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Optimising Advanced Telephony

Evolution not revolution

JAN 2023

Advanced telephony

What is Advanced Telephony?

Evolution not revolution

Using the features of cloud telephony and features that have been created specifically for Primary Care to create an efficient patient communication system.

Example Features:

- Clinical System Integration including data capture

- Soft Phones/Mobile & PC Apps

- Call Centre Technology

- Patient Self Serve/Appointment Booking

- Rules based re-routing, queue management

- Multi Site Integration

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Telephone Systems

Two main types of system:

Private Automatic Branch Exchange (PABX) - Onsite

Cloud Based Telephony System - Hosted

Private Automatic Branch Exchange (PABX) Summary

- Historically more reliable in rural areas
- Physical wiring and hardware dependence prevents flexibility
- Place based – creates single point of failure
- Requires engineer support to make changes
- Availability of incoming lines creates bottlenecks
- Unable/slow to facilitate new ways of working
- Little information available to improve call flows
- Big Investment but fixed on costs

Features of Cloud Telephony

- Limited hardware located on site

- Remote data center that is connected to the internet

- Calls are sent to surgery via broadband

- Calls can be sent to hard phones (a physical phone that sits on your desk) or a softphone, a piece of software on your computer or an app on your mobile, that allows you to make and receive calls

- No limits on lines or call bottlenecks

- Include many features that are derived from modern day call centers

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Features of Cloud Telephony

Changes can be made via a website enabling quick changes to be made remotely.

A set of different call flow configurations can be created and saved quickly and easily.

Call Diverting – allows for calls to be diverted to a different number or call group depending a rule

Closed rules – allows opening times to be configured and rules set on where to divert calls during out of hours

Announcements – For example "You are fourth in the call queue" or "Have you booked your flu vaccination?"

Call Menus (Auto attendant)– The caller is presented with a number of options for example, "Press 1 for appointments, Press 2 for home visits"

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) allows callers to respond to options with their voice

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Features of Cloud Telephony

Call Data

Live data is captured about all calls

Data is captured to show how many people are available to answer calls, average call queue wait time, total calls abandoned and other metrics

Calls can be analysed to understand which route any call followed as the call progresses through the call flow configuration

Call data can be used to identify bottlenecks enabling informed changes to be made to improve patient experience

Interactive Wall Boards & Online Portals

Live call data displayed on a TV screen

Can be configured to include different live data including:-

- Calls waiting

- Abandoned calls

- Longest call wait before answer

- Total calls answered

- Available call agents (eg/ care navigators)

- Unavailable call agents

- Quickly divert calls or redesign patient pathways

- Control the system from anywhere
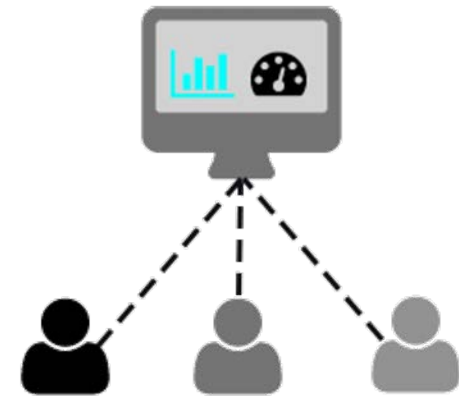
Advanced telephony

Practical Examples

Hybrid Working

Advanced telephony allows a number of different ways to be connected to your telephone system.

Connect using:

- Hard phone (physical handset)
- Soft phone (installed on your computer)
- App on a mobile phone

Clinical System Integration

Some Advanced Telephony Systems have integration with clinical systems.

When you receive a call, a match is made to the calling number - patient demographic information is then automatically shown on your screen so you know who you are talking to and can access the patients medical record quickly

It's possible to include alerts, including for example, needs to book flu appointment or "Is housebound" or "Is a carer"

Scenario

The problem

It's 8:30 on a busy Monday morning, two of your care navigators are self isolating, the call wallboard is showing 10 calls in the queue, average call wait is 16 mins, 20 patients have abandoned their calls.

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The solution

Activate "Call busting"

When a caller enters the telephone call queue, they are told their position in the queue…

"You are 10th in the call queue".

