CLOSING THE GAP ON PATIENT ACCESS

Everything you need
to know to sustainably
increase access to care
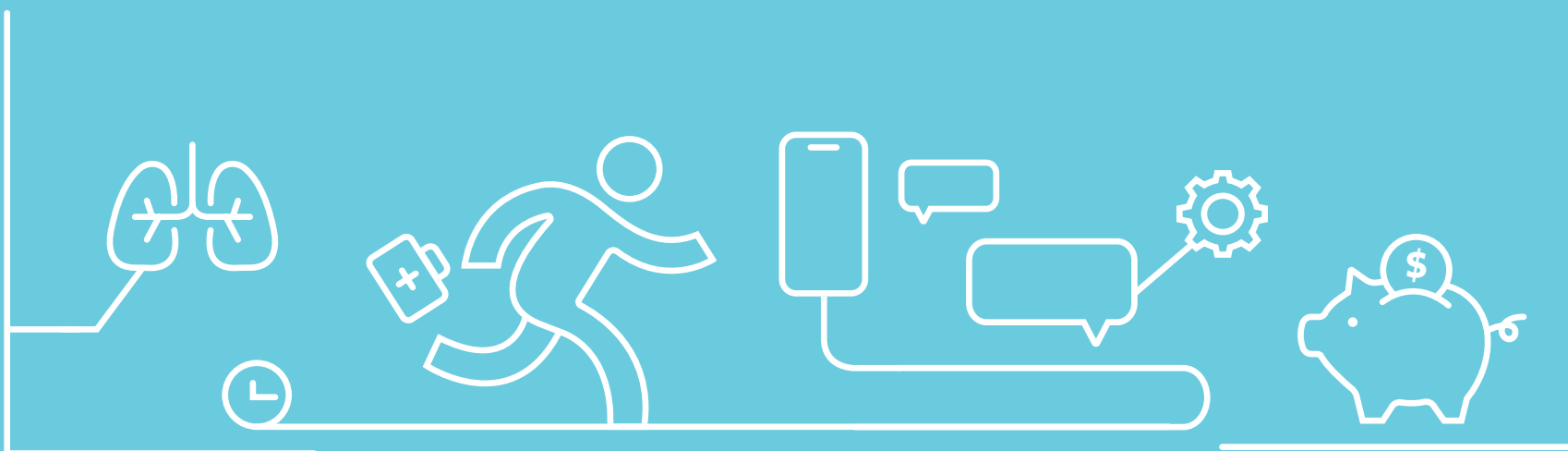
lumahealth™

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80 MILLION AMERICANS LIVE IN AREAS WITH LIMITED HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS.

Patient demand for care is growing. Are you prepared?

Twenty million people gained health insurance coverage over the past five years, and more and more patients are seeking regular sources of care. While coverage rates skyrocket, patients are now becoming more active consumers of healthcare. And yet millions of Americans still live in areas with limited providers, lack affordable transportation, or lack access to timely appointments.

Healthcare organizations are being forced to meet growing patient demand with limited resources. More and more patients are demanding care while workforce shortages loom and payers demand providers to demonstrate value. You must balance meeting growing patient demand with sustainable approaches to optimize capacity. This ebook will cover all the elements of patient access healthcare organizations like yours should pay attention to along with strategies to sustainably meet patient demand.

ALL ABOUT ACCESS

ACCESS TO CARE

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THE RIGHT CARE
AT THE RIGHT TIME
IN THE RIGHT PLACE

Access to care drives performance.

For providers, access to care is about:

- Meeting patient demand for services
- Maximizing patients seen
- Streamlining the patient's experience in getting to care
- Succeeding under managed care and pay-for-performance contracts
- Increasing revenue and growing market share

For patients, access to care is about:

- The first step to overcoming illness
- Getting the attention, treatment, and medication they need
- Guidance to get and stay healthy

Accessing care is perhaps the most important determinant of a patient's experience. Getting to care quickly and efficiently and having an open line of communication with a provider makes the difference between a terrible experience and a positive one.

Access to care is about bridging the gap between patients and providers. Patients get the care they need, and providers build a sustainable business.

What does patient access entail?

Affordability

Does a patient have health insurance? Is it a high deductible plan? Can the patient easily anticipate his or her financial responsibility? This can all impact financial access to care.

Range of services

Patients who live in rural areas have particular hurdles to jump through to access care. But even some urban areas may have shortages of particular provider types. Patients who can access a range of services will have a better chance of achieving their health goals.

Timeliness

Patients in the largest U.S. cities wait an average of 24 days for an appointment. When a patient is sick and in need of care, securing an appointment 20+ days after the fact doesn't cut it.

