



The Primary Care Physician's Guide to Streamlining Patient Visits to Increase Revenue



Table of Contents

3	Rethink the Patient Experience
4	Reimagine the Patient Visit
5	How to Streamline Patient Visits to Increase Revenue
6	Go Virtual for More Types of Visits
7	Adopt Digital Intake Forms
8	Automate Patient Appointment Scheduling
10	Automate Patient Check-In
11	Have Access to Effective Tech Support
12	Integrate with Your EHR
13	Keep Scheduling, Documentation, and Billing in the EHR/PMS
14	Telehealth Is Here to Stay

Rethink the Patient Experience

The healthcare landscape is evolving. The global pandemic has fundamentally changed an already evolving industry. Patients today are looking for a different type of care than the traditional in-person, paper form model. And that means delivering modern, digital in-office and virtual care hybrid experiences that patients expect.

While digital forms, patient scheduling, appointment reminders, and virtual care were already growing, the pandemic created a need and opportunity for mass adoption of an integrated model.

Today, patients want a seamless experience from their primary care physician, and that means:

- An easy process for scheduling and rescheduling appointments
- A comfortable “waiting” experience
- Support for technology services

The good news is that giving patients what they want also addresses the needs of primary care physician clinics, too. This includes wanting to create positive outcomes for patients, streamlining operations, and seeing more patients without physician burnout.

The adoption of digital patient engagement and telehealth services into your practice can support these goals. In this guide, we'll show you:

- How to reimagine the patient visit using telehealth
- How to streamline patient visits to increase revenue with the right telehealth platform

Because more clinics have adopted telehealth, patient needs are quickly evolving. According to [research by SYKES](#):

86% of respondents say telehealth made it easier for them to get the care they need

88% of Americans want to continue using telehealth for non-urgent consultations after COVID-19 has passed

80% of respondents said they feel it is possible to receive quality care through telehealth visits

And, according to [research by TripleTree](#):

76% of consumers are interested in using virtual care

36% of consumers would leave their current physician for a provider who offered telehealth services

95% of providers plan to offer telehealth in the future

Reimagine the Patient Visit

Primary care clinics face a number of challenges. These include negative patient outcomes, inefficient operations, increased costs, low daily patient visits, and no-shows.

The good news is that an integrated patient engagement and telehealth platform can help address all these issues. Today, the right platform can allow you to streamline patient intake and communications and connect with your patients virtually from anywhere.

Virtual visits are faster, cost less to conduct and expand your service areas, which enables you to help more people, while reducing no-shows to as low as 4%.

Let's explore some patient engagement benefits.



Benefits of Patient Engagement for Primary Care Physicians:

- A new business model with additional revenue streams
- Expanded business hours with reduced overhead
- Improved operational efficiency
- Reduced no-shows
- More “face time” with patients
- Continuity of care by offering more options for follow-ups
- The ability to focus on chronic care management
- The monetization of frequent care
- Better coordination between providers
- Improved patient outcomes and patient satisfaction

Next, we'll go over the specifics, including how a telehealth platform can streamline almost every area of the patient visit and experience.

Benefits of Patient Engagement for Patients:

- Easier scheduling with multiple options
- Taking less time off for an appointment (one study found the average time invested in a doctor's appointment was 121 minutes including travel time, wait time, and clinic time)
- Addressing transportation issues or travel burdens
- The convenience of seeing their primary care physician from home
- A more comfortable waiting experience prior to an appointment
- Increased access to care
- Convenient access to a physician even when living in a rural area
- Less worry about contracting or transmitting a contagious disease to other patients



How to Streamline Patient Visits to Increase Revenue

The technology that is available today can streamline your patient visits and ultimately increase your primary care clinic's revenue. Next, we'll look at seven ways that technology can help by improving your workflow, including:

- 1** Going virtual for more types of visits
- 2** Adopting digital intake forms
- 3** Automating patient appointment scheduling
- 4** Enhancing the virtual waiting room experience
- 5** Having access to effective tech support
- 6** Integrating with your EHR
- 7** Keeping scheduling, documentation, and billing within your EHR/PMS



1 Go Virtual for More Types of Visits

Because virtual visits are typically faster, cost less, and allow you to expand your service area, this means more revenue to your clinic. In addition, allowing virtual “walk-ins” via telehealth can help fill openings, cancels or no-shows in the schedule.

You might be surprised at the types of patient visits you can conduct via telehealth.

