Abington Neurological Associates

Abington Neurological Associates Eliminates Bottlenecks and Establishes Schedule Equity through the Use of Digital Provider Scheduling

Customer Profile

Abington Neurological Associates (ANA), located outside of Philadelphia, is one of the leading institutions for neurological care in the region. Their 11 physicians have completed additional education through fellowships to provide every patient a level of subspecialized care beyond regular neurology training. This has led them to serve as regional leaders in seizure disorders, stroke, dementia, other memory disorders, multiple sclerosis, movement disorders, neuromuscular medicine, balance disorders, concussion, headache, and sleep medicine. ANA has been recognized for its quality and leadership, as noted in "Best Doctors" in Philadelphia magazine and the Delaware Valley Stroke Council. Additionally, the practice's providers regularly serve in neurological consultative roles within several of the region's local hospitals, including Abington Hospital - Jefferson Health.

Challenges

Abington Neurological Associates (ANA) previously developed their provider schedules using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets or Google Docs. These schedules were created by their eleven providers' input on what they expected their tentative availability to be. From there, one of their providers would make the schedule and then disseminate it to the other providers for their final approval. However, this process proved inefficient, problematic, and time-consuming as hours upon hours were required to build a schedule two to three months out.

Challenges Experienced through Use of Manual Documentation

→ **Multiple bottlenecks**

→ **Overwhelming provider frustration**

→ **Lack of provider schedule equity**

→ **Absence of centralized visibility**

→ **Time-consuming and costly labor**

Perhaps the most pressing issue was a bottleneck that formed through the approval process. Each of the eleven providers was required to give their approval. To make matters worse, those providers regularly needed corrections to reflect their current availability and include vacation time and Paid Time Off (PTO). This, of course, required continuous updates.

By the time the schedule had been developed and finalized, labor costs had been significantly increased through the constant need to make amendments. Furthermore, the process created a handful of other issues directly affecting the providers and the staff tasked with creating the schedule, including a lack of real-time access to the updated version, intra-staff friction from a lack of schedule equity, miscommunications between staff, and coverage problems.

Patient access was also adversely affected by the processes they had in place, as it was challenging to schedule patients and truly know which providers were working.

ANA realized they needed a new solution. They needed a platform that would provide centralized visibility, allow the organization to develop schedule equity, provide a schedule that could be viewed in real-time, and eliminate all of the bottlenecks and other constraints affecting their operations. For ANA, the solution to mitigating these challenges was QGenda Advanced Scheduling.

The Solution

The implementation of QGenda Advanced Scheduling was crucial for ANA. With the platform's automation and ability to provide real-time visibility into when their providers were scheduled to work and where, patients now could schedule their appointments three to six months out.

David Moore, the Operations Manager for Abington Neurological Associates, explained the immediate benefit to patients stating, "We would ask [patients] to come back within three to six months, but we didn't even have a schedule for them. Now, being able to make the schedule six months out helps out patients in being able to schedule their appointments."

Regarding equity, ANA could now access scheduling information to ensure they were building a fair schedule for all providers. "By having an automated system, we're now able to pull data and look proactively at the entire year and make sure [the schedule] is balanced," Moore shared. This was an essential component of using QGenda Advanced Scheduling. They wanted to elicit schedule equity for various shift differentials, including weekend call, something they found challenging before implementing their scheduling automation.

ANA also uses the platform to measure providers' shifts against their financial numbers as a validation tool. "If a provider comes to us and they say, 'Why were my numbers lower than the previous year or previous month?' we're able to pull those stats and have visibility into the number of days they were in the office and when they were out," Moore said.

Ultimately, though, the automation provided by QGenda Advanced Scheduling meant the organization didn't have to worry about manually building the schedules out anymore. If any last-minute changes need to be made, it's effortless for them to apply minor adjustments.

The Results

Several highly beneficial results have come from the switch to QGenda Advanced Scheduling. First, Abington Neurological Associate providers are more satisfied with their schedules now as there's complete real-time visibility into when they're working and where, minor changes can efficiently be made, and equity is now fairly distributed amongst their eleven providers.

Additionally, other important pieces of information can be pulled at any given time to develop reporting on the shifts they've worked as it relates to financial compensation.

Second, workforce productivity significantly increased by eliminating unnecessary steps required to build the extended provider schedule. The solution eliminated multiple approval bottlenecks, automated updates and changes, and reduced the number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) required to develop and maintain the schedule's contents continually.

Lastly, the patients that rely on the organization now can seek care more efficiently. The majority of ANA's patients are elderly and have undergone adverse events such as strokes, meaning scheduling an appointment can be a daunting task for them and their caregivers. With a well-built provider schedule extended many months in advance, these patients can now have confidence that they'll be cared for without worrying about any inaccuracies or discrepancies within the provider schedule.

Immediate Results from Using QGenda Advanced Scheduling

→ **Improved provider satisfaction**

→ **Real-time visibility into schedule**

→ **Improved reporting for payroll**

→ **Increases in workforce productivity**

→ **Elimination of bottlenecks**

→ **Benefits to patient scheduling**

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We're extremely happy with QGenda. I've worked with a lot of third party vendors, but any time I call or email QGenda, I get a response right away. That's huge and something you don't see in a lot of places.

- David Moore, Operations Manager, ANA

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