Workforce

Are there sufficient, qualified providers to meet patient demand? This is a critical component of access to care, and one that's becoming more and more dire as provider shortages continue to trend upwards.

🔍 **Top 7 states with physician workforce shortages**

MS   ID   WY   NV   AR   OK   UT

Research shows that access to care:

☑ Is intricately linked to quality outcomes

Access to care is the first step on the patient's care journey, and it has an impact down the line on outcomes. Geographic access to medical care has been found to impact health outcomes for pediatric asthma patients, for example. Multiple studies have shown that financial access to care via insurance coverage has far-reaching effects on things like blood sugar control and chronic disease management.

Access is a necessary step for patients who need medical support to overcome an illness or achieve a health goal. Facilitating access to care is the first and most critical step to providing high-quality care.

☑ Lowers healthcare costs over time

When patients come out of the woodwork to access care, overall healthcare costs can initially increase. But over time, getting patients the care they need can lower overall healthcare costs by helping patients become healthier. Healthier patients generally don't have costly emergency room visits. They don't wait until an illness or injury becomes dangerous—they seek care when they need it.

One study looked at a gastroenterology clinic's initiative to meet increased patient demand. The clinic increased capacity to see 25% more patients. The clinic was able to boost access to care substantially over a year without increasing the cost of care or lowering the quality.

☑ Increases economic mobility and growth

Patients who can access the care they need are healthier, and healthier people are often more productive. Studies have found links between good health outcomes and labor market outcomes. Health and wealth go hand-in-hand. Increasing access to care and helping patients achieve their health goals has long-term effects on economic mobility and growth.

> " Access is intertwined with quality and difficult to de-link. While access does not equal quality, it is often a strong determinant of quality."
>
> Shantanu Agrawal & Brock Slabach
>
> The Drive to Quality And Access In Rural Health

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL COLLEGES ESTIMATES A SHORTAGE OF NEARLY 122,000 PHYSICIANS IN THE UNITED STATES BY 2032.

Recognizing access barriers.

So many things can get in the way of patients and providers coming together when care is needed. Anticipating those obstacles can help healthcare organizations develop better bridges to care.

Patient barriers to care

- No medical coverage
- Giant deductibles, excessive copays
- No car, no public transportation, no way to get there
- Crazy and demanding schedules
- Bad past experiences eroding patient-provider trust

Provider challenges

- Staff stretched too thin
- High no-show rates, big schedule gaps, and minimal optimization
- Phones ringing off the hook, no capacity for strategic outreach

HOW TO BOOST ACCESS TO CARE

It all starts with outreach.

Do you have a strategy in place to reach out to new and inactive patients? Access always begins with an effective outreach program.

Streamline communications with patients

Proactively send patients the information they need to remember an appointment, be prepared, and reschedule if necessary. This leads to happier patients and fewer phones ringing off the hook.

Bring in assigned patients for care

Make sure you have a plan in place to reach assigned patients. Those patients need a regular source of care, and you need a regular stream of patients. Sending personalized yet automatic invitations to care works wonders.

Elevate your online presence with 5-star reviews

A third of patients find providers on their own, and half of those patients found a provider online. Can patients find you online? Five-star reviews help you attract new patients in need of care.

Reach out to patients for follow-up or preventive care

Invite patients to make an appointment when they're due for follow-up care or are past-due for preventive screenings like mammograms, colonoscopies, and blood work.

Immediately contact referred patients

Do you get a steady stream of referrals? Develop a process to automatically reach out to each newly referred patient and get them scheduled as soon as possible. happier patients and fewer phones ringing off the hook.
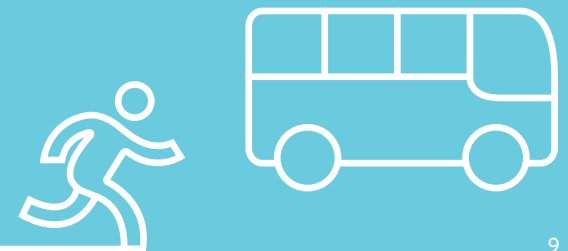
Driving patients to care.

For many providers, accessible and affordable transportation is one of the leading causes of appointment no-shows and cancellations. To address this common barrier to care and a major social determinant of health, Luma Health and Uber Health have partnered to help you easily offer rides to patients.

Here's how it works:

1. When a patient cancels an appointment, Luma Health automatically qualifies the patient for a ride based on customizable parameters like patient demographics, appointment types, and more.

