

Evolution of 'radical convenience' delivered in an integrated healthcare model

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Paul Szilagyi

is vice president of Primary Care & Medical Centers and is responsible for the administrative operations of the 27 Henry Ford Medical Group satellite medical centres in the metropolitan Detroit area. His responsibilities include daily operations, team and culture building, strategic planning, site development, financial management and community relations. He also has administrative responsibility for the primary care product lines. He is a current member and past co-chair of the Authority Health – Primary Care Network Council, and is the Steering Committee Chair for the Group Practice Improvement Network (GPIN).

Henry Ford Health System, One Ford Place - 3B, Detroit, MI 48202, USA

Tel: +1 313 874 3273

E-mail: Pszilag2@hfhs.org



Ara Telbelian

is director of marketing for the Henry Ford Medical Group and director of brand management for Henry Ford Health System. He has held numerous roles during his career, spanning more than 20 years, in healthcare marketing at Henry Ford. Currently, he leads the teams responsible for marketing and advertising one of the nation's largest group practices, the Henry Ford Medical Group, which includes more than 1,400 physicians and surgeons practising in more than 40 specialties. He also oversees and manages the US\$6.5bn (revenue) health system's brand.

Henry Ford Medical Group, Henry Ford Health System, One Ford Place - 3B, Detroit, MI 48202, USA

Tel: +1 313 874 5165

E-mail: Atelbel1@hfhs.org

Abstract Healthcare providers face unprecedented pressure in delivering primary care services at a reduced cost. At the same time, we face increased expectations from our patients related to access, convenience, quality and service. Henry Ford Health System, a large integrated health system in Detroit, Michigan, looked to attract additional patients to its primary care services. In 2014, Henry Ford made an operational commitment to provide patients with convenient and affordable access to primary care in ways that went beyond those traditionally offered by healthcare providers. An internal initiative called 'radical convenience' was adopted to attract patients to its primary care services and reduce unnecessary and costly utilisation of emergency departments and Urgent Care. Patients were introduced to radical convenience through a branding campaign called 'Call, Click or Come In'. Radical convenience was extended to include the development of an innovative, retail healthcare solution called QuickCare. A QuickCare Clinic was launched in August 2015 to meet the needs and expectations of a growing workforce in downtown Detroit comprising technology-driven Millennials and Gen X-ers.

KEYWORDS: radical convenience; call, click, or come in; primary care alternatives

BACKGROUND

As one of the nation's most integrated health systems, Henry Ford Health System provides healthcare services, including acute, speciality, primary and preventive care, at more than 250 care locations across Michigan. The system comprises five acute care hospitals, including its tertiary flagship medical centre, Henry Ford Hospital, in Detroit, three behavioural health inpatient facilities and 250 care delivery locations.

In 2015, Henry Ford Health System recorded more than 3.77 million outpatient visits, 74,700 surgical procedures and 99,700 patients admitted to our hospitals. Annual revenue topped US\$5bn with net income of US\$72m and uncompensated care of nearly US\$300m.

Henry Ford owns Health Alliance Plan (HAP), an insurance product with more than 700,000 members. With more than 30,000 employees, Henry Ford Health System is the fifth largest employer in metro Detroit. The Henry Ford Physician Network comprises 1,800 physicians, including the 1400-member Henry Ford Medical Group — one of the nation's largest group practices — as well as Henry Ford hospital-employed and private practice physicians. An additional 2,000 private practice physicians are affiliated with our hospitals.

Henry Ford has a history of groundbreaking innovations in healthcare delivery and management, a commitment to education, and annual research funding exceeding US\$70m. In 2011, the system was recognised with the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

INTRODUCTION

Healthcare environment challenges

The Affordable Care Act's reimbursement models and quality goals spawned an extraordinary transformation in healthcare delivery. Pressure to reduce emergency department misuse and to shift from

inpatient to outpatient services resulted in a greater focus on primary care.

