

HealthFortis Associates and HealthCare Partners: Improving Care Excellence

AI and innovative referral and authorization workflow solutions from Healthfortis Associates enhance coordinated care within the country's largest operator of medical groups and physician networks.

HealthCare Partners FAST FACTS

Company: HealthCare Partners

Location: El Segundo, California

Industry Segment:
Medical Group

HealthFortis Associates

Relationship: Jointly developed SmartUM and deployed it since 2016 in multiple markets. HealthCare Partners has turned to HealthFortis Associates for connecting patients with the right providers as efficiently as possible and streamlining its UM process.

Status: SmartUM has been live for over 2 years and is processing 2.5M referrals annually.

"Our utilization management team is faster and more efficient because of SmartUM."

CHRIS MAYNE

VP of Utilization Management
HealthCare Partners

PHYSICIAN DECISION SUPPORT AND CONNECTIVITY

The HealthCare Partners Medical Group delivers high-quality medical care through two delivery models: a staff model, and an independent physician association (IPA) model. The group provides health care services to both HMO enrollees and fee-for-service patients and has contracts with most major HMOs and PPOs in Southern California.

Coordinating patient care across such a broad network, with a wide range of carriers and diversity of culture, socioeconomic groups, ages, and health statuses was a challenge, requiring more than traditional fax-based utilization management could provide. To meet this challenge, HealthCare Partners turned to SmartUM.

The benefits of SmartUM were immediate, especially to physicians. Medical practices no longer had to decode complex carrier and network requirements. SmartUM automatically matches patients with carrier-specific preferred providers and routes referrals and pre-authorization requests to the appropriate destination, eliminating the need for faxes and phone calls.

Specialists and Utilization Management teams appreciated replacing faxes, which often contained partial or illegible information, with complete case information. "Practicing medicine today is complex and we were pleased to help relieve some of the administrative burdens of care delivery for our doctors and staff," commented Christel Mcrae, UM Director for CA North Region at HealthCare Partners.

INSTANT PRE-CERTIFICATION USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Prior to implementing SmartUM, patients often waited days for prior-approval, in order to be treated by a specialist. Well-intended physicians and utilization teams relied on antiquated systems- phone and fax, to relay information. Meanwhile, patients waited. A recent national survey reported that 92% of physicians believe that the traditional prior-approval process delays access to necessary care.¹

RESULTS



10,000

Daily referrals



15,000

Registered users



33,000

Daily communications



90+%

Online referral entry rate



60+%

Referral instant approval rate



300+%

Increase in UM staff productivity

LESSONS LEARNED

- Start with automating pre-certifications with a history of > 98% approval rates and grow from there.
- Eliminating fax-based pre-cert requests and providing instant approvals is a real motivator for medical offices.
- Monitor in real time cases approaching contractual deadlines and proactively stay compliant.

“We upgraded our UM system and our doctors, patients and fellow team members all benefited.”

GREG MASON

VP of Clinical Applications
HealthCare Partners

SmartUM reduces care delays and generates instant approvals, when appropriate. Using AI and Machine Learning techniques, SmartUM analyzes data from prior UM decisions to instantly approve identical requests, without manual intervention. It’s learning grows over time in autonomous fashion, by feeding it data on new, human decisions.

What’s the impact? Delivering a new, higher-level of patient care to an increasingly demanding medical consumer is first and foremost. Cost-savings is another gain. HealthCare Partners captured a 300% increase in staff efficiency from SmartUM.

What didn’t change? The quality of decision-making, since machine learning logic is driven by the decisions of HealthCare Partner’s own UM team.

UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT TEAM EFFICIENCY

With SmartUM automatically adjudicating pre-authorization requests and instantly approving up to 60% of them, the UM team has more time to focus on the remaining 40% of requests requiring manual attention. Those requests are distributed to staff based on client-specific parameters. Cases in SmartUM are electronically delivered to UM staff and contain all the required case or appeal information, so they can be evaluated quickly. “SmartUM has reduced our fax volume by 90% and cut-down on our need for follow-up calls to providers seeking additional information,” said Chris Mayne, VP of Utilization Management.

“Our team is more self-sufficient now”, Chris Mayne added, “we can run management reports, even ad hoc reports, without support from IT. We can even send patient letters in 26 languages!”

ABOUT HEALTHFORTIS ASSOCIATES

HealthFortis Associates is a healthcare technology company dedicated to simplifying utilization management for payers, providers, and patients.