2. If the patient qualifies, he or she will get an offer for a ride via text.

3. The patient can then accept the ride from his or her phone—no app downloads or credit cards necessary.

4. On the day of the appointment, the patient will get a message asking him or her to trigger the ride.

Working together, Luma Health and Uber Health can help you provide an invaluable service to your patients. Addressing this social determinant of health improves access and outcomes.

ONE STUDY OUT OF NEW YORK FOUND THAT PATIENTS WHO HAD TO TAKE THE BUS TO CARE WERE 2X AS LIKELY TO MISS THEIR APPOINTMENT.

Building a better digital front door.

For the modern patient, flexibility and convenience are must-haves. Providers can no longer get away with asking patients to call between nine and five for an appointment and then putting them on hold indefinitely only to schedule them over three weeks out. The rapid growth in retail clinics—over 5x between 2006-2014—has offered patients a new level of immediacy and convenience.

Healthcare associations including MGMA and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) recommend practices implement technology to make it easier to schedule an appointment including via patient self-scheduling. Opening your digital front door means there's no wrong door for your patients—whether they prefer to call, text, or go online, they can quickly get an appointment or the information they need.

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Clinic SF ★★★★

Allow online self-scheduling 24/7/365 with real-time availability

Organizations can start their digital front door development by allowing patients the ease and convenience of scheduling an appointment at any time of the day, any day of the week, on their device of choice. Luma Health's self-scheduling technology reflects real-time provider availability. Patients get the convenience they're looking for, and your staff spends less time on outbound calls.

Provide smart, actionable text reminders

Text-messaging appointment reminders are essential to increasing attendance and preventing empty gaps in providers' schedules. But not all appointment reminders are created equal. An effective appointment reminder makes it easy for patients to respond with questions, request to reschedule, or cancel an appointment. Opening the lines of communication via smart appointment reminders gives your organization the data you need to optimize capacity and gives patients the level of convenience they expect.

Allow established patients to access providers electronically without an appointment

Not all entries through your digital front door need to result in an appointment. Some questions or issues can be resolved via email, secure chat, or phone. Offering a secure, electronic communication platform like Luma Health's secure chat can help patients get their health concerns addressed without a trip to the doctor. In turn, your providers' schedules can stay open for higher-risk patients.

STUDIES SHOW LONG LEAD TIMES MAY INCREASE NO-SHOW RATES BY UP TO 19 PERCENTAGE POINTS.

Staying connected throughout the care journey.

If patients have to wait over 20 days for an appointment with their provider, how likely are they to go elsewhere? Very likely. The longer a patient has to wait for an appointment, the more likely he or she is to no-show.

Deliver disease-specific cadences with physician-certified health education content

The AAFP recommends that providers looking to improve access do more to ensure continuity of care. That means patients continue to see their personal provider, not just the provider with the earliest availability. But an annual or even quarterly check-up won't always address all the questions and concerns a patient may have.

Providers should be proactive about delivering content to patients that can help them understand, process, and take steps to manage a condition or disease. Videos, articles, or comic-book style handouts can help patients process information between visits and allow patients and providers to stay connected throughout the care journey.
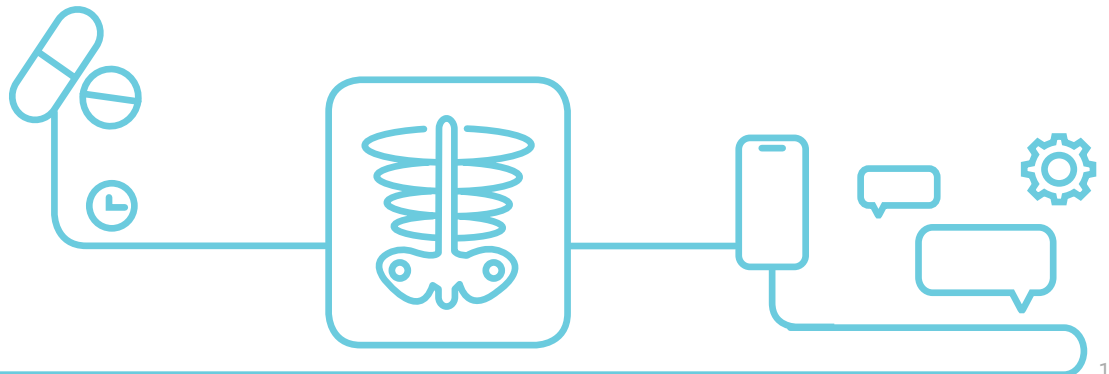
Delivering provider-certified health education content.

