

Communicating with Your Patients

Two things have changed dramatically with the advent of smartphones:

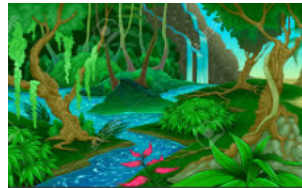
- smartphones are the computer of choice
- text messaging is preferred to email and phone calls

According to Adam Lella, Senior Marketing Insights Analyst, as of February 2017, smartphone penetration in the US had reached an 80% threshold.

The healthcare industry has embraced this phenomenon by adopting text messaging for appointment notifications and confirmations as well as by developing apps to provide mobile access to their patient portals anytime, anywhere.

Likewise, ABT Medical has incorporated text messaging into its new D-Trak Disability Forms workflow solution to virtually eliminate the tedious and archaic need for outbound and inbound emails and phone calls to/from Disability Forms patients.

Patients are now notified when their Disability Forms enter the workflow process and when their forms are completed and ready for viewing. See *sample text alerts on the next page . . .*



Journey Through the Disability Forms Jungle

We invite you to take a journey through the Disability Forms jungle. Disability Forms processing is indeed a “jungle” to navigate, as there is no established or defined method across Healthcare Providers for handling this arduous, time-consuming patient service. Visiting with Healthcare Providers across the country has given us a much better understanding of the complexities of the Disability Forms landscape and the challenges confronting Providers. While you may not encounter every sight and sound in the Disability Forms jungle, each one can significantly impact staff time and other precious resources.

The Parking Lot/Front Desk. Patients crowd the parking lot, the front desk, and the waiting room simply to drop off and perhaps pay for their Disability Forms, and they often return repeatedly to check on the status of their forms and finally to pick up their forms. Then, there are the Disability Forms sent directly to you from third parties. These forms often must be paid for and picked up, too. This resource-eating environment is also known as the “backend jungle.”

How can you survive? Patients do not need to come into the clinic to drop off, pay for, or pick up their forms. Providers like The W. B. Carrell Clinic in Dallas, TX, are enabling patients to upload their forms from their computers via a Disability Forms web page: <http://www.carrellclinic.com/patient-info/patient-disability-forms/>. For guaranteed survival, you can add a tool that lets patients pay for and retrieve their completed Disability Forms online, so both you and your patients can avoid ever entering this jungle.

Communications. Patients are anxious to have their forms completed, so they can receive needed income. Understandably, they are also anxious because they do not know exactly where their form is (if you still have it, if they can prove they gave it to you, if it is actually being worked on) and if you will really let them know the moment it is ready. As a result, they call your front desk, leave voice mails for your busy staff, and stop by your office. If not reassured, your patients’ anxiety worsens. Add to this situation that forms received from third parties require extra communication. Someone must call (often multiple times) or email back and forth with patients to determine if they want the form processed. If communication attempts are unsuccessful, perhaps scarce resources are used to complete the form needlessly and payment may become an issue.

How do you make it out of this jungle? You can send a text alert to patients when their form is dropped off or when you receive a form from a third party to reassure patients that their form is officially “in process.” You can also text patients immediately upon completion of their form, so they can pay for and access their form electronically at their convenience. Using a product with a built-in texting feature removes many obstacles in the

D-Trak Text Alerts

Messages

Wednesday 10:04 AM

Your Disability Form is in process. When complete, you will be sent Acct # and PIN # for online access. (ABT Orthopaedic Clinic)

Today 9:30 AM

Your Disability Form is ready!
Go to <https://MyDTRAK.com>
Account #: PR9985
PIN #: 1995
Thank you for using MyDTRAK!
Help line: [1-855-307-4340](tel:1-855-307-4340)

mydtrak.com



Log Out

Click an item to select it.
Then, click "Pay/View" button.

Form	Status	Invoice Date	Amount
Family Medical Leave Act	Completed	04/14/2017	\$20.00

Pay/View

Need help? Contact us anytime.
Call or text: [1-855-307-4340](tel:1-855-307-4340), ext. 6
Email: support@abtmedinc.com

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communications jungle. If patients need assistance, it is also best for the product to have a helpline tied to it.

Office Workflow. Patients bring you their forms very close to the deadline. Doctors and staff may misplace forms in a decentralized Disability Forms environment due to their focus on providing healthcare versus administrative tasks. Depending on whether forms are distributed to physicians and their staff for final completion and signature or whether forms are completed and signed primarily by a dedicated Disability Forms Specialist, it is essential to contain the chaos by being able to track forms from receipt to completion. Knowing exactly when forms arrived and whether they are still within your targeted turnaround timeframe is useful, not only in communicating with patients but also in knowing if there is a slow-down in the process and where it might be.

How do you combat the jungle elements? You can use a tool to track forms from start to finish, so you know when they arrived, which doctor or assistant is involved, and whether your forms are being processed for patients within an acceptable timeframe. While spreadsheets are useful, they prove much harder to use and to maintain without introducing key errors.

Charging or Not Charging? More and more Providers charge patients to complete Disability Forms, as these forms will ultimately create income opportunity for the patient and as the forms completion process remains a major drain on the resources of the Provider. Many Providers are now beginning to require the patient to prepay before they will begin processing a form. This approach also cuts down on patients submitting forms "just in case," only to find out they did not need them.

How can you navigate this jungle? You can use a tool that enables patients to pay for and retrieve their Disability Forms online from their computer or their cell phone. Patients find processing charges less objectionable when they are provided "anytime, anywhere" convenience and helpline support.

Summary. Disability Forms processing represents a jungle of non-healthcare revenue activity. Transform your journey through the jungle to a walk in the park with the right Disability Forms tool.



D-Trak Testimonial from Dean Brown CEO, Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic

Most recently, we have partnered with ABT Medical to revamp our Disability Forms processing with ABT's new D-Trak workflow solution. Our key objectives were as follows:

1. Significantly reduce inbound and outbound communications with Disability Forms patients by implementing patient text alerts, similar to how many of us have begun to successfully manage patient appointments through texts. We now alert patients at two key points in the Disability Forms completion process:

- when a patient's Disability Form has been received
- upon completion of a patient's Disability Form

2. Eliminate the need for patients to visit AOC to pick up their completed Disability Forms, which lightens the load on our front desk staff, recovers scarce parking real estate, and gives patients the following benefits:

- ability to prepay for forms by credit card over their computer or cell phone
- electronic access to completed forms on their computer or cell phone

In short order, here are the results we've seen:

- Disability Forms processing has been compressed from 7-10 days down to 1-3 days
- phone calls and emails to/from Disability Form patients have been reduced by 70%
- 80% of patients access completed forms electronically, without visiting the clinic

Just as importantly, ABT provides 24 x 365 helpline support directly to our Disability Form patients, which is invaluable to both us and our patients.