

# For Orthopedic Practices, Better Patient Access Means Better Care

Each month, almost 14,000 patients walk through the doors of Tennessee Orthopaedic Clinics (TOC).

With 7 locations and 27 doctors offering specialized care in everything from sports medicine, hand and wrist surgery, total joint replacement and spine surgery, getting the right patient to the right provider can become challenging. Add to that another 18 mid-level providers and on site therapy clinics with 10 full time therapists and you have a real dilemma in regards to convenient, efficient scheduling.

All the providers of Tennessee Orthopaedic Clinics are clearly aligned in their mission, to provide quality orthopedic care, with a focus on individual needs, positive outcomes and superior patient satisfaction. In order to provide this, the patient needs to be able to get to the most appropriate provider, in the quickest amount of time, without frustration or uncertainty. *"Multiple locations along with a wide scope of specialty care create a complex set of scheduling challenges for both physician and patient,"* said Tina Snodderly, Chief Operating Officer.

TOC's scheduling priorities are simple: to fulfill patients' requests for dates, times, locations and providers, while also optimizing provider's schedules to address details such as new patient appointments, call responsibilities and patient mix.

## The Clinics sought ways to better serve and care for patients

As recently as 2017, each TOC location had its own dedicated scheduling staff. As TOC continued experiencing significant growth, this structure was no longer optimal for the patients or the providers. The solitary scheduling team could only access and understand the nuances of their specific provider's schedules. If a patient was interested in a different location, they would need to hang up and call a whole different number. This created a division among sites and hindered the ability to offer optimal time, location and specialty options. *"There was absolutely room for improvement on the patient experience level as well as*

*optimizing the provider's schedules,"* Said Tina Snodderly.

*"We did not have an effective workflow to fill last minute cancellations, leading to voids in the providers' schedules. The search for improved scheduling led to a new software solution."*

She saw some specific opportunities to improve utilization. For example, *"last minute cancellations only created voids in the schedule with no opportunity to fill them in an efficient and quick manner."*

Snodderly says that with the implementation of Dash Schedule, and a centralized call center for all seven offices, TOC has been able to get more patients into the right provider, sooner.

The Clinics have used open scheduling templates with completely flexible *"any patient"* slots and individualized provider preferences to see more patients. In March and April 2018, for example, the **Clinics booked 1,074 more appointments than in the same months a year earlier.** Now, when there is a late cancellation, wait-list management automatically offers the appointment to another patient, scheduling it if they accept or continuing down the wait list if they do not. *"Just last week, we filled 19 last-minute cancellations,"* Snodderly says.

## The Clinics have improved their responsiveness to patients

The Clinics have been able to centralize their scheduling team since launching Dash Schedule, enabling the team to offer all locations, specialties and providers without having to forward calls and interrupt the scheduling process.

*"We're responding to patients more quickly and efficiently than ever before,"* says Snodderly. *"Dash helps us set the right staffing levels for our scheduling team."*

**The Clinics have also curbed call volume by enabling patients to communicate by text message,** with Dash Engage at the back end. AI-enabled chat empowers patients to confirm, cancel, or even reschedule anytime.

## The Dash Benefits that Tennessee Orthopedic values most

So far, the Clinics have **boosted capacity utilization by 3.4%** while also **improving load balancing among providers**. The Clinics' investment in new scheduling software has **yielded an ROI of over \$800,000**, a number that's expected to rise as the practice ramps up patient self-scheduling.

*"Dash has allowed us to get more patients scheduled, faster" says Snodderly. "The software has many valuable capabilities, but at the same time, it offers a simple, intuitive experience for our scheduling team."*

### Dash solutions utilized:



### What would you say are Dash's biggest benefits?

*"The ability to centralize scheduling, communicate with patients about appointment status, check insurance eligibility, and training new employees—all are so much easier with Dash."*

**Tina Snodderly**, Chief Operating Office, Tennessee  
Orthopaedic Clinics

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