SSM Health Enhances Digital Patient Experience and Achieves 19% Increase in New Patient Acquisition
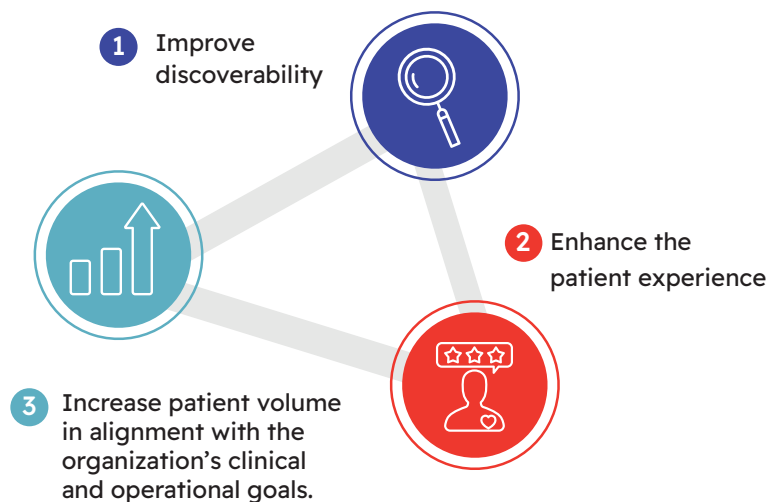
About SSM Health

SSM Health is a not-for-profit health system serving communities across the Midwest through a comprehensive and fully integrated healthcare delivery network. The organization operates 23 hospitals and more than 650 physician offices across five states, offering a wide range of outpatient and virtual care services. SSM Health's workforce includes 40,000 team members and more than 13,900 providers. SSM Health focuses on providing high-quality, personalized care to meet the diverse health needs of the population it serves.

The Challenge

As a patient-focused healthcare provider, SSM Health identified **three key initiatives**:

1. Improve discoverability
2. Enhance the patient experience
3. Increase patient volume in alignment with the organization's clinical and operational goals.

SSM Health digital strategy team recognized that its website needed to load faster and be optimized for mobile to improve Google search results. With two-thirds of its web traffic coming from mobile users, SSM Health wanted to ensure finding best-fit SSM Health care options at the point of search was as fast and easy as possible.

Also, the digital strategy team aimed to implement a smart scheduling system that would help patients quickly find available appointments, compare options, and book best-fit care that would balance their needs with the goals of the health system. Whether patients needed urgent care, in-person visits, or virtual consultations, SSM Health wanted to streamline the booking process to reduce clicks and eliminate dead ends. The organization also wanted to attract new patients and improve retention through a more user-friendly digital experience.

> "We set out to find a solution that would increase our Google click-through-rate. We knew organic growth would come from consumers searching for care on Google, but we didn't know how to do that until we talked with people who knew about website performance and how speed could boost our SEO efforts—especially on mobile."
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> —*Geoff Webster, Director, Digital Health Strategy, SSM Health*

Solution

SSM Health worked with DexCare to implement a comprehensive digital care orchestration platform that addresses its key challenges. Now patients have a streamlined, user-friendly process for finding and booking care.

The platform leverages natural language search and offers immediate, actionable, real-time availability so patients can quickly find the care they need. It also presents multiple options, including first available appointments, virtual care, and nearby alternatives – giving patients choice and convenience. This approach prevents patients from encountering dead ends and eliminates frustrations when searching for care.

Plus, the DexCare platform enables SSM Health to cross-sell by offering additional slots at nearby locations, and virtual options when a specific location is fully booked. Providers can work at the top of their license and treat more patients with the same clinical resources.
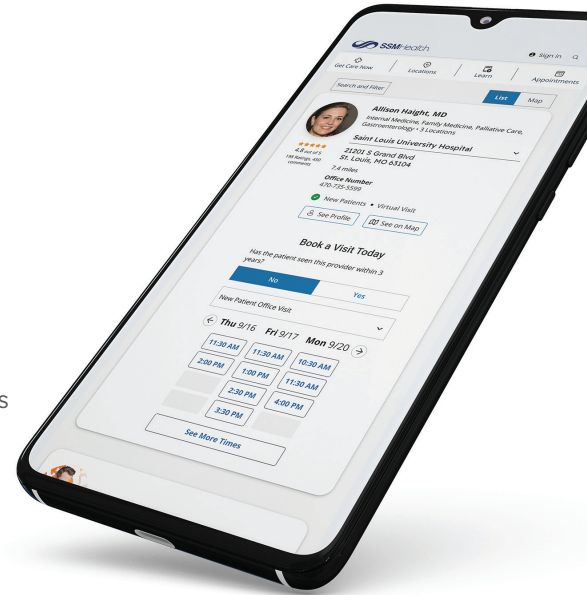
"Previously, if patients looked for urgent care, they only saw the one location they were searching for. The consumer then had to think, 'What else can I do? Do they have other locations? Maybe I can go back and look at those.' Now, we're literally serving up all options to them."

— Erin Powell, Vice President for Digital Health at SSM Health

Results

SSM Health has revolutionized its digital presence since adopting DexCare. Patients can easily find and book care from their mobile devices or desktops. The SSM Health team has attracted new patients and expanded its patient base through this improved accessibility.

Consumers now enjoy a streamlined process for comparing care options and accessing virtual visits. SSM Health's intelligent routing system has reduced wait times and increased patient satisfaction.

The organization has reported these results:

85% Boost in mobile click-through rates in the first year

19% Increase in the acquisition of new patients

79% Conversion rate for urgent care bookings

"We've eliminated dead ends for our patients. Now, we present them with options: 'Here's the location you chose, and here are other nearby locations with their available appointment times.' A patient might see that a location five miles away has the exact appointment time they want. We're making it easy for patients to find the care that best fits their needs."

— Erin Powell, Vice President for Digital Health at SSM Health