Since mobile messaging is inherently personal and interactive, empowering agents to utilize these channels for 1:1 conversations is key to driving real relationships and delivering the experience members have grown to expect.



Creating Operational Efficiencies

Not only does SMS deliver a positive consumer experience, but it also streamlines staff experience by helping create operational efficiencies. With SMS, agents can be engaged in multiple conversations at the same time. They can also reach more members or patients—on average, only 46% of outbound phone calls are answered, whereas 98% of text messages are read. This increased delivery and reach means more conversations in less time.

Designing your contact center with 1:1 SMS capabilities can also help create a “halo effect” for telephone outreach. A phone call will always be necessary in some cases, but to decrease the likelihood of a member not answering, you can prime them for the call via SMS or prompt them to call in.

These considerations can lead to significant cost savings. In fact, some studies show that organizing your call center effectively can generate a 3:1 ROI and have a significant impact on patient retention³.

Staff Impact

Beyond the impact on efficiency and productivity, implementing 1:1 messaging in the call center can improve staff morale. With increased conversations and chances to communicate, agents may feel more productive and that they are having a positive impact on more patients. Modern tools that help facilitate multichannel interactions often are preferred by tech-savvy agents and help modernize the call center.

COMPARISON OF CALLS VS. TEXT MESSAGING FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE INTERACTIONS

	PHONE	TEXT
Inbound volume per hour	500	500
Customer interactions handled per hour per agent	12	60
Required agents	63	8
Cost per interaction	\$8	\$1
Costs	\$4,000	\$500

Considerations for Incorporating 1:1 Texting into Your Call Center

Workflows

It is important to understand whether or not the types of touchpoints your contact center staff currently handle can be optimized through 1:1 text interactions. Generally, the following touchpoints successfully translate to text:

- Quick check-ins such as reminders, follow-ups, and requests for confirmation of non-sensitive information. This type of outreach can be triggered manually or automatically and prompt the member to respond. When the member does respond, support staff can follow-up appropriately through the text channel.
- Situations where answer rates are very low. Support staff can leverage the higher read rate of texts to outreach to members. In certain situations, texting can also be used to prompt the member to make an inbound call.
- Outreaching to members and then connecting them to support staff for more detailed telephone conversations.
- Transitioning inbound calls to text when call volumes are very high.

SMS vs. Secure Messaging

There are channel considerations when assessing the utility of 1:1 messaging for healthcare interactions. SMS has the significant advantage of reach, with essentially 100% adoption and exceptional reach rates. Its limitation is around security as it is not an encrypted channel. Many healthcare organizations still use SMS for the vast majority of check-ins, and there are a range of robust strategies for avoiding inclusion of PHI in messages. However, there may be more detailed clinical touchpoints where a secure messaging channel is required. The limitation of secure channels is adoption and

access, as they must be downloaded apps or password protected web environments.

As with any communication of PHI, a risk assessment is required. Additionally, engaging a vendor experienced in healthcare messaging is recommended to understand best practices.

Message Content

1:1 texting capabilities are most efficient when used with preset messages and content so that staff can minimize the need to create custom responses while interacting with patients and members. The best tools for live chat will enable preset messages that can be sent either automatically or manually to a response. When incorporating texting into call center operations, a process for creating and maintaining preset message content needs to be established for the likely topics that could arise. In addition, a process for responding to members on topics that fall outside of the presets needs to be considered.

Automation

Leveraging conversational AI solutions, chatbots, and other automation tools has also become a best practice to help handle high volumes of requests and communications with health consumers. These tools enable organizations to maintain a high level of personalization and accuracy, all while reducing agent workload and ensuring that each individual is satisfied with their experience with the organization.

Incorporating automation into staff workflows can help deliver the optimal amount of personal attention while maximizing efficiency, especially when they can pick up where an automated conversation left off seamlessly.

mPulse Mobile's Engagement Console

To improve contact center utilization, many mPulse clients have implemented Engagement Console, a web-based, HIPAA-compliant application that allows staff to take over automated conversations as required and initiate 1:1 communication with members across multiple channels. mPulse's Engagement Console contains key capabilities designed for healthcare call center use cases.

Triage

Through the Triage feature, agents are alerted to unique or unanticipated responses that fall outside of automated dialogue rules. Multiple triage folders can also be configured to catch certain key phrases that the organization has decided should be sent to an agent for follow-up.

