

Vanguard Medical Group Reduces Leakage By 75% with Data-Driven Referral Management

Vanguard Medical Group (VMG) is made of 10 primary and specialty care practices serving over 50,000 patients in the state of New Jersey. Like many medical groups today, VMG knew they had a problem with referrals going out-of-network and had no process to close the loop or measure the clinical and financial impacts.

Vanguard had two main problems: their clinics used manual and disconnected processes to manage outbound referrals, and they had patients self-referring outside of their preferred network. As a result, VMG had little control over costs and quality with no clear way to eliminate leakage or close the loop on referrals.

Challenge

Most VMG referrals were subjective. Each clinic used unmanaged spreadsheets to identify where to refer patients, and after a provider was selected, it was up to the patient to schedule their referral appointment. Some patients fell through the cracks and never booked an appointment, and for those who did, VMG had no visibility to know if they showed or what the result was. To close the loop, VMG staff manually called patients or contacted the specialists' office to receive an update, adding unnecessary burden. The problem only became more critical when they started to take on value-based programs in addition to traditional fee-for-service contracts.

Solution

Lightbeam built a customized referral module tailored to VMG's patient-centered care mission. The referral management module prompts their referral coordinators to select the most appropriate specialist from their preferred network based on multiple criteria, including the patient's insurance, distance from their home or work, preferred language, and more. The module ranks the specialists based on objective performance data, resulting in an ideal patient-provider match.



"What I like most about the Lightbeam referral module is getting 100% more control over our referrals and know how many patients were seeking care outside the network. Lightbeam's referral team also helped us market the solution to our patients, so they do not just Google for specialist recommendations, but contact us so we can connect them."

Dr. Thomas McCarrick
Chief Medical Officer, Vanguard Medical Group

Vanguard Medical Group

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Outcomes

- Reduced leakage by 75%
- Reduced Medicare Part B and commercial costs by 10%
- Increased outbound referral visibility by 100%
- Increased patient engagement with automated texts by 64%

Solution

Lightbeam's Population Health Management Platform



Goals

- Reduce leakage from Vanguard Medical Group's network
- Make data-driven referrals to the ideal specialists
- Close the referral loop and reduce appointment no-shows
- Accurately track and manage referrals

Once a referral order is completed, automated patient engagement is triggered to close the referral loop, including pre-visit reminders and post-appointment feedback. These keep the patient, the referring provider, and the specialist informed. Referral analytics enable VMG to track and measure each step of the referral process to identify leakage trends, cost savings, and quality improvements.

Results

VMG implemented the referral module across all locations and immediately noticed a difference in referral, cost, and patient engagement metrics. With a reliable way to control and manage referrals, VMG has seen leakage drop by 75% in less than six months. Additionally, VMG has 100% more visibility into knowing where the patient is in the referral journey and has seen 64% of patients engage with the automated communications.

