



Provider Influence on No-Shows

Provider behaviors can have a significant influence on no-show rate:

1. Providers will often, when they expect today's patient's clinical condition to improve, have the patient make a follow-up appointment "just in case." This fills up the future schedule. The doctors do this in order to protect themselves from future daily demand. This occurs primarily in salaried environments. Alternatively, other providers, when they expect that today's patient's clinical condition will improve, will say "you don't need to make an appointment, but if you need to see me, you can call me back at any time." This behavior occurs primarily in non-salaried environments. The first behavior will result in increased no-shows. We can shift the behaviors from the first to the second by:
 - Reducing the waiting time so that there's always clinic space
 - Making the panel size right so that the fear of too much demand is mitigated
 - Moving away from a focus on visits to a focus on managing a panel, where the first behavior offers no advantage.
2. Some providers "sell" the future appointment by clearly identifying the clinical need for the visit and explaining in some detail what the patient can expect to happen. Those expectations will often include an activity that can only take place in person - examination of the heart and lungs, for example. Other providers do not sell the return visits, and as a consequence, the no-show rate is higher. With providers that have a strong practice team, we also see that the team reinforces the message. In practices with a weak team, the message is not reinforced.
3. Providers that offer a positive patient experience, primarily by staying on time, will also have lower no-show rates. Patients often have to make a choice about showing up with a negative experience or showing up with a positive experience.