



Enhancing Patient Safety with Conduit's Nurse Triage Solution: Kenosha Community Health Center's Success Story

Background on Kenosha Community Health Center (KCHC)

Kenosha Community Health Center, Inc (KCHC) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving Kenosha and southeastern Wisconsin. KCHC operates multiple sites across the region, including its newly branded Pillar Health Clinic location, which is moving towards a fully integrated care model. This model includes primary medical care, dental services, and behavioral health services, aiming to provide comprehensive care to the community.

The Challenge

With a limited number of nurses on staff at the time, the team was overextended, juggling multiple roles including patient triage, which created inconsistency in answering patient calls, potentially creating a patient safety risk. The leadership recognized the need for a more streamlined, consistent approach to triage that would ensure patients could access care quickly, while also meeting strict regulatory requirements set by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

Choosing Conduit Health Partners

KCHC chose to partner with Conduit Health Partners to address these challenges. The decision was driven by Conduit's ability to provide a consistent, evidence-based triage process, which was crucial for maintaining patient safety and meeting HRSA standards. KCHC was particularly impressed by Conduit's use of evidence-based protocols, such as the Schmitt-Thompson guidelines, which assured that every patient interaction was handled with best practices in mind. The flexibility offered by Conduit during the onboarding process, including customized workflows and responsive communication, also played a significant role in KCHC's decision.

Key Stats:

84.4% ED avoidance rate; almost 10 percentage points above the industry benchmark of 75%.

93% Calls answered within 30 seconds, which is 13 percentage points better than the industry benchmark of 80%.

1.1% Abandonment rate; almost 4 percentage points better than the industry benchmark.

“Outsourcing the triage function as a high-risk, high-volume, and potentially problem prone area of care has made a great deal of sense. The Conduit Health Partners model ensures the use of the most up to date triage protocols, measures the most important parts of the process, and excellent care partnership to achieve seamless workflows resulting in timeliness of care and less confusion for patients. I would make the decision again!”

— Mary Ouimet, DNP, RN,
CEO, Kenosha Community
Health Center, Inc.

Since partnering with Conduit Health Partners, KCHC has seen several key benefits:

Results	Benefits
Improved Patient Access	Patients now have quicker access to a nurse, offering immediate access to care. This has significantly reduced the instances of calls going to voicemail and has improved the overall patient experience.
Consistent Triage Process	The use of standardized, evidence-based protocols ensures that patient safety is prioritized, and that no critical symptoms are missed. This has also helped in meeting HRSA's stringent standards for patient care access.
Operational Efficiency	By outsourcing the triage process, KCHC's nurses are now able to focus on more value-added activities within the office, such as patient intake, care coordination, care management of patients with chronic diseases and helping pilot new innovations such as behavioral health integration and population health strategies. The front desk staff is also relieved to know they can quickly provide their patients with a registered nurse who can listen to and triage their health concerns. This reallocation of resources has improved overall operational efficiency.
Enhanced Data and Reporting	The detailed reports provided by Conduit have allowed KCHC to monitor metrics such as Emergency Department (ED) avoidance, which is useful for both financial planning and payer relations. In addition, Conduit's reporting has provided visibility to patient behavior with data on metrics such as times and days with the highest call volume.

“The main benefit for us has been that when our patients call, they get to talk to a registered nurse immediately. They aren't getting a voicemail but getting to talk to a nurse right away supporting our patient safety and experience goals.”

— **Karla Boho, MSN, APNP**, Director of Clinical Practice Transformation
Kenosha Community Health Center, Inc.

The partnership between KCHC and Conduit Health Partners has proven to be a strategic success. It has not only enhanced patient care and safety but also allowed KCHC to streamline its operations and reallocate resources more effectively. The integration of Conduit's triage services stands as a model of how healthcare providers can leverage external expertise to overcome internal challenges and improve service delivery.

For more information on Conduit Health Partners' nurse-first triage solution, visit www.conduithp.com.