

Dialog Health Helps Hospital Eliminate Readmission Penalty



The Case Study

The hospital used Dialog Health's conversational, two-way text messaging software as a strategic approach to address its high readmission rate. Through the utilization of this software, the hospital achieved substantial success in reducing its readmission rate and eliminated the reimbursement penalty for the hospital in FY '24.

The Problem

A hospital faced a significant challenge related to high readmission rates for both medical and surgical discharges. To address this issue and lower the overall rate of readmissions, the hospital took proactive measures by establishing a dedicated task force. This task force was given the responsibility of developing and executing strategies that would help achieve this goal.

The Summary

The hospital executed its readmission reduction strategies, which included using Dialog Health two-way text messaging starting in December 2021. These strategies accomplished the following:

- **Eliminated Readmission Penalty**
 - The hospital's fiscal year (FY) 2024 readmission penalty was 0%, which was down from about 1.7% in FY 2023 and 2% in FY 2022.
- **Readmission Risk Reduction**
 - There was an 18x reduction in overall readmission risk for patients targeted by the task force.
- **Prioritized Patient Outreach**
 - Patients were able to self-identify if they needed help, which allowed staff to prioritize outreach to those who needed it most.

The Solution

The hospital identified key strategies involving two-way text messaging to improve staff communication, boost adherence to medication and discharge instructions, and chose Dialog Health for several reasons:

- Dialog Health provided pre-templated patient experience and survey questions for high-risk conditions like COPD, CHF, PNA, sepsis, AMI, and total joint replacement.
- Implementation of Dialog Health was quick, and staff training was straightforward.
- Dialog Health was cost-effective compared to phone-based services, allowing more patient interactions through text messages.
- Patients increasingly preferred text messages for communication with the hospital.
- Two-way texting helped staff prioritize high-priority patients daily.

The hospital conducted two readmission-focused campaigns: one for medical patients (sepsis, pneumonia, COPD, CHF) using the Dialog Health Readmission Medical console, and one for surgical patients (bariatric, total joint replacement) using the Dialog Health Readmission Surgical console.

The medical campaign sent periodic, two-way post-discharge messages to check patients' health and adherence to instructions, offered reminders, and allowed patients to request a call for further discussion.

The surgical campaign for bariatric and joint replacement patients sent pre-appointment text messages about preoperative responsibilities and post-surgery reminders, similar to the medical campaign.

The Conclusion

Dialog Health's Medical and Surgical Readmission solutions significantly improved the hospital's readmission reduction efforts, enhancing patient care and financial performance. Text messages reminded patients of post-discharge instructions and provided assistance during recovery, while also increasing preoperative and postoperative compliance. For patients, Dialog Health ensured recovery focus and simplified assistance via text.

The Results

**Eliminated
readmission penalty**

18x

**Reduction in
readmission risk**

**Improved ability
to identify
high-risk patients**

Dialog Health's HIPAA-compliant, conversational two-way texting solutions are cloud-based, easy-to-use, and proven to improve patient engagement while increasing staff productivity.

Powerful mobile solutions. Better engagement for today's world.