COVID-19
Maximize Safe Patient Flow and Clinic Capacity Guide
Clinic Readiness Guide

Helping clinics maximize revenue through best practice & automation:

**Problem**
- As restrictive measures continue to ease, clinics are beginning to welcome patients back for appointments.
- However, **risks** regarding COVID-19 transmission persist.
- Patients are **hesitant to return** to clinics, and practices are dealing with a **decrease in patient appointments**.
- Hospitals and Clinics need to learn how to maximize safe patient flow and clinic capacity in this “new normal”.

**Solution**
- The Verto team has prepared the following ‘Maximize Safe Patient Flow and Clinic Capacity Guide’ to share how technology paired with best practice can unlock safe clinic capacity and patient flow in a COVID-19 world.
Reopening, Patient Engagement & Education

There are 5 key items to enhance patient perception of personal safety through educating patients in order to convince them it’s safe to return to your clinic.
Automated **Appointment Reminders**

- Consider setting up automated [text messages or emails](#) with appointment reminders
- Engage patients with educational resources on the steps you are taking to keep them safe
- Consider setting up automated appointment confirmations through text messages or emails. This provides a seamless way for both clinic staff and patients to easily confirm or reschedule
Engage & Educate patients prior to their appointment

- Keep patients informed about the new safe patient flow protocols being followed in the clinic to ensure their safety.
- Prior to their appointment, text, email, or call the patient with detailed steps on the new safety protocols and on how to proceed.
- Keep the patient informed regarding steps they must take to prepare for their visit.
Enable **Patient Recall Messaging**

- When you proactively reach out to your patients, they feel cared and valued for. Recall messaging can help your practice get patients back in for the appointments they need with personal, targeted, automated reminders.

- By being proactive in your recall messaging, you can keep your schedule full, increase patient retention, helping patients stay healthy while making your practice be more profitable.

- Consider segmenting patients based on various criteria including diagnosis, insurance and procedures when executing recall messaging.
The CDC recommends that clinicians share information with patients regarding COVID-19 testing available in order to better inform their patients.

- Clinics should be prepared to coordinate testing within their communities.
Contextual Educational Resources

- Provide educational information tailored to your patients’ care journey
- Educate patients on topics such as COVID-19 symptoms or information related to their care
Digitally Enabled Self-Screening

There are 4 key items to think about when pre-screening patients
Ask staff and patients to engage in self screening

Online Self-Assessments
There are many government online tools. You can leverage these in conjunction with your own automated pre-screening tools

Develop a notification protocol
The notification protocol confirms the steps to inform one another should a patient or staff member develop symptoms or be diagnosed with COVID-19. This notification system should comply with confidentiality and privacy protocols
COVID-19 Pre-Screening

- Consider setting up a mobile-first automated pre-screening solution
- Have patients complete as much pre-screening paperwork online as possible
- Prior to patients’ appointments, have them fill out a COVID-19 pre-screening survey online via text or email. This can help you to identify those at risk before the day of their appointments
- Pre-screening patients not only unlocks the ability to screen for COVID-19, but also validate patient insurance and prior authorization requirements before their visit
Digital Queuing

- When you pre-screen your patients, you gain enhanced visibility into your population. You’ll know who is suspected positive for COVID-19 before they step foot into your practice.

- You’ll have the ability to easily adjust appointment slots and contact patients for suspected positive cases, ensuring that every patient in your clinic is healthy and safe.

- You’ll be able to automatically flag patients for additional assessments and follow-up as needed.
Chat with the Care Team

- Consider enabling a chat solution with your patients, so they can message the care team to proactively address COVID-19 and other health concerns.
Eliminate Line-ups and Bottlenecks

There are 3 key items to think about if you want to streamline clinical flow at the entrance to your practice
Coordinating Patient Arrival

- Have patients send you a text, email or call upon their arrival and wait in their vehicle or outside your building until you are ready to see them.

- Provide an estimated wait time to set and update their wait time expectations.

- When you are ready to receive the patient, notify them to proceed to the entry area and ideally, directly to the examination room.
Minimize time spent in the **waiting room**

- Whenever possible, clinics should strive to have patients wait outside their clinic in their vehicle or outside the building and only enter the clinic for their clinical visit.