An option is then given to the patient…

"We are very busy right know, if you would like to keep your place in the queue and hang-up, we will call you back when you reach the front of the queue".

The systems will then coordinate this call back.

Scenario

The problem

You have a number of patient groups that require additional support, eg/ patients who are extremely frail, carers, housebound or palliative care patients.

Most likely to phone.

Aim: make it as easy for these patients to contact, prioritise their calls.

The solution

Prioritising access

Using Advanced Telephony features you can import a list of priority telephone numbers into your system. Run a report on your clinical system to give you a list of telephone numbers eg/ for palliative care patients.

When someone calls from one of these numbers they are sent straight to the front of the queue.

Benefits

- Helps you to prioritise your resources for patients in most need

- Is a way of customising the services you provide for CQC Population groups.

- Priority patients can be identified by telephone system based upon a specified read code in EMR

Scenario

"We don't currently have any GP routine appointments to book "

The surgery is in the process of recruiting a GP, until they are in post there is a shortage of routine appointments.

Care navigation team are receiving lots of phone calls to book a routine GP appointment.

Patients are unhappy, have waited in the call queue, to be told there are no appointments.

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The solution

AT Webpage

Click the pre configured "No routine appointments option".

The configuration is instantly changed.

When patient selects the GP routine appointment menu option they are played a message.

"Unfortunately there are currently no GP routine appointments to book. We hope to have more appointments available in the near future. Please call back in a couple of days or use our online services to view available appointments."

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Benefits

Quickly informs callers of appointment availability.

Reduces calls entering the call queue requiring response from care navigation team.

