

Connections

REACHING UAB MEDICINE AMBULATORY CLINICS

FEATURED STORIES

- 2 Spotlight cont'd
Way to Go!
- 3 Shout Out—Highlands
Neurosurgery
Right on Target:
Pokemon Go
- 4 Safety Matters
- 5 Quality Corner: Patient
Identification
- 6 SuccessFactors
Physician Photo Shoot

IN THIS ISSUE

- 7 Wellness Programs
- 8 New Employees
Job Vacancies
TIAA CREF Dates
- 9-10 Plugged in to Ed &
Development

BULLETIN BOARD

- 11 Programs
- 12 Studies

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Previous issues: <http://www.oneuabmedicine.org/events-news/connections>



Spotlight—Orthopaedic Surgery Patient Kiosk



Ortho Surgery Highlands Wins Awards for Patient Kiosk Check-In Project

The UAB Department of Surgery's Division of Orthopaedic Surgery implemented the use of registration kiosks in April, achieving its goals of speeding up the check-in process, improving patient satisfaction, and increasing payments made at the time of service. The project has proven successful by all measures; so much so that the division earned both a "Most Innovative" UAB Strive Award for the 2016 second quarter and a UAB Health System Innovation Award.

Kiosk technology has proven successful in real-time verification of patient demographics and insurance information and interfacing with multiple billing and registration systems. A team effort involving Patient Access, orthopaedic administration, the University of Alabama Health Services Foundation (HSF), and Health System Information Services (HSIS) established six registration kiosks at the UAB Orthopaedics

clinic at UAB Hospital-Highlands. Four kiosks are free-standing, and two are table-mounted for patient convenience. The first day of operation saw more than 200

provide real-time information concerning co-pays, deductibles, and other insurance data. Because patients see accurate co-pay amounts at the time of check-in, they can pay then



"We are extremely pleased with the efficiency of this system." - Rob Crabtree

patients check in, reducing the registration time to fewer than three minutes per patient. Patients also commented positively on the reduction of paperwork.

The kiosk units allow patients to enter their driver's license, insurance card, and credit/debit card for co-payments. The system alerts the front desk when a patient has arrived, and it securely stores patient information so that future transactions may be handled via smart phone. In addition to enabling shorter wait times and a much smoother check-in process, the kiosks reduce redundant paperwork and

(currently with credit or debit card only; cash isn't accepted) instead of being delayed on their way out. Information is immediately and securely submitted to the patient's insurance company, helping ensure that claims are processed correctly and reducing the need for calls from the clinic office to the in-

cont'd pg 2



Orthopedic Surgery continued from page 1

insurance company.

Capturing Data, Dollars

Usage data from only a few months of operation indicate that the new check-in system is a success, notes Rob Crabtree, administrative director of Orthopaedic Surgery.

“We were extremely pleased with the efficiency of this system right away,” Crabtree says. “New patient average check-in time was seven minutes before we installed the kiosks; it dropped to three in April. For return patients, the average check-in time dropped from just over four minutes to 2 ½ minutes.”

At this writing, other data confirm that the average check-in time for returning patients is now less than one minute and 20 seconds. The system also has stepped up the collection of important patient demographic information, including the primary care physician contact (277 in

two months), email addresses for sending patient portal invitations (708 in two months), and key telephone numbers to reach the patient in case of appointment changes (more than 900 in two months).



The system is also increasing cash flow. For the previous six months, the daily average of point-of-service collections was just over \$1,500. The April and May 2016 daily averages were almost \$2,400 and \$2,070, respectively, representing a better than 54

percent increase.

Patient comments suggest that ease of use is a notable feature of the kiosk technology. That’s an important factor, considering that some patients—especially among older demographics—have traditionally shown resistance or concern about new technologies.

“That’s been quite the contrary in our case,” Crabtree says. “Our older patients have embraced the technology, and not only are they pleased with the speed of the system, they very often convey a sense of accomplishment in registering without assistance. Overall, the patients and staff have been very adaptable and have

stated that there is no desire to ever go back to the more tedious manual paper-based processes. The kiosks are still in their infancy, and we will continue to strive to make more operational improvements in the future as we seek to provide a quality patient experience.”

Way to Go!



August TKC Dermatology Employees of the Month are Breanna Davidson and Jacqueline Thomas, pictured here with Andrew Flowers, Dermatology Practice Manager. They both have been working exceptionally hard to exemplify the Core Values of this institution. The faculty and staff nominated the two of them for their exceptional work.

Congratulations Jaqueline & Breanna!

Congratulations!

Steel City Pops

vending at
Callahan Eye Hospital

Monday, August 15th
Wednesday, August 17th

1st Floor Lobby
11:00 am – 3:00 pm