- This will help ensure physical distancing measures are being followed, thus improving both patient safety and patient perception of personal safety.

- Ask patients to come alone when possible, but account for caregivers and support people when pre-screening and planning seating and clinic capacity.
Attendance Confirmation & Navigation

- Tell patients exactly where they need to be and when, as well as what to expect at their visit.
- With text and email engagements, you can seamlessly streamline patient check-in.
Maximizing Safe Patient Flow & Capacity

There are 4 key items to think about regarding maximizing safe patient flow & capacity in the clinic
Plan extra time and coordinate cleaning/sanitizing exam rooms

- Create a Patient Flow ‘dashboard’ if possible to coordinate patient visits and exam room cleaning

- Coordinate patient flow transitions from one clinical area to another in order to ensure physical distancing and clinical area cleaning
Use Validated Pathways

- Embed clinical best practices through clear visualization of the entire journey, as well as though easily accessible patient information.
Embed Workflow Transitions

- Consider using a patient journey kanban board that can suggest next steps, and reduce the likelihood of patients falling through the cracks as volume increases.
Enable Population Dashboards

- Share key metrics in a more actionable format for busy clinicians while fulfilling executive strategic initiatives for the organization.
Examples of COVID-19 Checklists

AMA Example
CDC Example
ASCA Example
Examples

AMA
CDC
ASCA

Healthcare Professional Preparedness Checklist
For Transport and Arrival of Patients With Confirmed or Possible COVID-19

Front-line healthcare personnel in the United States should be prepared to evaluate patients for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The following checklist highlights key steps for healthcare personnel in preparation for transport and arrival of patients with confirmed or possible COVID-19. Stay up to date on the latest information about signs and symptoms, diagnostic testing, and case definitions for coronavirus disease 2019.

Review your infection prevention and control policies and CDC infection control recommendations for COVID-19:

- Assessment and triage of patients with acute respiratory symptoms
- Patient placement
- Implementation of Standard, Contact, and Airborne Precautions, including the use of eye protection
- Visitor management and exclusion
- Source control measures for patients (e.g., put facemask on suspect patients)
- Requirements for performing aerosol generating procedures
- Be alert for patients who meet the persons under investigation (PUI) definition
- Know how to report a potential COVID-19 case or exposure to facility infection control leads and public health officials.
- Know who, when, and how to seek evaluation by occupational health following an unprotected exposure (i.e., not wearing recommended PPE) to a suspected or confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 patient.
- Remain at home, and notify occupational health services, if you are ill.
- Know how to contact and receive information from your state or local public health agency.

COVID-19: Protecting Patients, Families and Staff During Necessary Surgeries

Please note that events and recommendations surrounding COVID-19 are evolving rapidly. This material is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute medical or legal advice. It should not be construed as representing ASCA policy or substituting for the judgment of a physician and consultation with independent legal counsel.

To help ASCs protect patients and families, their surgical staff and the US population from COVID-19, ASCA is sharing the following recommendations:

1. Pre-screen all patients for symptoms or high-risk exposure prior to their visit, beginning at the physician’s office and during any pre-admission phone calls or other remote methods. Inform the patient to call ahead and discuss the need to reschedule their appointment if they develop symptoms of a respiratory infection (e.g., cough, sore throat, fever).


2. Upon arrival, but prior to admission, patients should again be asked about a personal history of fever, sore throat, cough or other respiratory symptoms, and about similar symptoms in family members or close contacts. The body temperature of the patient should be checked upon arrival. Ask also about contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 or recent travel to a high-risk area.


3. Prohibit individuals (including patients) from entering the facility if they are experiencing elevated temperature or symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.


4. Keep patients and accompanying visitors separated 3–6 feet apart during their time at your ASC. Provide supplies such as tissues, alcohol-based hand rub and trash cans and encourage frequent handwashing. If space is limited, ask patients and caregivers to wait in their cars until they are needed in the facility. If toys, reading materials or other communal objects are located in the ASC, remove or clean them regularly.

Helpful Resources


Any Questions?

Call Us
Call us to speak to a member of our team.
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Email Us
Email us for general queries, including marketing and partnership opportunities.
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