Patients with new diagnoses have questions. Whether it's seasonal allergies or Type 2 diabetes, when medical appointment times are limited to twenty minutes or less, not every question gets addressed. Providers can be proactive about addressing patients' questions by providing them with a trusted source of content, designed to be delivered in diagnosis-specific cadences.

Luma Health and Healthline work together to implement customizable, diagnosis-specific content

- Luma Health users can implement diagnosis-specific content calendars
- All Healthline content is provider-certified
- Luma Health users can customize this content and the cadences as they see fit

Newly diagnosed patients receive regular, personalized text messages with the information they need to feel confident addressing their diagnosis.service to your patients. Addressing this social determinant of health improves access and outcomes.
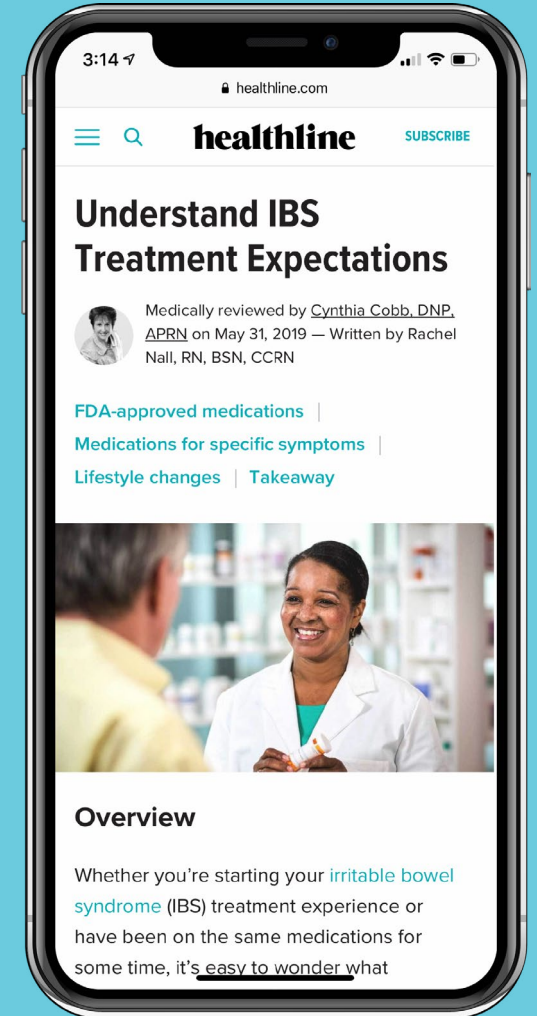
CMS RECENTLY FINALIZED A POLICY TO ALLOW MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PLANS TO COVER TELEHEALTH SERVICE.

Allow for telehealth visits.

Uptake of telehealth has lagged largely due to complicated or lacking reimbursement structures. But offering secure video visits is starting to become more affordable, requiring less of an up-front investment. Plus, more plans are starting to test out payment for these virtual visits.

Offering telehealth to high-risk patients or patients who may struggle to physically get to care is a huge boost to access and can help improve performance as well. But not all telehealth is created equal. Making the experience seamless for patients and providers is critical—that means no downloads, passwords, or equipment.

Plus, instituting protocols for offering telehealth visits based on appointment cancellations, diagnoses, or unique patient needs can help streamline these new workflows. That logic can help prioritize telehealth visits for those who need it most and keep in-person visits when it makes more sense to have a face-to-face conversation.

Cisco Webex Teams

Up-leveling patient care with team collaboration technology.

Patients have a lot of reasons to cancel appointments, from limited transportation options to competing priorities at work, school, or home. To minimize the impact of cancellations and get patients the care they need, Luma Health and Webex Teams work together.

1. When a patient cancels an appointment, Luma Health determines if the patient is eligible for a telehealth visit based on appointment type, diagnosis, and provider preference.

2. If the patient agrees to a virtual visit, Luma Health creates a private room via Webex over a secure channel.

3. After the visit, the room is deleted to ensure privacy.

The Luma Health-Webex Teams integration delivers:

