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A Force to be reckoned with: How Force Therapeutics uses engagement to improve patient care.

Use case
Support & Service

Industry
Healthcare & Life Sciences

Integrations
N/A

Key metric
↑ User engagement
↑ Patient NPS
↑ Customer feedback

I recently saw something on Twitter that resonated with me: "Being a product manager is a little like being a rancher—except the fence has disappeared, the field is on fire, and you're trying to herd both chickens and wolves." This analogy is even more relevant for healthcare software —with the additional pressure of patient outcomes at stake.

Up to 90% of patient care happens outside the hospital, making effective episodic care management critical. Force Therapeutics is a virtual patient engagement platform that serves as a digital extension of a hospital, reaching out to patients at every step of the care journey. Our comprehensive engagement and monitoring tool helps them prepare and recover.

There has been an increased focus on same-day discharge, even in cases of major surgery like a total knee replacement. The idea is to get patients into and out of beds quickly, which means they need more guidance around their procedures. If a patient shows up at the hospital unprepared, that leads to cancellations, which is expensive for the hospital. Before procedures, we reach out to the patients to ensure they are adequately prepped for surgery and understand the expectations. After surgery, we want to monitor patients to help engage them in digital rehabilitation.

Improving digital care in a new environment.

The original focus of digital health involved taking the in-person experience and merely shifting it online. For example, if I want to go to the doctor in person, I would make an appointment. And on the day and time of that appointment, I would enter the facility and sit in the waiting room. In the digital health 1.0 experience, patients would log in for their appointment time and "sit"

in an online waiting room. But directly translating the in-person experience isn't always the right choice.

For this reason, we have built our platform around behavioral design, which we see as a shift to digital health 2.0. We have created a patient-centered process that digitizes the process and sets goals and touchpoints

that engage patients. We ensure there's a bidirectional flow of information and it lives in the right place to optimize care coordination.

No two surgeries are alike, and our platform allows clinicians the chance to intelligently extend their reach. It leverages video and digital connections to engage patients through every step of the journey. We have been pushing toward remote care for some time, but the pandemic brought that need to the surface. Hospitals are stretched thin, and providing digital support for patients outside of the hospital is an important way to alleviate the pressure.

I'm Head of Product for Force Therapeutics, and our team is responsible for helping improve the customer (aka patient) experience on our virtual patient engagement platform. We want to make sure we're creating a piece of software that patients want to use and see value in. Our goal is to address provider burnout by improving and scaling provider workflows. By doing these things, we can drive better patient outcomes.

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Finding a partner to improve the client journey.

One of the most important steps we took to drive better patient outcomes was partnering with Talkdesk in 2019. Before that, our on-the-ground patient associates used an autodialing solution to make phone calls. This option was limited, and it wasn't HIPAA and BAA (Business Associate Agreement) compliant. Reps couldn't save notes in the platform. Instead, they had to make them in their internal CRM, moving back and forth between the programs. This situation wasn't scalable or sustainable.

Talkdesk gave us the option to have the clients sign a BAA, which let us store patient information. We also appreciated how we could scale provider workflows with the platform. Because we reach out on behalf of the hospital system, we have to understand patient hesitations or anything else

that might be causing friction in the patient experience. The Talkdesk contact center platform is valuable because it allows us to scale our ability to talk to patients. As we look to remove a burden from providers, we want to ensure that patient interactions aren't a burden for us, either. With Talkdesk, we can leverage automation to scale our team nonlinearly.

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Automation allows companies to scale customer service in a nonlinear fashion.

Engagement and the Customer Experience.

Our success relies on consistent engagement. We measure weekly active patients to track those engagement rates. If you're an outpatient whose care term is 120–190 days (12–13 weeks), we know you should be checking in a few times a week.

Talkdesk helps us reach out to patients who might not be logging in as frequently. We can see if they have questions or need help, which is a crucial part of our customer experience.