With the ongoing consolidation of provider groups, systems such as Henry Ford have experienced shrinking referral networks. Attractive primary care services are essential to capturing a healthy slice of the patient population and driving speciality care.

While providers face unprecedented pressure to deliver primary care services for a reduced cost, we face rising consumerism from our customers, with increased demands for access, convenience, quality and service.

Research

To assess the primary care needs of its target population, Henry Ford drew upon its own market research.

Our marketing team's objectives were to better understand the dynamics that drive a patient's primary care selection, including 1) how and why people select a primary care provider (in general); 2) how and why people select a specific primary care provider and/or network within the HAP network; 3) what 'product' is preferred, according to market segment; 4) the impact of the delivery package (ie 'design') on selection; 5) the role of the Henry Ford Medical Group in the selection and 6) how the Henry Ford Health System can best reach consumers seeking a primary care provider.

A two-phase study was conducted among consumers in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, including the city of Detroit. The sample size of 600 respondents enabled us to detect differences of +/- 1 per cent as significant.

Phase 1, or 'Idea Generation', yielded 133 ideas that were categorised within the areas of 'Patient Handling and Access', 'Doctors' and 'System of Medical Care and Facilities'. Phase II sought to identify which of those ideas most significantly impacted choice.

The ideas tested in this study fell into three tiers: strong, neutral and weak. There was, however, a disproportionate number of strong ideas, as 20 of the 24 ideas tested were determined to positively contribute to interest in Henry Ford, at confidence levels of 98 per cent or greater. The largest segment of consumers in the sample was motivated by *immediate access* — both to the doctors themselves (including specialists) and to the physical facility. Consumers liked specific references to time, such as ‘30 minutes’ or ‘within 24 hours’.

To better understand what drives patients’ primary care preferences, Henry Ford also

turned to another source — the Advisory Board Company’s Primary Care Consumer Choice Survey (25 June 2014).

The survey asked nearly 4,000 health-care consumers to assume they needed on-demand care but their usual care provider was not available. Among sets of clinical attributes, consumers chose the ‘most appealing’ and the ‘least appealing’ to them. The methodology did not allow consumers to rate all items as ‘important’, but rather forced them to make trade-offs among 56 different clinical attributes, providing insight into the relative importance of each attribute. Of the ten preferred primary care clinic attributes, six related to access and convenience.

Box 1: What Patients Want from a Primary Care Provider

Two common themes emerged from Henry Ford Health System’s market research among the top-scoring segments: *immediate access* and *peace of mind*:

Top-scoring responses ‘immediate access’

‘you will never have to wait more than 30 minutes.’

‘you will be able to get an appointment . . . within 24 hours when you are sick.’

‘you don’t have to go to the hospital for basic tests . . . we do them right in our office.’

‘you will be able to have all required tests done at any one of the conveniently located Medical Centers; within a 15-minute drive.’

‘you can visit any one of 27 Medical Centers, which are never more than a 15-minute drive away.’

Top-scoring responses ‘peace of mind’

‘doctors . . . report directly to their patients any test results within 24 hours of completion.’

‘you will be able to speak with a doctor by phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.’

‘doctors have available to them the latest knowledge in new medical treatments and clinical drug trials.’

‘all of your records are computerised . . . doctors can access them 24/7 . . . your treatment will be coordinated.’

Source: HFHS Primary Care Market Research

Box 2: ‘Convenience is king’

Top clinical attributes related to access and convenience:

‘I can walk in without an appointment, and I’m guaranteed to be seen within 30 minutes’.

‘If I need lab tests or x-rays, I can get them done at the clinic.’

‘The clinic is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.’

‘I can get an appointment for later today.’

‘If I need a prescription, I can get it filled at the clinic instead of going to another location.’

‘The clinic is located near my home.’

Source: The Advisory Board Company, Primary Care Consumer Choice Survey summary (25 June 2014).

