

# 6 Ways for Healthcare Contact Center Agents to Better Engage with Members and Patients

The COVID-19 outbreak has upended businesses and operations while putting pressure on companies to provide immediate support. In the healthcare industry, contact center agents must operate faster and more efficiently than ever to assist members and patients.

Here are some immediate and long-term steps healthcare organizations can take to enable agents to do what they do best: Provide expertise, empathy, and compassion to individuals in need.

## Immediate actions to maximize efficiencies

- 1**  **Identify priorities**  
Start by understanding which are the most critical journeys or touchpoint experiences that need rapid responses. Which channels do your members and/or patients use most often? Focus your resources on these points and expand from there.
- 2**  **Automate redundancies**  
Work with a partner to implement automation technology that identifies and prioritizes calls as they come in. A chatbot, for instance, can greet members or patients and collect basic verifying information and in some cases answer questions. When the message is transferred to an agent, he or she already has the information needed to assist the member or patient, reducing average time in queue and allowing the agent to focus on the interaction.
- 3**  **Use channels strategically**  
Not all channels are equally efficient. An associate can handle four messaging sessions concurrently but only speak to one person at a time. During peak periods direct callers to text their questions via messaging or engage a chatbot for faster support and to reduce call volume. During a slowdown, agents can switch back to answering phone calls and emails.

## Long-term actions to increase business resilience

- 4**  **Be proactive**  
Use predictive analytics and proactive outbound messaging to stay ahead of member and patient concerns. Send an email or text message (to those who opted in) with a link to the latest information to deflect callers about a popular topic. Similarly, if a primary doctor needs to reschedule an appointment, contact patients through their preferred channel and provide alternative dates and times to reschedule instead of manually contacting each patient.

## Key questions to ask potential CX partners

What are the company's core CX competencies?

How has the company made an effort to understand our members or patients and our needs?

What relevant knowledge and experience does the company bring to the table?

Does the company have a foundation of best practices to pull from to help us drive growth and innovation faster?

Does the firm have the resources to quickly ramp a remote team and/or set up digital channels?

Can we expect this firm to go the extra mile for our needs?

- 5**  **Mobilize a work-from-home workforce**  
Even before the outbreak, recruiting and hiring licensed agents in specific contact center locations was challenging. Remote workforces offer a larger pool of available agents that can be scaled up or down as needed while reducing overhead costs. Look for an outsourcing partner that can provide a virtual workforce that is already regulatory and security compliant.
- 6**  **Create a virtual environment where your associates can thrive**  
Digital-focused experiences are the new reality. For experienced agents that are transitioning to a work-at-home environment, create an abridged version of the training curriculum that is tailored to their new work environment. For newly hired remote employees, aim for a simulated learning approach that replicates a live environment. Ideally training materials should be asynchronous, with self-directed lessons that provide immediate feedback and coaching opportunities.

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**Want to learn more?**

Learn about TTEC's Business Continuity Planning and Resiliency Solutions for healthcare and others at [www.ttec.com/business-continuity-planning](http://www.ttec.com/business-continuity-planning).

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TTEC Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ: TTEC) is a leading digital global customer experience (CX) technology and services company focused on the design, implementation and delivery of transformative customer experience, engagement and growth solutions. The Company's TTEC Digital business provides insight-driven, outcome-based and AI-enabled omnichannel cloud platforms and CX consulting solutions and its TTEC Engage business delivers operational excellence through customer care, acquisition, retention, fraud prevention and detection, and content moderation services. Founded in 1982, the Company's 48,500 employees operate on six continents across the globe and live by a set of customer-focused values that guide relationships with clients, their customers, and each other. To learn more about how TTEC is bringing humanity to the customer experience, visit [www.ttec.com](http://www.ttec.com).