Common telehealth visits include:

- Cold and flu
- Allergies
- Sinus/ear infections
- Sore throat
- UTIs
- Diarrhea and vomiting
- Medication management
- Follow-ups
- Pre- and post-op care
- Group education and wellness

For chronic care management, you can offer telehealth for patients with:

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Coronary artery disease
- Cardiac arrhythmia
- End-stage renal disease
- Hepatitis
- Asthma / COPD
- Obesity
- Oncologic co-morbidities
- Neurodegenerative diseases

Discussing lab results is another type of appointment that's great for telehealth, including:

- Colonoscopy / sigmoidoscopy results
- Mammogram results
- Cholesterol levels
- STD testing
- CBC results
- Blood glucose levels
- Liver function testing
- Pap smear results
- Blood electrolytes

2 Adopt Digital Intake Forms

Getting patients to fill in the required forms can be a headache. That's because clinics don't always offer the most convenient way to get these forms completed.

Patients might not have time to fill in the paperwork ahead of the appointment, they might be concerned with how the clinic will protect the information they provide or they may not have the technology to support the forms the clinic sends ahead of time (PDFs, Word docs, etc.).

The right patient engagement platform can make forms a breeze with the ability to fill in all forms digitally with a click of a button, safely (HIPAA compliant), and in multiple languages.

Digital intake forms such as the kind offered by Mend garner an average 80% engagement rate, with some groups as high as 98%.

When patients have their intake forms ready to go ahead of the appointment, your clinic enjoys more efficient operations. This could even translate to more time for more appointments.

Here's what a digital intake form process can look like:

- Your medical forms are custom built into the telehealth platform in any language
- Based on the type of appointment, the telehealth platform knows which patient forms to send
- The patient clicks a secure link via text or email and completes the online patient intake forms before they arrive
- In the case of an interruption, forms save automatically so patients can come back without losing data
- The online intake forms and data get sent automatically to the EHR
- Forms can also set patient statuses automatically if you want to track various pipeline stages through your processes

3

Automate Patient Appointment Scheduling

With traditional phone scheduling, your staff is typically only available to take calls within the allotted 40 hours per week. Online scheduling allows patients to book and modify appointments 24/7/365.

Research shows that all else being equal, 81% of people would choose a primary care physician based on whether or not the clinic offered online scheduling.

In fact, patients will choose to see providers who are farther away but have online scheduling by a 2-to-1 margin over those who are closer and do not have the option.

Plus, Mend data shows that when patients can self-schedule, they are 50% less likely to no-show. That's promising since primary care clinics have the highest number of patient no-shows, according to one study.

What does self-scheduling look like through a patient engagement platform? Let's go through the steps...

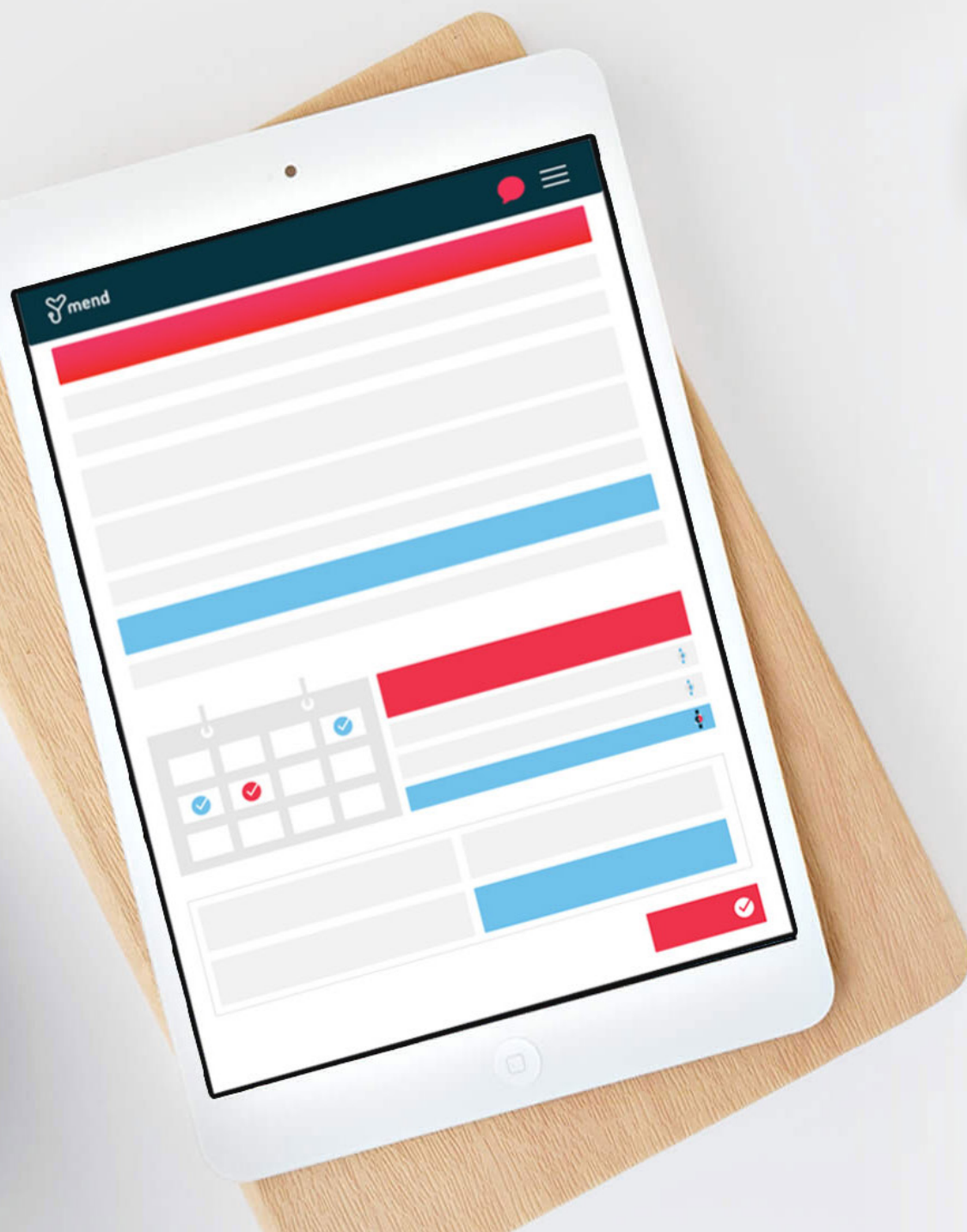
Patients Can Self-Schedule from Your Website

