

CX CHECKLIST:



5 Coronavirus-Spurred Trends Reshaping Healthcare Contact Centers

The future is now. The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated digital innovations that healthcare organizations were only beginning to explore. But change isn't as simple as flipping a switch.

Shortcomings that were tolerated during a crisis won't be accepted as a permanent service. Here are 5 trends that were spurred by the coronavirus that are reshaping healthcare to better meet the needs of members and patients.



1 Rethinking regulatory requirements

Prior to the pandemic, enabling healthcare contact center agents to work remotely was considered unfeasible due to privacy regulations and technology requirements. However, that mindset has changed in light of having to do exactly that—shift healthcare agents into a work-from-home environment to maintain operations.

Expect a reevaluation of ways to balance health privacy, health information exchange, and contact center support in the context of remote work environments.



2 Digital healthcare: The new CX differentiator

Telehealth appointments, on-demand healthcare, wearable medical devices and other forms of digital healthcare were suddenly pushed from the periphery to center stage as a result of quarantine lockdowns and office closures.

Demand for telemedicine insurance coverage is accelerating and all signs suggest it will continue even after medical offices reopen. Effortless and convenient virtual care experiences—from both providers and payers—will be a key differentiator moving forward.



3 More empathetic training

Associates who interact with individuals as part of contact tracing and coronavirus testing efforts are receiving training and honing skill sets that could shape member and patient interactions beyond the pandemic. They need to be adept at extracting critical information during fraught situations—acting as both coach and counselor. There are myriad healthcare situations where agents with such skills will be in high demand.

Insights at a Glance

Agility is a selling point.

Companies with an agile culture that are able to rapidly assess problems and make decisions are better positioned to withstand uncertainty and can tout this quality to members, patients, and partners.

Empathy matters.

Soft skills such as the ability to empathize and be a good listener are impactful, especially when patients and members need reassurance.

Shifting to digital is only the beginning.

Offering digital communication options and tools is not an end point. Companies still need to ensure that they're providing a personalized, effortless experience.

What works today may not work tomorrow.

Member and patient needs can change in a flash, so it's important for organizations to be open to different ways to engage, along with ensuring employees have what they need to quickly adapt.



Closer human/bot relationships

When it comes to combatting healthcare fraud and other types of fraud, a combination of technology and human expertise is often the most effective approach. AI-powered bots, for example, can rapidly scan databases and monitor calls for suspicious activities in real time, helping agents work faster and more effectively. But agents are only as successful as the training and resources that they receive. As healthcare becomes increasingly digital, ensuring humans—and bots—are set up to work harmoniously together will be even more critical.



Work-at-home is here to stay

While some companies expect their employees to eventually return to brick-and-mortar offices, many companies are looking for assistance building out plans to maintain at-home operations as a viable, ongoing service. Healthcare contact centers are no exception. Key decision-makers are opening up budgets to engage technology to expand capabilities for work-at-home service. Plan for many aspects of equipping agents to provide excellent support to change, from recruitment and onboarding to training and managing employees, in a remote setting.

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