Implementation of radical convenience

Although the name itself was not formalised for another decade, the first seeds of Henry Ford's 'radical convenience' concept were sown in the early 2000s when 'same day appointments' were implemented in several ambulatory medical centres. Patients could call before noon to make a primary care appointment for the same day. If patients called after 12 pm, they were offered an appointment for the following morning. The goal was to provide each patient with on-demand primary care within 24 hours.

A decade later, with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the resulting healthcare reform came mounting pressure to attract more primary care patients. Henry Ford faced existing competition from other south-east Michigan health systems, as well as in a few form of competition, as retail stores began offering on-demand primary care services. Consumers can now get a physical examination, flu injection or a strep test while they shop at their local grocery store or retail pharmacy.

In 2014, Henry Ford made an operational commitment to provide patients with convenient and affordable access to primary care in ways that went beyond those traditionally offered by healthcare providers.

Internally, Henry Ford called the endeavour 'radical convenience'. Externally, patients were introduced to the commitment through a branding campaign called 'Call, Click or Come In'.

For Henry Ford patients, 'Call, Click or Come In' means that primary care services are offered when and where they need them and in the manner they most prefer.

Call

Consumers are informed that healthcare advice 'is just a phone call away'. During regular office hours, representatives at the Henry Ford 1-800 contact centre and at Henry Ford Medical Centers electronically relay messages to primary care providers, including requests for prescription renewals. Patients receive a response or return phone call within 24 hours.

On nights, weekends and holidays when medical centres are not open, a complimentary Nurse On Call is available to answer questions about patients' primary care medical concerns (Figure 1). In conjunction with the Henry Ford Cold & Flu Line, this provides a service staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by registered nurses to field phone calls offering medical advice, self-care tips and guidance about whether and when a patient should see a doctor.

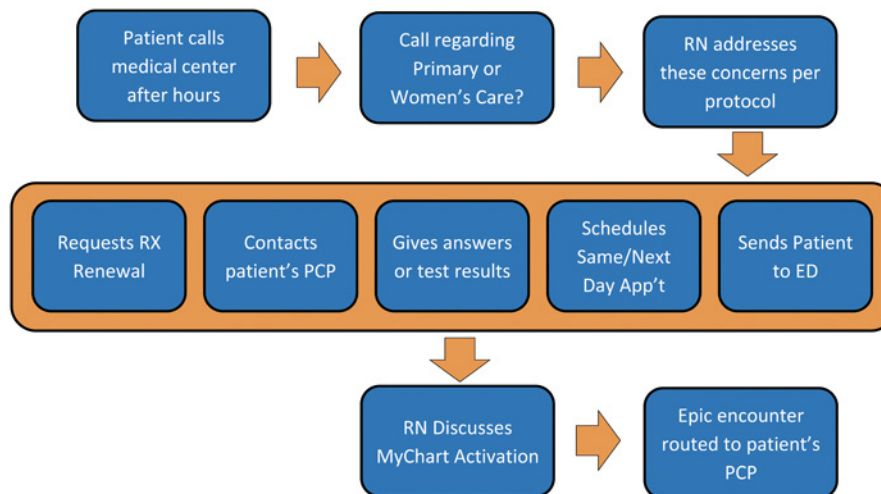


Figure 1: Nurse-On-Call

The facility for patients to receive medical advice over the phone is the first line in combating unnecessary trips to Urgent Care or misuse of the emergency department.

Click

Consumers are informed that health care is 'at your fingertips'. Henry Ford's Epic electronic medical record is the foundation on which the health system has built online medical services.

Henry Ford's MyChart is the portal for patients to manage their health care electronically. A secure, online service, MyChart gives patients access to their health information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. From a personal computer or mobile device, patients use a MyChart account to access their health summary in the electronic medical record; consult their doctor via secure messaging; view laboratory or test results (posted within 48 hours); refill and renew prescriptions; schedule a primary care appointment or request a speciality appointment. Using a proxy feature, adults can manage the health of their children and loved ones.