Patients can click a link that takes them to a custom and fully integrated triage and self-scheduling experience on any device.

The right telehealth platform can integrate with the master schedule from your EHR or PMS, and can handle any appointment type with varying lengths and complexities automatically.

Patients Can Reschedule as Needed

Patients can easily reschedule, too. When you make it easy for them to modify their appointment calendar, expect another 2% to 8% reduction in no-show rates. For a 30-provider practice averaging \$74 per visit, that's at least \$560,000 in new revenue.



Appointment Reminders Reduce No-Shows

Automatic appointment reminders use multiple touchpoints to help reduce the chance that your patient no-shows. This can include text and email or email and a phone call together.

These reminders can:

- Reduce staff workload
- Improve patient communication
- Maximize appointment visibility

Here's how the automated system can work:

- The platform pulls the patient data automatically from your EHR
- The telehealth platform sorts through the contact information and automatically sends patient appointment reminders with the day, date, time, address, provider, etc.
- Some platforms can even look up phone numbers automatically to determine whether to send a text and email or a phone call and email.

Automatic reminders can reduce no-show rates to between 11% and 18%. For a 10-provider practice, that equates to a \$615,680 in revenue recovered.

When you work with Mend's patient engagement platform, you get access to the healthcare industry's first-ever artificial intelligence **Attendance Predictor**, which **predicts no-shows and cancellations before they happen with up to 99% accuracy**. [Learn more](#) about this feature.

4 Enhancing the Waiting Room Experience

The traditional patient check-in can be laborious. Often, your staff needs to verify patients have completed the necessary paperwork, and if not, the patient needs to do it on the spot in the waiting room.

The traditional waiting room experience can lead to patient dissatisfaction. Evidence concludes that the waiting room experience is an important factor in patient satisfaction, as outlined here:

"Surveys of primary care offices show that how patients feel about their physician encounters and the quality of their health care is directly related to the impression of their time in the waiting room. For example, longer waiting times are associated with lower patient satisfaction; however, by being occupied during the wait, this satisfaction is markedly increased, even if the length of waiting is unaltered."

But it's not just patient satisfaction that is linked with waiting room issues. One study found that "every aspect of patient experience—specifically confidence in the care provider and perceived quality of care—correlated negatively with longer wait times."

In-person appointment wait times are usually broken into two segments: the waiting room "wait" and the exam room "wait."

Research shows that patients want the first two segments minimized and the final segment of their appointment, which is time spent with the physician maximized.

Telehealth appointments reimagine the waiting experience.

First, patients are already in the comfort of their own homes. The right platform will have already streamlined the forms process and they will be in the patient's chart.

When it is time for their appointment, the patient simply clicks a meeting link and is immediately connected with the physician or enters into a virtual "waiting room" as needed.

