

# University of Ottawa Health Services: Case Study



On any given day, 500 patients visit the University of Ottawa Health Services (UOHS) clinics. A range of services – family and specialty medicine, mental health services, physiotherapy, sports medicine and more – is offered to the University’s students, faculty, staff and the general public.

In 2015, that added up to 175,000 visits. 96,000 outbound emails and 24,000 phone calls were sent, reminding patients of those appointments.

## IMPROVING PATIENT INTERACTIONS

When a patient misses an appointment, it impacts staff productivity, patient care and the Health Centre’s bottom line. “We are always looking to improve the efficiency of our service model,” says Chris Fisher, Executive Director at University of Ottawa Health Services. “When the providers are here, they’re here to see patients. Reducing no-shows and streamlining staff time is critical to providing better patient care.”

## TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

In 2010, UOHS implemented an email appointment reminder system, but there was no way of knowing if the email was received and whether the patient would show.

When, late in 2015, Nathalie Laforest, Senior Manager, Medical Records & Registration Services, UOHS, learned the Cliniconex solution featured automated two-way communication, she wasted no time getting in touch.

Today, Cliniconex’s fully automated reminder system contacts patients about upcoming appointments and lets them immediately confirm or cancel with the click of a button.



*Chris Fisher*

Through seamless integration with the EMR system, Cliniconex automatically provides much of the detailed information that had taken up so much staff time. Medical forms are emailed along with the automated reminder, so patients now arrive with completed forms in hand, saving everyone time and helping keep the clinic running on schedule.



*Nathalie Laforest*

## THE CHALLENGE

The UOHS requirements far surpassed any Cliniconex implementation to date. Nearly 250,000 charts reside in UOHS’s EMR system. Dozens of templates were built to accommodate different types of appointments and different types of specialists.

Bilingual reminders are sent three days prior to appointments to allow time to fill in gaps when an appointment is cancelled. For UOHS, that includes Saturdays and Sundays. “We have staff in on the weekend, and anything we can do to even out the

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“The thing that tipped it for us was the ability for patients to instantly respond online”

**Nathalie Laforest – Senior Manager Medical Records & Registration Services**

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Monday morning heavy inbox load helps increase our efficiency,” says Chris.

Internal buy-in by the 40 administrators was a no-brainer. “Zero training required!” enthuses Nathalie. Staff immediately felt the benefits of a decrease in call volume. Patients find the system user friendly and love the ability to confirm and cancel right away. They can choose to be reminded by email, text or automated phone call.

Overall, the technical implementation was smooth for such a large clinic. “Ours is a very complex process,” says Nathalie. “The Cliniconex team showed a great deal of flexibility and versatility dealing with all the things we wanted to do. They worked with us side-by-side prior to going live, and still do as our needs evolve.”



## DESIGNING A MORE EFFICIENT FUTURE

Chris and Nathalie continue to look for additional efficiency gains. They’re particularly enthused about a “wait-list widget.” Thanks to the Cliniconex EMR integration, wait times at the walk-in clinic will be broadcast right on the UOHS website so patients can decide when to visit. They see great potential in Cliniconex’s broadcast feature, especially with regard to preventative care.



uOttawa

- Multi-disciplinary clinic
- 50+ templates developed
- Reminders sent 7 days a week, in French & English
- Serving 100+ health care professionals

It’s all part of realizing the UOHS vision for an Advanced Access model: “If a patient wants to be seen today, we want to see them today,” says Chris. “The Cliniconex solution supports our mission of streamlining workflow and delivering the most efficient model possible...for the best patient care.”

“We’re very, very pleased to have delivered the same successful onboarding experience that we provide to all our customers,” says Anthony Mar, CEO, Cliniconex Inc. “The relationship with UOHS is special for Cliniconex, not only as our most complex deployment to date, but also as a research partner to explore how our technologies can further streamline operations and assure sustainability. We’re very much looking forward to working with the UOHS team moving forward.”

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“The Cliniconex team has been great to work with. They’re very responsive, always kept me in the loop, and they rose to the occasion with our technology demands.”

- Nathalie Laforest, Senior Manager Medical Records & Registration Services

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