Through MyChart, patients may also participate in an electronic medical visit or 'eVisit'. Henry Ford Health is the first system in the Detroit market to offer true telemedicine to its patients. American Well (tele-health) is a partnership that currently provides patients with convenient and affordable access to a doctor 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by smartphone or the Internet. Telemedicine helps fulfil patients' need for convenient, on-demand primary care services, but meets the 'triple aim' most insurance companies are looking for: quality care with timely access at a lower cost.

Also from their personal computer or mobile device, patients can make a reservation at a Henry Ford Walk-In Clinic. Henry Ford Health contracted with the Clockwise MD online reservation and management system — similar to Open Table, which is used for restaurant

reservations. Patients register online, and their names are added to a queue. They receive text messages or e-mail alerts with the expected waiting time. In view of the ability to put their names in the queue, patients benefit from shortened and predictable waiting times, resulting in improved patient satisfaction and service scores (Figure 2).

Come in

There are times when patients expect to be seen by a primary care provider on demand. Henry Ford allows patients to access primary care services in several ways.

First, Henry Ford expanded the available hours for scheduled primary care visits to include early morning, late evening and weekend appointments at 27 ambulatory medical centres.

Same-day primary care appointments are available at every Henry Ford Medical Center. Patients can call before noon to make a primary care appointment for the same day. If patients call after 12 pm, they are offered an appointment the same day or the following morning. The goal is to provide each patient with on-demand primary care within 24 hours.

Next, to meet the need for on-demand primary care services and reduce unnecessary emergency department visits, Walk-In Clinics were introduced at five existing Henry Ford Medical Centers located throughout metro Detroit. For the co-payment of a regular doctor's office visit, Henry Ford primary care physicians and nurse practitioners offer adult and paediatric treatment for common health issues such as cough, sore throat and fever; sprains and minor fractures; deep cuts; bladder infection; dehydration; and earaches and eye infections.

As previously mentioned, Walk-In Clinics utilise the Clockwise MD online reservation and management system. The ability to register their names in the queue has resulted in shortened and predictable waiting times for patients.