Talkdesk has impacted most of what we monitor in digital care. We measure our patient net promoter score (NPS), a loyalty metric that helps us predict how patients will behave in the future. It also helps us understand the likelihood to build loyalty, which is important in the shift towards consumerism in healthcare. The industry average for healthcare software is 32, and our patient NPS last month was 62. Talkdesk helps us get folks engaged early in the process and obtain more data, which we use to improve their experience and ultimately, drive higher NPS. Talkdesk has become a critical part of how we connect to patients. If we can understand those patients who might not have the best experience, we can intervene earlier and improve that experience. We can also use their feedback to improve our product.

Improving client reputations and their bottom line.

We are a consumer-driven world, and the healthcare sector isn't immune from that. There's more information available to patients than ever, and the general public can research, review, and compare hospitals within moments. A good patient experience can help a hospital achieve better health scores and online reviews. If you are a top hospital in a crowded system, anything you can do to manage your reputation will add value. Improving the customer experience makes a hospital more marketable and enhances their reputation.

High patient engagement saves providers money, too. We can lower the cost of an MSK episode by $2,100 per patient through quality improvements, process efficiencies, and reduced variability. This strategy can also improve top-line revenue growth. Our solution can help drive outcomes similar to spending more time in the hospital or skilled nursing facilities.

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Why automation matters.

In 2022, we plan to focus on automating the patient workflow even more. We have had discussions with Talkdesk about the best ways to leverage their Healthcare Experience Cloud, beginning with connecting to our internal patient database to automate more processes.

We still have some manual workflows, but increasing automation lets our providers spend more time with patients and engage in clinical work. We are focused on scaling their workforces to shift from reactive care to proactive care. If we can automate some of the administration and process-based parts of their job, they can spend more time caring for patients. Talkdesk has allowed for automation in an individualized and personalized way.

Healthcare tech is not easy to develop. It takes a lot of research and development (R&D) to do things right. We have to be thoughtful, and plenty of companies in this space aren't. Talkdesk spends a lot of time and places a lot of emphasis on R&D, which shows.

As we add more hospital systems, we need to partner with companies that help us grow responsibly. Our partnership with Talkdesk has enabled us to improve our platform, driving higher engagement and creating a better patient experience and outcomes.
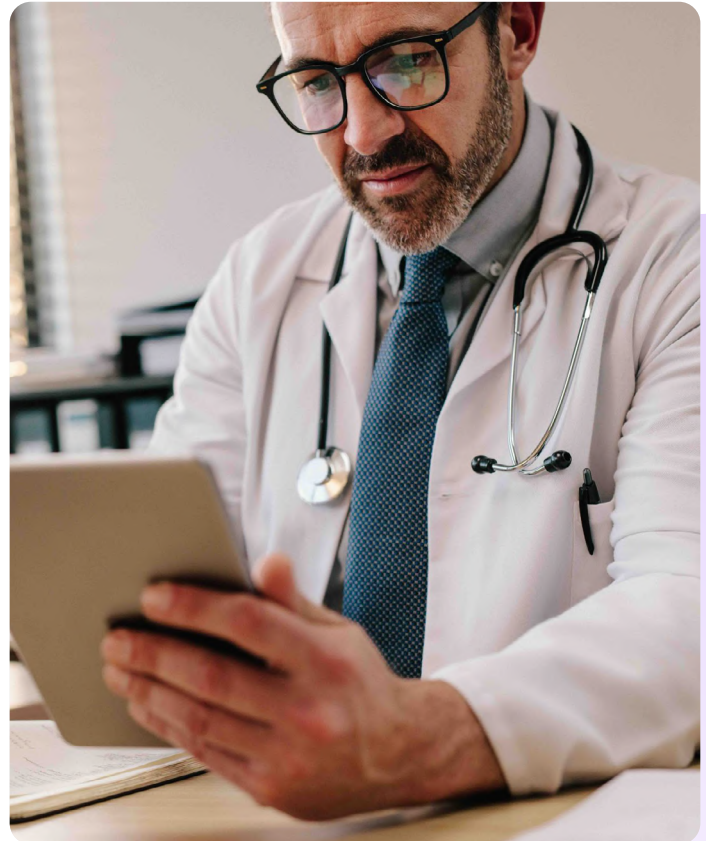
Automating some of the administrative and process-based parts of healthcare allows providers to spend more time caring for patients.

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Experience. A better way.

Customer stories:
Force Therapeutics