

# Healthcare Analytics Creating a Positive Prognosis

Analytics and benchmarking are the foundation of a well-run contact center, but how do contact center standards relate to healthcare? The customer on the phone is not calling for an insurance quote, or help with their cable service. Your customers are patients, sometimes with serious health problems. Can we really use the same measures for success as a non-healthcare contact center? The answer is yes, if patient centric metrics are infused into the daily operations.

## The Journey Begins

Healthcare Institutions across the country are focused on the Triple Aim and creating new processes to:

- Improve the patient experience of care
- Improve the health of the population
- Reduce the per capita cost of healthcare

In creating new processes, the most difficult question is 'where do we start'? Smart healthcare systems are starting with the first point of contact with their patient – the healthcare contact center. All of the objectives of the Triple Aim are impacted at the very beginning of the patient experience, which lends to the importance of the healthcare contact center... Analytics must be available at the first point of care to support the goals of the Triple Aim and continually measure the outcome of the patient's journey.

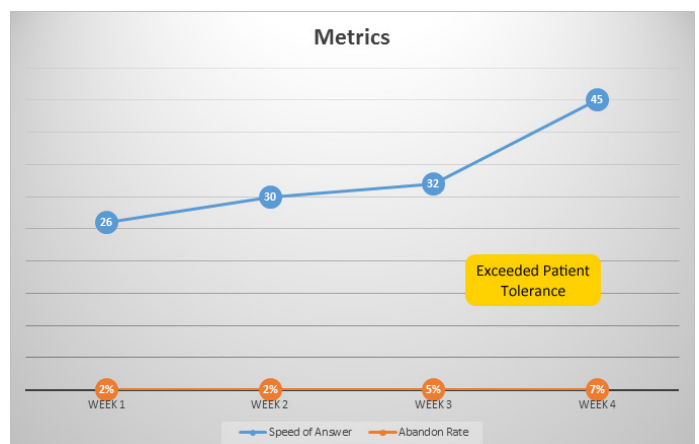
**"The industry must become more technically sophisticated by utilizing analytics to help identify important diagnostics and metrics, interrogate data for gaps in care, set health goals and program elements, and integrate delegated care models and chronic care management."** <sup>1</sup>

## Start With the Basics

Healthcare analytics is not merely about collecting data; it's about analyzing the data and creating actionable improvement processes. Analytics will help you understand

your patient base and their expectations. The basic measurements of a well-run contact center are focused on time to answer, abandonment rate, average handle time, idle time, talk time, agent occupancy and non-productive time. Healthcare Intelligence has found that if you focus on the abandon rate, the time to answer may not necessarily be one of your key performance indicators. As an example, industry standard for time to answer ranges anywhere between 25 and 30 seconds. Abandon rate is usually 5% or less. Knowing that an abandoned call is a missed opportunity, best practice should be 2% to 3%. If your abandon rate is 2%, does it really matter if your speed of answer is 35 seconds? Since there is a direct correlation between the speed of answer and the abandon rate, patient tolerance will let you know when the hold time is too long with higher abandon rates.

**Table 1: Speed to Answer vs. Abandon Rate**



Exceeded Patient Tolerance

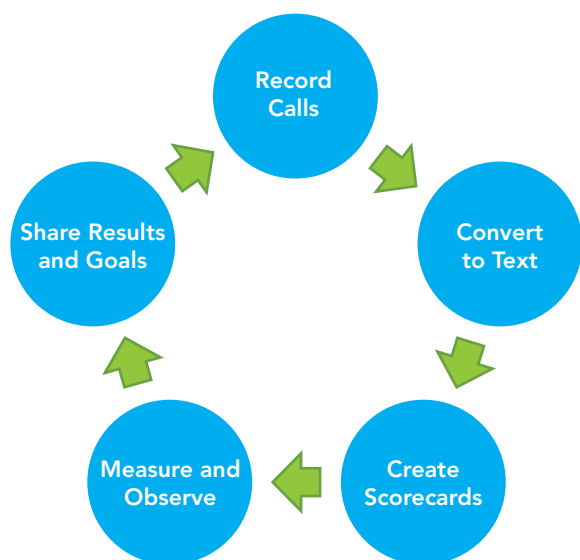
Utilizing your telephony tools to analyze this type of data enables each institution to customize their target numbers by service line rather than using an arbitrary industry standard across the board.

**“As medical science and technology has advanced at a rapid pace, the healthcare delivery system has floundered in its ability to provide consistently high quality care to all.”<sup>2</sup>**

### Quality Assurance Process

Achieving the objectives of the Triple Aim requires long-term commitment to the *Quality Assurance Process*. This process is a series of steps containing activities and programs intended to assure or improve the quality of care in either a defined medical setting or program and includes the assessment or evaluation of the quality of care; identification of problems or shortcomings in the delivery of care. Outcomes are achieved in the quality assurance process by designing activities to overcome these deficiencies. Follow-up monitoring ensures the effectiveness of corrective steps.