Mend's **Enhanced Virtual Waiting Room** increases patient satisfaction by up to 23%. The first-of-its-kind Netflix-like library offers engaging and educational content that is designed to entertain patients as they wait for their virtual visit. Providers can choose from either Mend's pre-populated content library, or upload their own based on their organization's preference.



5 Have Access to Effective Tech Support

The right telehealth platform will work with low-bandwidth connectivity and basic technology, including:



3G internet and above



Audio and video as low as 50 Kbps

Tech problems when trying to initiate a telehealth appointment or during the appointment can cause delays, no-shows, and overall frustration.

Research shows that “usability problems with installation and account creation led to high mental demand and task completion time,” and study participants preferred using a telehealth system without these issues.

Also consider the fact that certain populations may not be as savvy with technology or have access to the best-in-class technology.

One study by UC San Francisco found that “more than a third of adults over age 65 face potential difficulties seeing their doctor via telemedicine, with the greatest challenges experienced by older, low-income men in remote or rural areas.”

In addition, you'll want to look for telehealth platforms that offer extensive training before launch, and fast-responding tech support in the long run.

For example, Mend monitors connectivity for a period of two to six weeks after implementation to ensure long-term success. In addition, **our tech support team has an average response time of 23 seconds, so you or your patients can get instant support early in the morning or late at night.**



6 Integrate with Your EHR

Streamlining operations means choosing a patient engagement platform that integrates with all major EHRs.

Check out all of [Mend's integrations](#). We also offer full API coverage if you're looking to build an application on top of our platform.

When it comes to appointment scheduling, your staff has many decision points to consider. This includes insurance, provider availability and specialization, appointment complexity, geography, age, and more.

The right telehealth platform will integrate with the master schedule from your EHR or PMS and use advanced technology to make these decision points easy.

All that a patient needs to do is select the appointment, and the patient engagement platform can sync the medical appointment calendar and master schedule automatically. They can also handle cancellations and reschedules.

And because certain platforms connect with EHRs, they can automatically send out reminders and paperwork to patients.

This includes digital intake forms, which are automatically put into the patient's chart as they come in. But that is not all. The right platform can send out clinical assessments, surveys, and more.

Once the patient completes the online forms, the telehealth platform puts them right into the chart. It's a seamless workflow that patients and staff will enjoy and equates to a lot of saved time for your staff.



7 Keep Scheduling, Documentation, and Billing in the EHR/PMS

To get the most benefit from your telehealth platform, integrations are key. With the right platform, you keep the scheduling, documentation and billing within your chosen EHR/PMS.

That means the telehealth platform should run smoothly in the background while you continue to work within your system of choice.

For example, when providers take notes during a telehealth visit, this information automatically goes into the patient's health record, simplifying the data entry process.

This reduces the chances of making an error when updating the EHR system, ensuring providers have access to current, accurate information.

This type of integration helps ease the flow of information, improves patient outcomes, and simplifies the billing process.



Telehealth Is Here to Stay

According to research, **95% of providers plan to offer telehealth in the future**. The sooner your primary care clinic explores telehealth as a service offering, the better positioned you are to address the changing expectations of your patients.

Doing so now gives you a leg up on your competition, knowing that patients are currently seeking primary care clinics that offer this type of revolutionary healthcare.

Enterprise-Grade Patient Engagement and Integrated Telehealth

About Mend: Mend is an enterprise-grade patient engagement and integrated telehealth platform designed to help healthcare organizations profitably scale their practice and care for more patients. Founded in 2014, Mend makes it easy for healthcare providers to securely and efficiently communicate with their patients (and with each other), without concerns of violating HIPAA compliance or misplacing patient information. Nearly 20,000 providers across 90 specialties leverage Mend to tailor and streamline their in-office and virtual care workflows, providing integrated care experiences to more than 4 million patients.

Mend's comprehensive platform works hand-in-hand with all major EHR and PMS software to facilitate more than 400,000 telehealth visits per month, increase patient satisfaction by up to 23%, reduce no-show rates as low as 4%, radically improved staff productivity, and help providers drive more revenue through better patient attendance.





The Leading Telemedicine & Digital Patient Intake Platform

Achieve single digit no-show rates and 90+% patient engagement

Mend is a telehealth company. We offer a customized platform, including telemedicine, appointment reminders, patient scheduling, and digital patient intake forms to take existing workflows and processes to the web. Simply put, Mend can increase patient volume, close gaps in care, and automate your workflow while enabling you to increase revenue, reduce overhead, and save time.

LEARN MORE

or call us at 1-866-933-2362