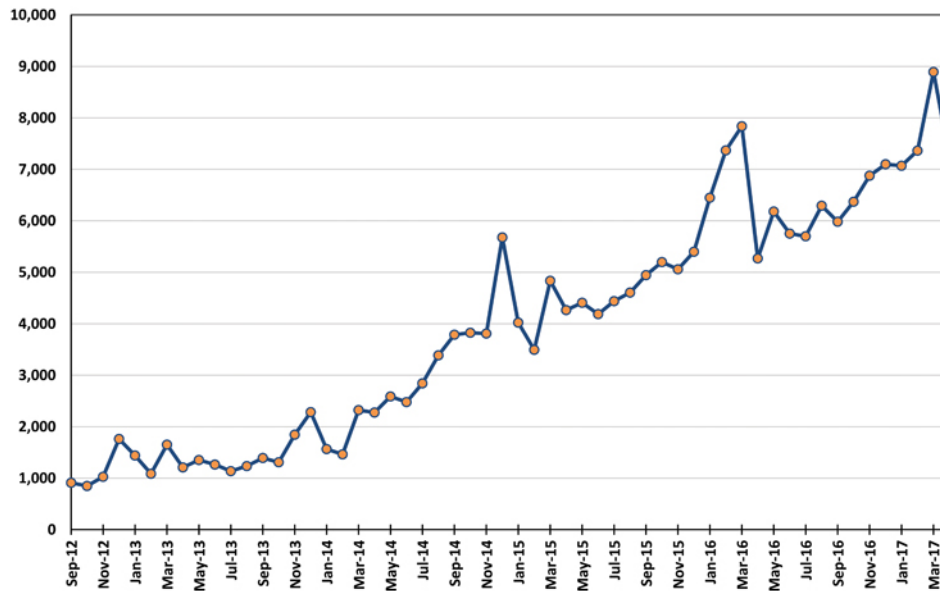


Figure 2: Walk-In Clinic monthly visit trend - total

Patients may also access primary care services without an appointment at a CVS MinuteClinic. Henry Ford partners with MinuteClinic to care for patients at 17 CVS locations throughout metro Detroit. MinuteClinics are staffed by nurse practitioners specialising in family healthcare, and Henry Ford Medical Group and Henry Ford Physician Network physicians provide medical support through a service agreement. Through the partnership, Henry Ford and MinuteClinic are working on initiatives focused on improving health and access to care and reducing cost.

INTRODUCTION OF QUICK CARE RETAIL HEALTH SOLUTION

In July 2015, Henry Ford Health System piloted a new primary care delivery model called 'QuickCare'. The objective was to provide an innovative retail healthcare solution that meets the needs and expectations of a growing downtown Detroit workforce comprising technology-driven Millennials and Gen X-ers.

The target market for the QuickCare Clinic is city commuters aged from 18 to 49 years, who are employed and insured.

Research

Henry Ford's market research showed that Millennials (generally defined as those born between 1981 and 1996, or who are currently 21 to 36 years of age) are generally healthy, self-dependent on health issues, unlikely to have a relationship with a primary care provider and expect high-tech conveniences. Gen X-ers (generally defined as those born between 1961 and 1981, or who are currently 36 to 56 years of age) also expect high-tech conveniences, value preventative medicine and are beginning to experience chronic conditions such as pre-diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. While many consumers in this demographic segment may not have an affinity to a particular primary care provider, the QuickCare Clinic was viewed as a way to introduce them into the Henry Ford Health System for possible alignment with a primary care physician and additional speciality services.

Henry Ford partnered with local employers in downtown Detroit, including Rock Holdings (the parent company of Quicken Loans) to gain an understanding of employees' healthcare needs.

Box 3: QuickCare Clinic Survey

A survey of Rock Holdings employees was conducted to investigate the scope for providing access to convenient, quality, non-urgent medical care on-site or near their workplace during work hours. The responses indicated:

99 per cent would benefit from having a health clinic on-site or near their workplace.

61 would feel comfortable visiting a clinic on-site, 21 per cent nearby (within a ½ mile or less/within walking distance), while 18 per cent had no preference.

85 per cent were very likely or somewhat likely to use a clinic in their preferred location.

89 per cent preferred a combination of appointment/walk-in services.

76 per cent preferred that a clinic offer audio and video communication with a physician (specialist) in conjunction with walk-in options or during off-hours.

98 expected to pay for services with insurance, similar to office visit co-pay.

79 per cent were willing to pay US\$ 25–50 if services were not covered by insurance; 14 per cent would not use the services.

The selected top five preferred services or conditions treated were cold and flu symptoms, abnormal blood pressure and temperature readings, immunisations such as flu injections, annual physicals and preventative care. When asked if they were aware of any health clinic near their work site, 93 per cent responded 'no', and 7 per cent responded 'yes'.

Source: HFHS/Rock Holdings team member survey (10–17 October 2014) 785 respondents.

Designing QuickCare

The first QuickCare Clinic was opened in downtown Detroit in the heart of its emerging technology district.

QuickCare is open from 7:30 am to 6 pm on weekdays, offering same-day, low-acuity primary care and more than 40 types of treatments for minor injuries and illnesses, medical tests, point-of-care laboratory testing and vaccinations and other health services. The clinic is integrated with the Epic electronic medical record system and MyChart, so that patients can take advantage of Henry Ford's after-hours primary care services, including Nurse On Call.

Primary care services are provided by a nurse practitioner who consults with Henry Ford Medical Group physicians when necessary. A standard clinic visit fee is US\$ 85; most health insurance plans are accepted.

