



RELATIENT®

Cherokee Health Systems Powers Telehealth with Patient Engagement, Goes Live Across 24 Locations During COVID-19

"We could have paused our go-live project due to COVID-19, but we needed these tools even more given the pandemic," says Andy Rhea, CIO of Cherokee Health Systems. The Tennessee health system, which operates 24 rural and urban health clinics across 13 Tennessee counties, began planning to implement Relatient's patient engagement platform in early 2020 before COVID-19 swept the nation and halted normal operations. And while it was tempting to slow their plans, Rhea knew they needed Relatient's digital tools and robust integration to their practice management system, NextGen, to keep patients informed during the pandemic.

Certified as an NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home, Cherokee Health stayed focused on minimizing gaps-in-care, keeping care accessible to patients regardless of payer, and communicating the availability of Telehealth as a new visit option. Rhea says this would have been much more complicated with previous vendors, some who would take days or even weeks to make changes to scripting or send on-demand messaging to patients.

"We implemented Relatient's software during a global pandemic. As soon as we went live, we had immediate changes to implement due to ramifications of the crisis. Relatient's team was available at every step of the transition. This collaboration was critical because we moved the majority of our patient appointments to Telehealth within a 10-day timeframe. For example, Relatient expedited actions such as the inclusion of the unique patient Telehealth link in the appointment reminder. We are pleased with Relatient's professionalism and timeliness when we needed it most."

Andy Rhea, CIO, Cherokee Health Systems

Looking Past COVID-19

An early adopter of telemedicine, Cherokee Health has been using it within their clinics since 1999 to connect their patients to specialists that would have otherwise been difficult to access. COVID-19 created an immediate need to expand those services into patient homes and Rhea says it's likely here to stay even after the risk of COVID-19 dissipates. Whether in-clinic or via Telehealth, Cherokee Health looks to digital tools like reminders, demand messaging, online billing, health campaigns, and patient surveys to help patients navigate the patient journey, stay current in their care, and access care easily.



Highlights

- Hands-on implementation made for a smooth go-live experience
- Expedited the inclusion of a unique Telehealth link within appointment reminders
- Demand Messaging kept patients informed without manual outreach

Solutions:

- Appointment Reminders
- Demand Messaging
- MDpay
- Surveys (planned)
- Health Campaigns (planned)

Integration:

- NextGen