**Table 2: Steps in the Quality Assurance Process**



### Quality Assurance in Action

Having the right tools to adequately monitor the quality of the call will help you more easily reach your quality assurance objectives and Triple Aim goals. In the majority of healthcare contact centers, monitoring consists of listening to five calls per month, per agent. Realistically, even this minor goal is not consistently met given the day to day expectations of

a healthcare contact center manager. Do you know if your staff asks a patient if they have a referring physician? Is basic demographic and registration information being captured during each interaction? Is the patient being treated in an empathetic manner? Solutions such as *Aspect® Healthcare – Speech Analytics* can help by monitoring of 100% of incoming calls. You can create algorithms for the coordination of care by collecting the scheduling questions and tracking variations in patient responses. The end result is that not only are you improving the patient experience, but also the physician experience and bottom line results.

### Leveraging Quality Assurance Outcomes

Access pilots are quite popular in the healthcare setting. Hospitals are always searching for the answer to the age old question of “how do we provide services when there is a shortage of supply and an incessant demand for care?” Shared medical appointments have been successful in some service lines; during these visits approximately 10 - 15 patients are seen together in the same setting. These visits promote medical education and information gathering from a joint question and answer session. Initially patients were very hesitant to participate in these visits. The callers assumed that there would be a shared examination which would lead to a violation of their privacy and cause them embarrassment. Analytics tools like *Aspect Healthcare – Speech Analytics* extracts comments from patients to identify the root cause of their concern. Scripting was developed to combat the misconceptions about shared medical appointments and promote convenient access. In turn, the quality assurance process monitored the agents’ compliance with offering the shared medical appointments. There was a direct link between the amended scripting and the increase patient volumes and patient retention within the shared medical appointment visits.

### Faster Call Resolution = Bottom Line Results

First time call resolution in a healthcare contact center is a bottom line measure that has equal weight if not greater than the net promoter score. *Aspect Healthcare* can measure the ability of the care team located in the healthcare contact center to provide first time call resolution through disposition codes and the rate of recurrence of telephone numbers associated with a patient record. The best practice for first time call resolution ranges between 70%-92%. The range is dependent on the amount of clinical intervention and multi-disciplinary scheduling needs. First time call resolution can also create efficiencies by decreasing unnecessary call volumes and alleviating pressure on the workforce during peaks.

## Connecting with the Patient

As healthcare systems shift from volume to value, marketing is becoming more essential in generating patient awareness of care lines and services. Increasing patient volume and increasing brand awareness are difficult tasks without the correct market information. Healthcare marketing departments spend millions of dollars each year, yet they struggle to know if a marketing campaign was effective: Was it geared toward the right audience? What was the ROI for the campaign? Capturing this data starts at the healthcare contact center level.

## The Patient Evolution

Through the quality assurance process, healthcare contact center management is realizing the importance of moving to a multi-channel platform. Patients are evolving and demanding experiences from their healthcare providers that are similar to their financial institutions and retail outlets. Healthcare systems are realizing that they can save money and improve the patient experience by giving patients the ability to schedule appointments, refill prescriptions or pay bills at a time and in a manner that is familiar and comfortable.

According to the 2012 US Contact Center Decision-Maker's Guide, the use of multimedia contact is growing swiftly and will continue to grow in the future. They predict that the adoption of web chat in the healthcare contact center environment will grow by 60% in the next 12 months. In addition, a recent survey conducted by Forrester Research found that the following healthcare contact center technologies are an integral part of today's healthcare systems.

IVR or Self-Service Speech Technology	62%
Workforce Management Solutions	58%
Chat Solutions	50%
Quality Monitoring	48%
Email Response Management System	44%
Case Management Solution	53%

## Wake Up Call

The Triple Aim is causing unprecedented change in the healthcare industry. Quality assurance programs are a 'must have' to capture actionable data that improves operational performance and efficiencies. Benchmarking with non-healthcare industries is imperative and the key to your success.

As the Healthcare Industry and the contact center industry begin to fuse, it is essential to establish patient centric key measures of success. Accountable Care Organizations have a duty unite to share best practices and jointly test for tolerance by disease lines. There are multiple methodologies within each industry for determining success. Many targets have been placed indiscriminately to create a baseline or a goal. Aspect and Healthcare Intelligence have the expertise to help you establish metrics and targets that truly capture the patient data that improves clinical outcomes and bottom line results.

Learn more at [www.aspect.com/solutions/industry-solutions/healthcare-providers/](http://www.aspect.com/solutions/industry-solutions/healthcare-providers/).

*1 Christopher Mathews, Healthcare's Triple Aim, Health Management Technology, January 2013*

*2 "Quality of Care, A Process for Making Strategic Choices", World Health Organization, 2006*

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### About Aspect

Aspect is the only software company with a fully-integrated interaction and workforce optimization platform for enterprise contact centers globally that need to profitably (and seamlessly) orchestrate people, processes and touch points in an era when the contact center is the new center of the customer experience. For more information, visit [www.aspect.com](http://www.aspect.com).

### About Healthcare Intelligence

Healthcare Intelligence enables Accountable Care Organizations to leverage a combination of technology, process improvement, employee engagement and innovation to create successful patient centric access solutions.

