Melton improves patient experience and clinic efficiency with patient self check-in.

In order to improve patient experience and staff efficiency, Melton Health invested in a **patient flow management system** from Qmatic. The investment has paid off not only by saving the organisation $800,000 in building costs and reducing frontline staff costs by 25%.

The clinic provides over 50,000 episodes of care per annum and has successfully implemented automated queuing technology from Qmatic to reduce the need for people to physically wait in queues, improve way-finding, automate the clinicians collection of patients from those waiting, simplify data compilation, monitor patient waiting times, reduce the demand on reception resources and improve patient satisfaction.

Qmatic was selected as the automated queuing system and was integrated with the hospital's existing patient management system. The integration and implementation of the project was achieved within the prescribed timelines and prior to the clinic opening.
The icing on the cake came when Melton Health won the prestigious **Victorian Public Healthcare Gold Award** for its automated patient flow system.

😊 THE SITUATION

Melton Health, near Melbourne in Australia, is one of three super clinics funded by the state government to provide same-day hospital and ambulatory care services to the rapidly expanding populations in the outerwestern metropolitan area of Australia. Melton Health opened in February 2006 with one of its key objectives being to utilise new and innovative technology to deliver services in a more efficient and effective manner.

The Melton Health implementation team believed that improving the time and way people were queued was an important contributor to patient satisfaction.

The team identified an opportunity to use an automated queuing system to reduce the number of reception counters and waiting areas required, reducing capital and recurrent operating costs. While automated queuing systems were becoming more widely used throughout a wide range of

- $ 800,000
Building costs reduction estimated

client service industries, it became evident that no one in Australia had previously attempted to integrate the technology with a health service's patient administration system.

The great challenges when installing an automated queuing system integrated with the health service's patient management system were to:

☐ Reduce the need for patients to queue at reception counters.

☐ Provide information to patients on which waiting area to attend and how to get there.

☐ Allow clinicians to see the names and wait-ing times of each patient from the computer screen located in their consultation room.

☐ Enable clinicians within their consulting room to call patients forward from the wait-ing room.

☐ Automate the collection of arrival times, consultation commencement and comple-tion times.

☐ Alert managers when waiting times exceed predetermined thresholds.

☐ Allow monitoring of performance targets against performance indicators

♥ THE SOLUTION

Upon entering the clinic, the **patient scans a barcode** at the top of their appointment letter at one of two self-service points located near the front door. As the patient scans the letter, their name is added to a waiting list of patients on the clinician's computer screen in their consulting room. The patient is also automatically recorded as 'arrived' in the patient management system.

The **ticket printer in the self service kiosk** issues the patient with an appointment number ticket and provides information on which waiting area to attend. The waiting areas are distinguished from each other using a colour coded system. When the clinician is ready to see the patient, they **click a button on their computer screen** which initiates both an audible and visual call up of the patient's ticket number over the speaker system and waiting room screen. The call forward includes **information on what entry door to use to the consulting area**. It also automatically records the consultation commencement time for that patient, and the conclusion of the previous patient's consultation, in the patient management system.

The automated queuing system has freed up the reception

for general enquiries and other customer service matters. Clinicians are **able to monitor patient volumes** and their waiting times. **Managers are automatically alerted** to problem solve any excessive delay to patients as they occur in real time.

A fully integrated queuing system in the patient management system provides capacity to **automate a complex array of clinic services** - sometimes over 40 individual clinics running at once. It also utilises the technology for record keeping purposes as well as monitoring waiting times.

"The system reduced the number of recep-tion counters required from four to three, as well as reducing the waiting areas required by approximately 25%"

KPMG Study

⭐ THE RESULTS

An independent patient satisfaction survey confirms that 72% of patients perceived that they did not have to wait at all for their service while 98% perceived that they waited less than 15 minutes.

A staff survey also suggests that staff perceived the computerized systems at Melton Health as a major strength in the model of care provided.

The automated queuing system reduced the number of reception counters required from four to three, as well as reducing the waiting areas required by approximately 25%, reducing the building cost by an estimated $800,000 (at 2006 building).

Victorian Public Healthcare Gold Award for Melton automated patient flow system

QMATIC