Dialogues

Users can see conversations with individual consumers in real-time and view all previous manual and automated interactions that consumer has had with the organization. This enables each agent to have complete context for their next conversation, while the individual benefits from a streamlined experience and feeling like the organization understands and cares about them. Agents can also launch and manage automated text dialogues and programs to individual consumers as needed.

Custom Groups and Segmentation

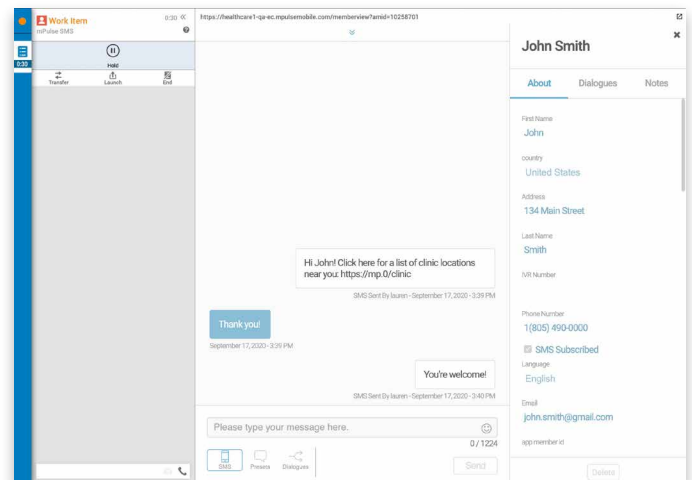
Consumers can be grouped into highly customizable segments based on database fields, demographic or geographic data, or their responses to previous texts. This helps staff organize their outreach and engagement efforts and helps with visual organization.

Presets

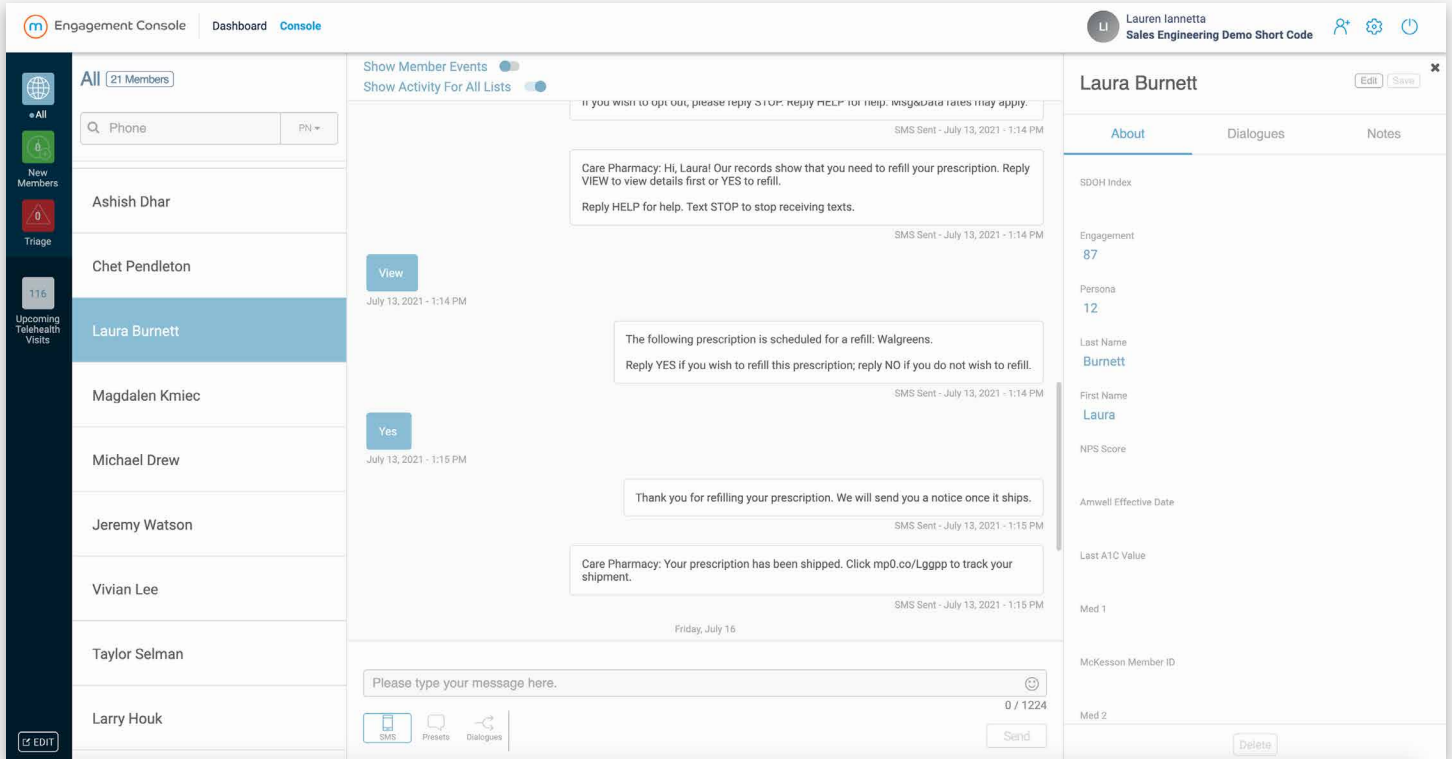
Preset messages can be configured to enable staff to easily reply to frequently asked questions or send messages that may require standardized language. Presets are customizable; they can be complex and fit into specific programs or can be as simple as a prompt asking the member or patient to call in for further discussion.

