

Nuesoft's College Health Center Solutions Improve Patient Service and Increase Efficiencies in American University's Student Health Center

Background/Reason for Search

American University is a private, four-year college in Washington, D.C., with 12,000 students. In 2007, health center staff began a search for a clinic management system with online scheduling and advanced reporting capabilities. The team at American is led by an Associate Director for Clinical Services who also serves as the staff physician, an Associate Director for Administrative Services, a Patient Services Supervisor, and three Patient Services Representatives. The health center also has a part-time nurse. Health Center Director Daniel Bruey headed the software selection process.

Because of the size and varied backgrounds of its staff, ease of training was important to Bruey, as was price. But the team also wanted to use technology to enhance the customer experience for student patients, and to get a more holistic view of its operational performance.

"We did not have a big software budget so it was important to us to find a product that was affordable and easy for our team to implement, but that also supported our business goals," said Bruey.

American's objectives were to find a solution for the health center that would:

1. Optimize the appointment schedule to eliminate wait times and decrease no-shows
2. Provide better insights about financial and operational metrics that could then help the health center justify budget and resource requests to the university's administration office.

Big Results for a Small Investment

After a short search, American identified Nuesoft XpressTM, an Internet-based clinic management software application from Nuesoft Technologies, with core functionality that includes an appointment scheduler, advanced reporting and the Student Health LinkTM (SHL) patient portal. Because Nuesoft's products run in the cloud, they eliminate the need for extensive IT resources and large capital investments in hardware. There are also no costs associated with ongoing maintenance, backups or upgrades. American pays a low monthly subscription fee, so variable costs are minimized and Bruey can easily budget for monthly expenses.

In addition to staying within its allocated software budget, the health center team at American within months began to see results with Nuesoft's easy-to-use products.

A Smoother Appointment Machine

Prior to implementation with Nuesoft, Bruey's team struggled with patient access and flow, particularly during the beginning of the semester and other high volume times. Research showed that students who could not get through on the phone to schedule an appointment were frustrated, and some were opting to not get treated - not to mention that staff were trying to juggle taking calls with actually seeing students.

Quick Facts:

Health Center Staff:

Daniel L. Bruey, director
Associate director for clinical services/physician
Associate director for administrative services
Patient services supervisor
Three patient services representatives
Part-time nurse

IT Infrastructure:

11 workstations running Nuesoft products with a DSL connection



About Nuesoft Technologies

Established in 1993, Nuesoft Technologies pioneered cloud computing for the college health market, and has the datacenter facilities to support secure and HIPAA-compliant application hosting. Nuesoft has an established U.S. customer base of more than 15,000 users, and houses and maintains more than 1.5 million student records. Our Nuesoft Xpress™, Nuevita™ and Nuesoft™ Billing Services product divisions meet the diverse needs of professionals in health or counseling centers from campus environments of all sizes and service levels. For more information, visit www.nuesoft.com, or call 800.401.7422, ext. 1.

But with the addition of Nuesoft Xpress and SHL, students were able to search online for appointment times that were convenient to them without having to call or come into the health center – all within a secure, and HIPAA compliant web-based environment. Because SHL operates in real time in conjunction with Xpress, all changes are instantly updated in the Nuesoft Xpress system, eliminating hours of work for staff.

The net effect? The number of callers put on hold (to make an appointment) dropped by almost five percent. The no-show rate decreased by two percent immediately, and has continued to decrease as students are embracing the online appointment feature. American found that students who made their own appointments online were more likely to show up. Bruey and his team are able to use Nuesoft's reporting module to run appointment discrepancy reports to help resolve all appointments daily and get access to important data, and patient flow has improved because providers now know the status of the patient (checked in, late, ready, checked out, etc.) by looking at the schedule.

A Clearer Picture of Performance

Nuesoft Xpress has also helped American meet its other objective of getting a handle on key performance metrics, and then use that information to improve service and justify requests with university administrators.

For example, financial reports (e.g. – daily log, deposit report, payment report, etc.) have helped American to accurately manage its daily receipts so that all encounters are appropriately coded, transactions are entered on time and all payments are accounted for and deposited.

“We can now determine students that owe a large amount of money and begin discussions with them on paying their balances,” Bruey said. “We work with students and try to understand their financial realities, but ultimately decrease our accounts receivable.”

Patient volume reports give staff a clear picture of the health center's activity, and ticket discrepancy reports provide a snapshot of all of the services performed and encourage their documentation in the system.

“We've been able to use data from these reports to justify the need to bring on additional staff to accommodate students' needs,” said Bruey.

All in all, Bruey and his team feel that Nuesoft was the right choice for their health center.

“Nuesoft has been a very big asset to our team,” he said. “We now have our scheduling under control and students are more satisfied, and we also now have access to important data so that we can be more efficient, responsive, and valuable to our various campus constituencies.”

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