- Maximized revenue, optimized capacity utilization

- Easy, intuitive provider experience

- Modernized experience for patients
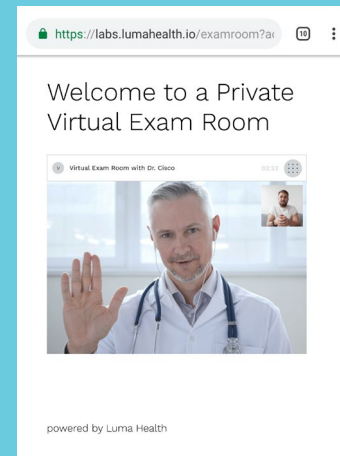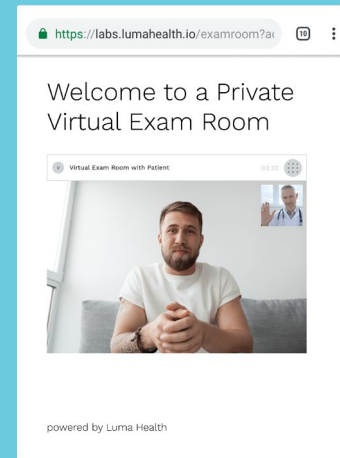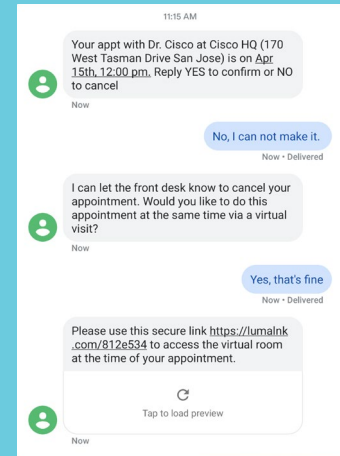
Boosting Access, Scaling Your Business.

As you increase access to care, you have to scale your business accordingly. Increasing patient volume is great, but only if you have the capacity to provide each patient with a relatively seamless experience.

☑ Optimize provider schedules to maximize patients seen

If your no-show rate is above 8%, which is about industry average, it is time to do something about it. To increase access, you should aim to fill each and every appointment slot on your providers' calendars. To do so, use a reminder-waitlist one-two punch.

1. **Remind every patient about upcoming appointments.** Luma Health has an optimized reminder cadence, based on reminder data for millions of patients. Two weeks out, seven days out, and two days out.

   > This customized reminder cadence has reduced no-shows by half for one Luma Health Customer and by 79% for another.

2. **Fill empty slots with waitlist patients.** Patients should be able to add themselves to your waitlist so you don't have to touch it. Then, when a slot opens up, you automatically fill those empty slots with waitlist patients.

☑ Save time, save money

How much time does your staff spend entering intake forms into the EHR? Calling referred patients? Manually scheduling patients for appointments? Each of these processes can be flipped on its head to save your staff's valuable time.

More appointments = more dollars

Driving patients to care at your organization also drives revenue. And opening up appointment slots for new patients helps drive revenue down the line as well.

> One Luma Health customer increased monthly revenue by $10,000 by increasing referral conversion and filling empty appointment slots.

Happy patients are valuable patients

When access to care is quick and easy, patient satisfaction soars. Happy patients are loyal patients, and they drive business to your organization to support your bottom line.

Drive revenue in pay-for-performance and other value-based models

MIPS, ACOs, pay-for-performance plans, and other value-based payment programs incentivize providers that increase access to care. Whether you are seeing more assigned patients, increasing rates of preventive care, or improving outcomes through better communication and follow-up, paying attention to access to care pays under value-based care.

Conquering MIPS.

If you don't already have a plan for MIPS, now is the time to start. Passed back in 2015 as a part of MACRA, MIPS is a wide-reaching program that affects thousands of providers. Here's how to start:

1. Get cozy with the MIPS performance areas.

- ☑ Quality

- ☑ Advancing Care Information (formerly known as meaningful use)

- ☑ Resource Use, or cost

- ☑ Improvement Activities

2. Focus on patient health.

Check-in on high-risk patients between visits to ensure they are on the path to success.

3. Check-in on high-risk patients between visits.

Allow for seamless and secure communication between providers and patients to address each patient's unique concerns and boost your quality.

4. Get rid of tedious tasks.

You don't have time for that anymore. Quality improvement and reporting will take that up now.

5. Get your data together.

Make sure you're familiar with key performance and patient engagement metrics and start tracking them over time.

Why Partner with Luma Health

- Improve quality outcomes through tailored care reminders

- Advance meaningful use by driving patients to access clinical information online

- Support improvement activities like care coordination and population health

Increase access to care and meet patient demand with Luma Health

☑ Implement custom outreach cadences via text, email, and phone. Drive more patients to care.	☑ Allow patients to schedule care online. Open up digital lanes of communication and drive 5-star reviews online.
☑ Communicate with your patients throughout their care journey. Improve access beyond the traditional appointment.	☑ Scale your business. Optimize your providers' schedules to maximize patients seen and reduce wait times.

Luma Health was founded on the idea that access to care should be easy for patients.

Learn more about how partnering with Luma Health can help you sustainably boost access to care while working toward your goals of healthier and happier patients.

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