Reduces conversations with unhappy patients = happier care navigators.
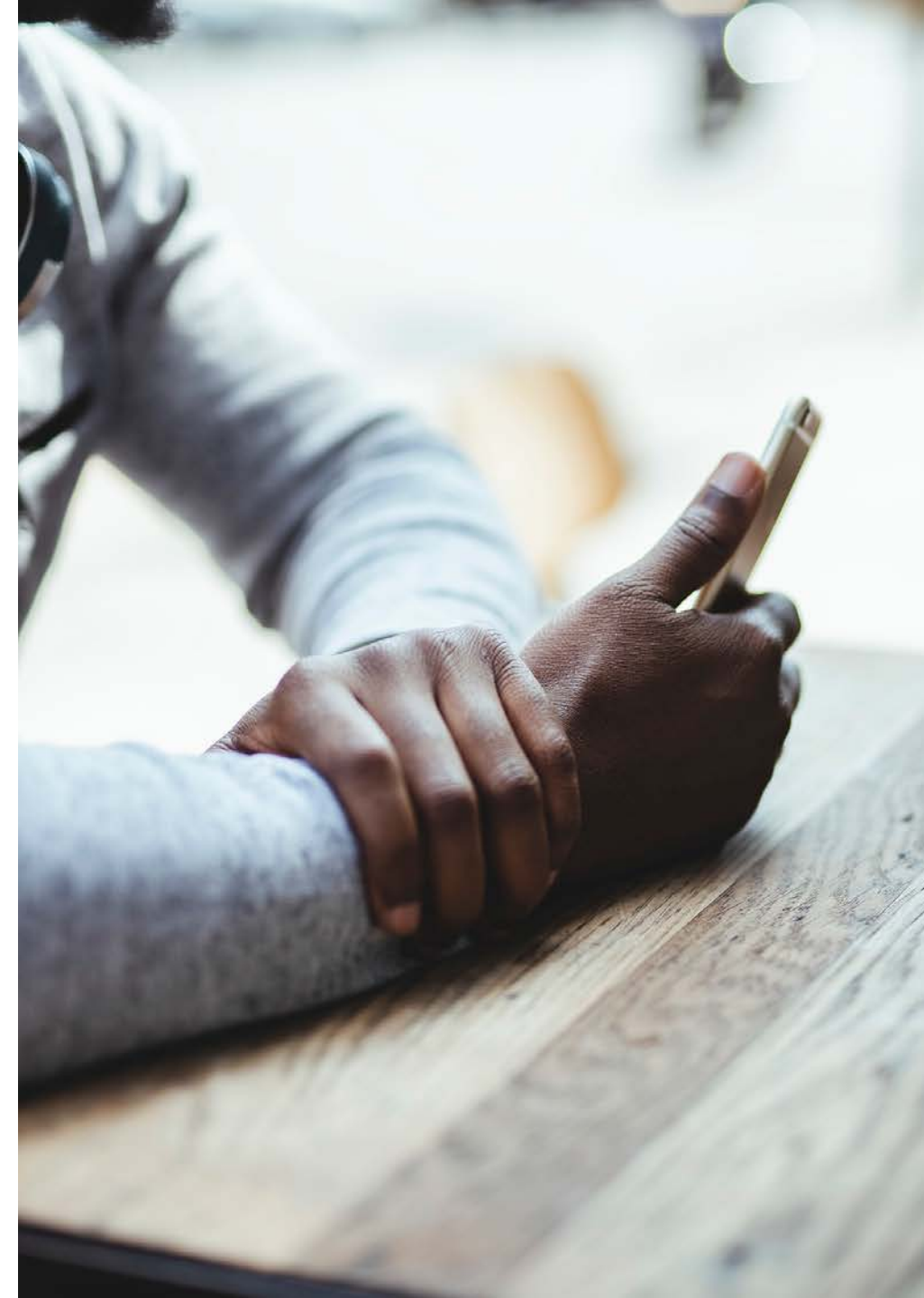
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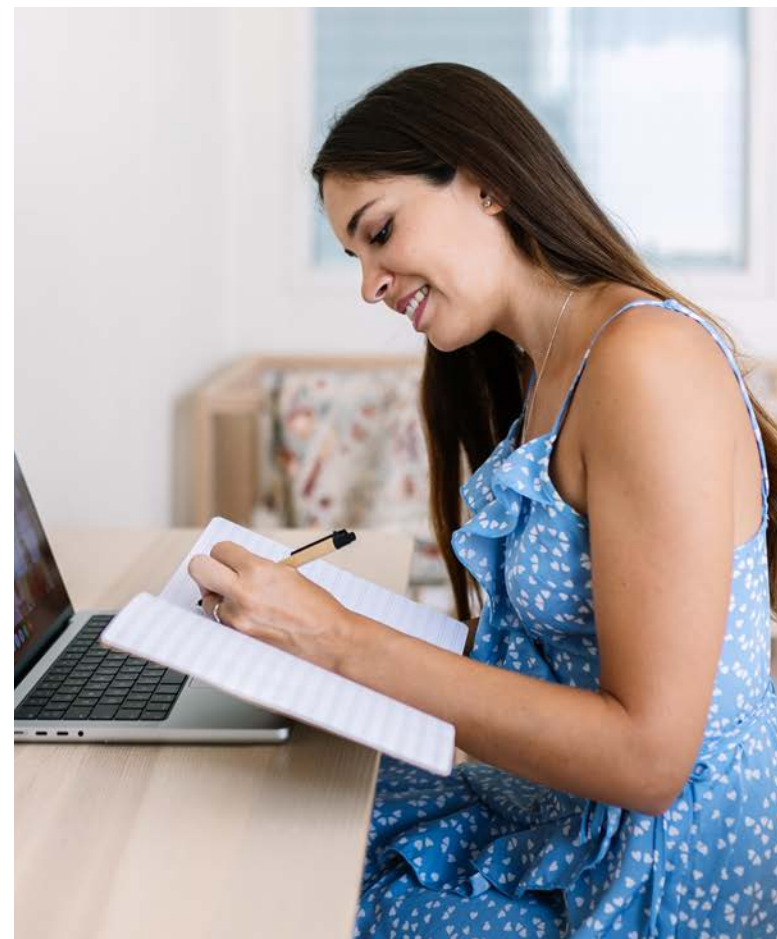
Scenario

"Would you like us to send the information you need in a text message?"

Seasonal vaccinations are available.

Care navigation team are receiving lots of calls about eligibility.

Increased call volume is impacting your response times.

Care navigation team are becoming frustrated.

The solution

AT Webpage

In Advanced Telephony system create a new auto attendant option for vaccination queries.

Create a voice message for this option.