To support a retail feel, QuickCare offers acupuncture and massage services. Business travellers and holidaymakers headed outside the United States can participate in a Travel Medicine appointment via on-site video conferencing with a Henry Ford Travel Clinic provider to discuss health and safety

issues. Immunisations and medications are provided on-site.

The QuickCare Clinic offers primary care on a walk-in basis, or patients can hold their spot in the queue using the Clockwise MD online reservation tool. A text reminds patients of their visit time and resets the time if there are delays at the clinic, allowing patients to continue working until it is time to be seen.

Patients need not worry about finding a parking space in a busy city as they can use Detroit's downtown bicycle-share programme. Henry Ford has five bicycles in the programme, and a bicycle rack is situated in front of the QuickCare Clinic.

Henry Ford engaged local design firm Patrick Thomas Design, known for its work on Shinola's flagship Detroit store, to create the clinic's modern, urban boutique look and feel. A concierge representative is on hand to greet patients, handle transactions and connect them with additional Henry Ford services and speciality care at other locations, if necessary. An area with high tables and chairs and low chairs with side tables creates the environment similar to a coffee shop instead of a doctor's office waiting room.

QuickCare marketing

To promote the opening of QuickCare and its 'radical convenience', Henry Ford engaged a Detroit-based advertising and communications agency to design a pre-launch, launch and post-launch campaign.

The pre-launch strategy was to create awareness of the clinic and build brand worth and significance with the target market. The launch strategy was to create awareness and opportunity to schedule or walk in for an appointment. The post-launch strategy was to continue to create opportunities to schedule or walk in for an appointment, and build word-of-mouth relevance and brand significance.

The #QuickCare campaign featured employees from several downtown Detroit businesses and skyline visuals with the tagline 'Downtown is Getting Healthier'. The campaign integrated social and digital media, including targeted e-mails and search engine buys. Other placements included wraps of the People Mover rail cars, outdoor media buys and pavement messaging. A ribbon-cutting ceremony and community open house were attended by local city and business leaders, and offered tours, flu

injections, chair massages, acupuncture and other health demonstrations (Figure 3).

QuickCare lessons learned

A six-month post-launch analysis of the QuickCare Clinic confirmed what we are doing right. Convenience ranks first and foremost. The location is very convenient for employees of local businesses, and patients enjoy the flexibility of being able to walk in and receive care on demand without an appointment. A queuing system helps balance demand arrivals and reduces waiting times. Using a healthcare concierge instead of a receptionist greatly facilitates referral retention and access to speciality care. Utilisation of alternative care services such as massage and acupuncture started out slowly but has increased over time, as has utilisation of speciality services via videoconferencing.

While many Millennials do not have a primary care provider, our experience has been that customers across all demographics share an interest in establishing a relationship with a primary care physician.

QuickCare patients have a higher level of acuity and a need for a higher level of



Figure 3: Images from the community open house promoting the Henry Ford QuickCare Clinic

services, such as suturing, than anticipated. Also, the market has a larger demand for women's health and obstetric and gynaecological care, and sexually transmitted diseases testing and counselling, than expected.

In 2017, Henry Ford Health plans to move the QuickCare Clinic to a larger space near its current location in downtown Detroit. More clinical support will be provided to support an expanded scope of services.

CONCLUSION

The success of radical convenience depends upon a true integration of operations and marketing to design, implement, operate and promote a primary care experience that is

convenient, accessible, of high quality and affordable for our patients.

Radical convenience requires a paradigm shift in the way we approach primary care. A reliance on high-margin/lower-volume acute care must be replaced by a more consumer-centric, lower-margin/high-volume focus. Opportunistic pricing must be replaced by more transparent, market-based pricing. Lastly, health systems must cease to focus on an operational experience that works for them, and instead create a standardised and predictable patient experience with a strong and relevant brand. As our QuickCare Clinic demonstrated, partnerships and collaboration with businesses and residents in the communities you serve can also help ensure you are meeting the needs of your customers.