

# Accelerating care: How you can use technology to see your patients sooner



Connecting patients to the services they need is at the heart of healthcare. But if you feel that patient access seems more complicated now than it used to, you're not alone. Organizations of all sizes need innovative ways to cope with short-staffed administrative teams, a changing economic landscape and patients' evolving expectations for their healthcare experience.

Here are patients' biggest barriers to accessing care—and four ways that healthcare organizations can address them.

## Why is it more difficult for patients to get care now?

### Long wait times for appointments

The amount of time patients wait for medical appointments directly correlates to visit cancellation and no-show rates.



Average wait times to see a new physician **jumped from 21 days** in 2004 to **26 days** in 2022.<sup>1</sup>



Just one no-show increases the likelihood of attrition by **almost 70%**.<sup>2</sup>

Patients cite long wait times as their top access pain point—and that means organizations with limited appointment availability risk losing patients to competitors that can see them sooner.<sup>3</sup>



### Staffing shortages

The healthcare industry is facing an ongoing labor shortage. Hiring is more difficult than ever, and many professionals have left the field.

80%

Personnel issues top the list of hospital CEOs' concerns, with 80% reporting burnout among their non-physician staff.<sup>4</sup>

44%

In 2023, 44% of healthcare leaders said their current support staffing levels are inadequate for meeting patient demand.<sup>5</sup>

1 in 5

Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) medical practices report that administrative and billing roles are the most difficult to fill at their organizations.<sup>6</sup>

### Growing patient financial concerns

The pandemic and ensuing rise in inflation exacerbated financial concerns for many Americans and diminished patients' ability to see providers. These disparities remain especially pronounced among certain communities.



A record high percentage (38%) of Americans **put off medical treatment due to cost** in 2022.<sup>7</sup>



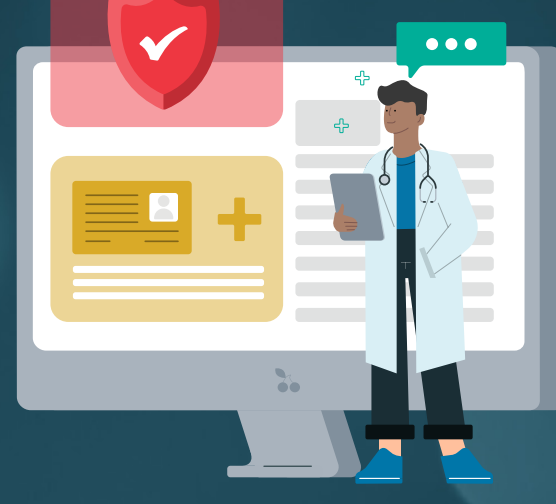
Lower-income Americans, younger adults and women are most likely to **delay seeking care** for financial reasons.<sup>7</sup>



LGBTQ+ Americans were more likely to **forgo necessary healthcare** during the pandemic compared with cisgender, heterosexual men, and cost was the most common reason cited.<sup>8</sup>

### How can your organization address access challenges?

**One simple answer: technology.** In 2022, 88% of physicians who participated in an American Medical Association study said digital health technologies had improved their clinical outcomes and efficiency, up from 82% in 2016.<sup>9</sup>



By making technology part of your patient access strategy, you can help your patients more quickly get the care they need.

Here are four strategies to get there:

1

#### Simplify scheduling.

Give patients the convenience of online self-scheduling and appointment requests. You can save staff an hour of time for every eight self-scheduled patient visits, reducing their administrative burden.

2

#### Use an automated schedule-management tool to fill open appointments.

Unlike traditional waitlists, automated systems notify eligible patients about reopened appointment slots and fill gaps in your schedule.

- With Phreesia, you can automatically fill 1 in 5 cancellations without phone calls to your front desk.
- Bridge staffing gaps while seeing patients up to 30 days sooner.

3

#### Reach patients with two-way text messaging.

Templates for common messages, like pre-visit registration reminders or day-of-appointment details, save staff time and engage patients using the communication channel they prefer.

- A provider group using Phreesia's two-way text messaging tool saved 100 phone calls per day per staff member.

4

#### Help patients manage healthcare costs with flexible ways to pay.

Technology can automate and standardize time-of-service collections and offer patients online payments, payment plans and other ways for them to pay their bill with minimal stress.

- Healthcare organizations see a 3X increase in time-of-service collections using Phreesia versus asking their staff to collect balances due.
- Phreesia determines copays at the time of service, giving them immediate visibility into what they owe.

Phreesia can help you improve patient access, streamline appointment scheduling and create a better experience for patients and practices alike.

LEARN MORE

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