Integrated Engagement Console

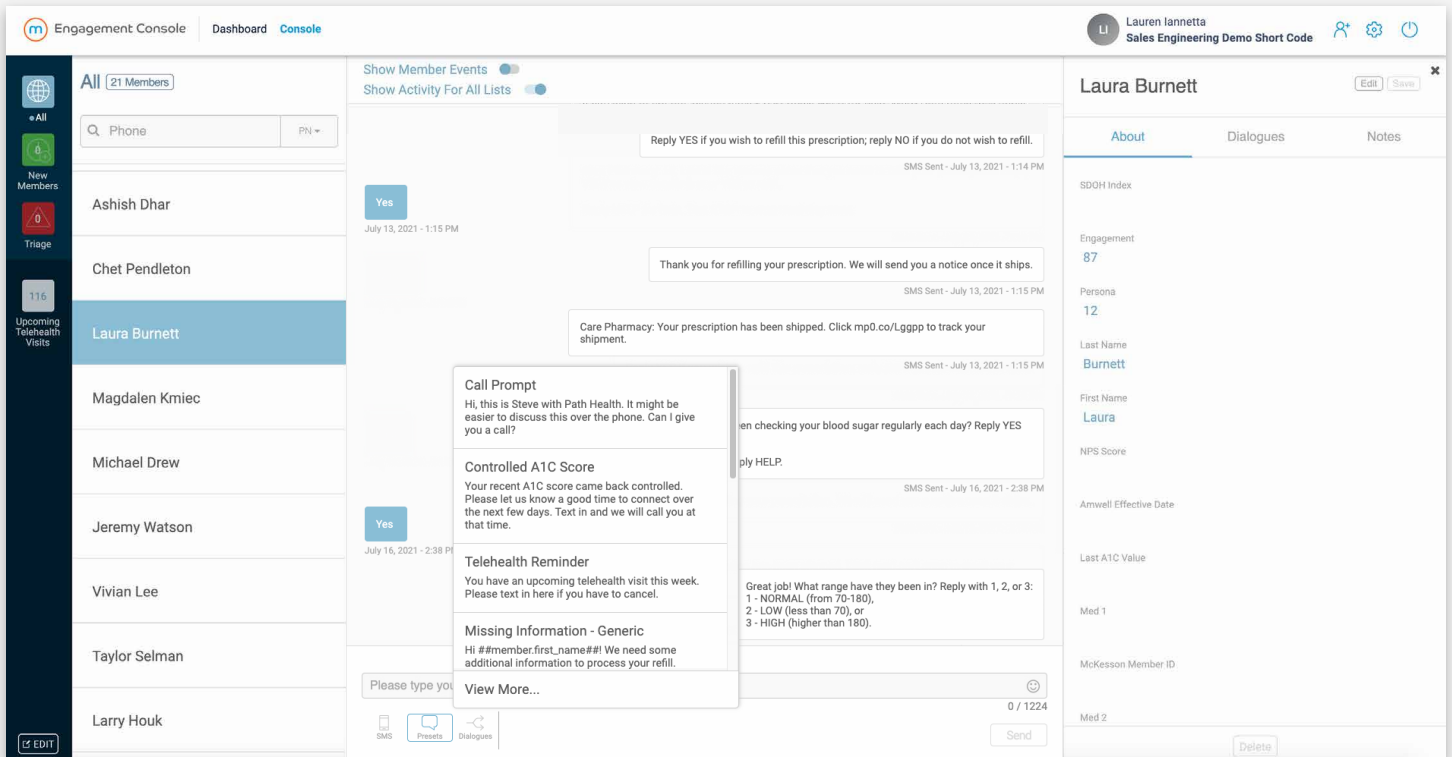
In order to further connect possible communication silos and make daily processes as seamless as possible for staff, mPulse Mobile also offers an Integrated Engagement Console that displays with your contact center software. This enables agents to access core Engagement Console functionality without having to switch applications. Staff can send and respond to messages in real-time while on the phone with a patient or member and incorporate Engagement Console into existing contact center workflows. This helps support agents in their day-to-day and empowers them to deliver an excellent experience and build relationships with consumers.