"We have lots of information about vaccinations on our website, press 1 if you would like us to send you a text message about this".

Patient selects this option and text message is sent with a link to the Vaccination FAQ's page on your website.

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Scenario

It's 8:30 am on a Tuesday after a bank holiday.

Reception manager looks at the call wallboard.

15 patients in the call queue.

Average waiting time is 18 mins.

All of the care navigation team are answering calls.

Calls waiting are steadily increasing.

The solution

- Log into Advanced Telephony console

- Can see each of her team members and members

- Can identify other team members available to support with calls and add them temporarily to the care navigation team

- This can be configured automatically based upon preconfigured metrics

Scenario

Booking Appointments

Sent out a large batch of flu vaccination invitations.

Advised your patients how to book using online services.

Expecting a high volume of patients to phone to book their flu vaccination appointment.

The solution

- Advanced Telephony clinical system integration

- Patients can book appointments using their phone

- System configuration can be updated to include option for booking an appointment

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Telephony Solutions Summary

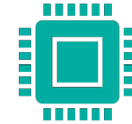No one size fits all solution

Not every phone system can do everything

Be clear about what your system can do and how you may be able to configure it

Don't accept problems caused by your phone system, seek assistance

Develop practice "champions" who understand the telephone system

Look at other providers, moving to a new phone system is not as complicated or challenging as it once was

PCN Telephony

PCN Telephony

As we start to delivery more services through our Primary Care Networks it's helpful to understand how Advanced Telephony can help support the delivery of these services.

Useful features for PCNs

- Multi-site full functionality

- Integrate with other IP telephony systems

- Remote integration and logging of outgoing calls to patients with Clinical Systems

Purchase systems with future integration in mind!

PCN Scenario

Scenario

A PCN is made up of 6 practices.

There is a team of 4 Clinical Pharmacists, they each work in a different practice, and often move between practices working in a clinical room or a hot desk space.

The CD would like a call group setting up that will ring on any of the Clinical Pharmacists phones that are showing as available (not consulting with a patient).

Solution

Using the same configuration system you use to configure Advanced Telephony call flows for your own member practice create a new call flow.

If the Advanced Telephony system is the same as other practices you will be able to view staff members.

Create a new call group.

Patient selects the option to speak with a Clinical Pharmacist their call is routed to any of Clinical Pharmacists whose status is available.

Other Access Technologies

Need to ensure that optimising communication technologies so that complement each other rather than compete!
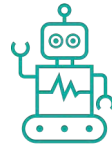
Online Consultations & Triage tools

