

Boston Medical Center + Uber Health: Efficient patient transportation across multiple departments

One of New England's busiest healthcare centers relies on Uber Health to move patients swiftly and cost effectively

The challenge

Boston Medical Center (BMC) is one of the most respected and busiest hospitals in New England with more than 1.1 million patient visits a year and a 98% occupancy rate. The main center is spread over three city blocks in the South End neighborhood of Boston, and it is a 15 minute walk from the closest MBTA subway station. They also operate 11 community health centers in the greater Boston area. Combined with limited parking options at the main hospital, there are logistical challenges associated with moving such a large number of patients to and from multiple locations.

Even when patients stay on the main campus, they need transportation to get from one office to another. The organization used cab vouchers and shuttles with mixed results. After evaluating their options, BMC became one of the first Uber Health customers.

One solution: multiple deployment scenarios

Within BMC there are multiple ways that different departments are using the Uber Health platform to address their patients' transportation needs. Its flexibility allows each group to determine the best way to leverage it.

Patient discharge

The team in charge of patient discharges has an ongoing challenge with patients who are discharged and eager to head home, but did not always have a way to get there. Often times their loved ones are at work and unable to come get them at the exact time needed. The discharge team set up an Uber Health account, and they are now able to arrange rides directly for patients via the dashboard. The program gives their patients peace of mind that they will have a reliable way home.

Interfacility transfers

BMC had a shuttle service which moved patients between the main hospital and its outpatient clinics. Patients usually had to wait for the shuttle on both ends. With Uber Health, ride coordinators are able to book individual rides for patients, and they can go directly from point A to point B.



Industry

Unwavering in its commitment to the community, BMC is a private, not-for-profit, 567-bed, academic medical center located in Boston's historic South End.

Challenge

- More than 1.1 million patient visits per year
- Flexible, reliable transportation needed by patients

Solution

- Uber Health
- Multiple departments leveraging the platform in different ways

Results

- Increased patient satisfaction
- Cost savings
- More efficient transportation option

\$500K

saved in 2018 by replacing shuttle buses between main campus and clinics



“Our patients love the flexibility of Uber, and the time that it saves them. When they are done with an appointment, they want to get back to home or work as quickly as possible. It gives them a sense of control over their schedule”

David Maffeo, Senior Director
of Support Services,
Boston Medical Center

Appointment transportation

The radiology and oncology department is using Uber Health for their patients with cancer that need to come in for regularly scheduled radiation and chemotherapy appointments, sometimes as often as five times a week. With Uber Health enables the department's ride coordinators to book rides days or weeks in advance, so the patient knows it is scheduled at the same time as the appointment. For patients who are struggling with a serious illness, it is comforting to have one less thing to worry about.

“Our patients love the flexibility of Uber, and the time that it saves them. When they are done with an appointment, they want to get back to home or work as quickly as possible. It gives them a sense of control over their schedule,” said David Maffeo, Senior Director of Support Services, BMC.

Across all the use cases, patients do not need a smartphone to take advantage of the program. Using the Uber Health dashboard, ride coordinators are able to automatically send patients ride details via text when the ride is booked for the time the ride is needed.

The result

“Within the organization, the news that we had launched Uber Health spread by word-of-mouth. Soon our team was getting calls from teams across the center who were interested in taking part in the program. The beauty of the Uber Health platform is that it can be customized by each department to fit their patients' specific needs,” said Kristin Jeffes, Senior Manager of Support Services, Boston Medical Center.

By teaming with Uber Health, Boston Medical Center enjoys a number of key benefits including:

- Streamlined billing and financial accountability--The Boston Medical Center team is able to track spending for multiple departments and use cases via one Uber Health account. They can run customizable reports which provide complete visibility into current and past costs for each department.
- Fast and reliable service--Staff are able to request rides upon demand or book them in advance to allow for scheduling on their time. Each ride is tracked so both the patient and staff know when to expect it, saving valuable time.
- Easy to use--Using Uber Health has been easy for both staff and patients across multiple use cases, even among populations without smartphones or passengers new to Uber.



For more information
on Uber Health, visit:

uberhealth.com