Integrated Engagement Console shown within NICE inContact's MAX agent interface



mPulse Mobile's Engagement Console enables staff to view dialogue history alongside key member profile information



Reply to frequently asked questions or common messages with customizable presets

Outcomes Achieved Through 1:1 Manual Text Interactions

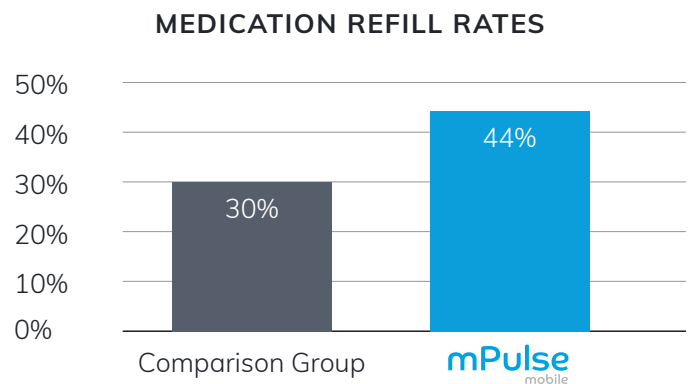
A Large Health Supply Organization

Prior to implementing the mPulse Mobile solution, this supplier relied on live therapy specialists to make 6,000-8,000 outbound calls a day to determine if patients with diabetes needed a product replacement or upgrade.

After launching the first phase of automated reminders to improve patient awareness of their eligibility, over 300 specialists were also trained with the Engagement Console to text back to the patients that replied. After 30 days, there was a 5.2% increase in product upgrade rate using one-way text reminders as opposed to outbound calling, and there was a 9.1% increase in upgrade rate from one-way texts when two-way dialogues were implemented using Engagement Console. This created a more engaging and convenient experience for patients, as well as significant operational efficiencies for the health supplier, whose therapy specialists could make fewer outbound calls and focus more time on complex or unique interactions with patients.

A Large Integrated Delivery Network

This organization utilized the Engagement Console to manage its interactive Rx Refill solution to a non-adherent Medicare population on medication for chronic conditions. The mPulse Mobile solution produced a significant increase of 14.1 percentage points for Rx Refill rate opposed to the comparison group.



Conclusion

Manual text interactions create an opportunity to improve the member experience and will create significant cost efficiencies. If your organization is looking to innovate its call center operations, visit

mpulsemobile.com/contact to request more information on program design considerations and best practices.

References

1. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dangingiss/2019/02/20/customer-satisfaction-with-live-chat-is-on-the-rise/?sh=9c471ce7a346>
2. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dangingiss/2019/02/20/customer-satisfaction-with-live-chat-is-on-the-rise/?sh=9c471ce7a346>
3. <https://www.mckesson.com/Blog/Why-Call-Centers-Benefit-Practitioners-and-Patients/>

About mPulse Mobile

mPulse Mobile, the leader in Conversational AI solutions for the healthcare industry, drives improved health outcomes and business efficiencies by engaging individuals with tailored and meaningful dialogue. mPulse Mobile combines behavioral science, analytics and industry expertise that helps healthcare organizations activate their consumers to adopt healthy behaviors.

With over a decade of experience, 100+ healthcare customers and more than 400 million conversations annually, mPulse Mobile has the data, the expertise and the solutions to drive healthy behavior change.

To ask a question or request a call, go to: mpulsemobile.com/contact