Email

Website & Apps
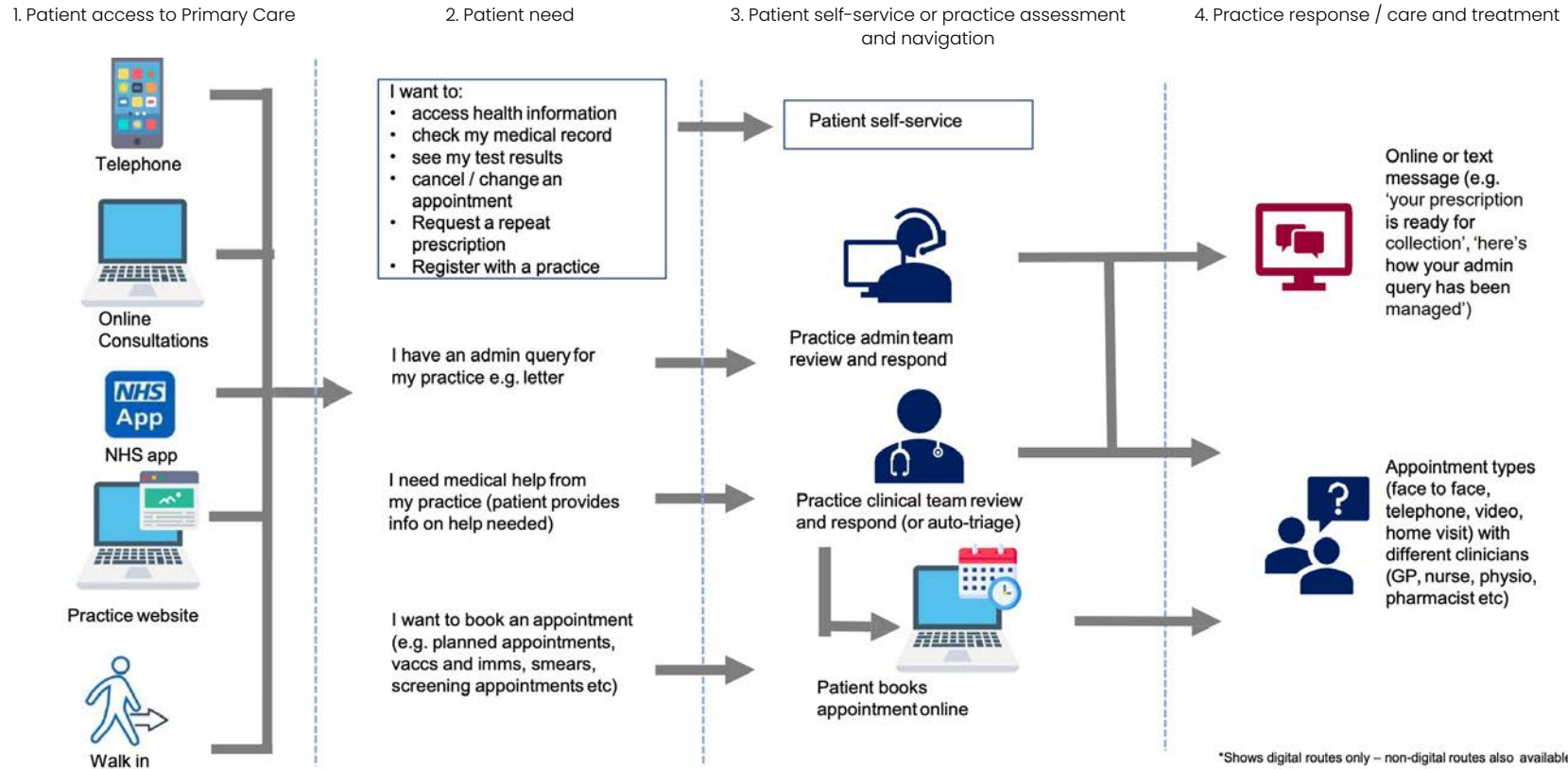
SMS

Video Calling

Text and Chat Bots

Social Media

Some people may even come into the building!!

Developing Patient Pathways

January 2023

Patient access to GP Practices

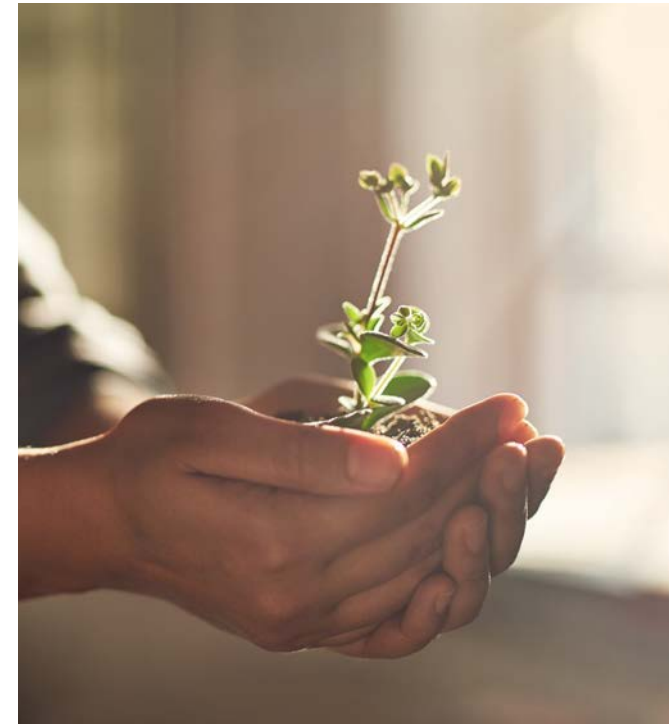# Support offer

Redmoor Support Desk

Digital Journey Planner

Additional Webinars

Landing Page

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END

Thank you