Best Practices PlayBook for Managing Free Standing Imaging Centers

OIA | OUTPATIENT IMAGING AFFILIATES, LLC

Positive effects on patient leakage through a partnership with OIA

Background

Minimizing patient leakage for freestanding/retail imaging requires having a deep understanding of the major levers impacting leakage, as well experience in closely managing each step of the "exam lifecycle" (time of order receipt through exam completion).

OIA has spent many years, in various markets, perfecting our approach to managing the exam lifecycle. Retaining patients requires focus and expertise in a number of key areas: sales and marketing, managing referring MD relationships, retention of staff to allow for coverage of cases, exceptional management of call centers, throughput, and a cultural focus on providing an A+ patient experience.
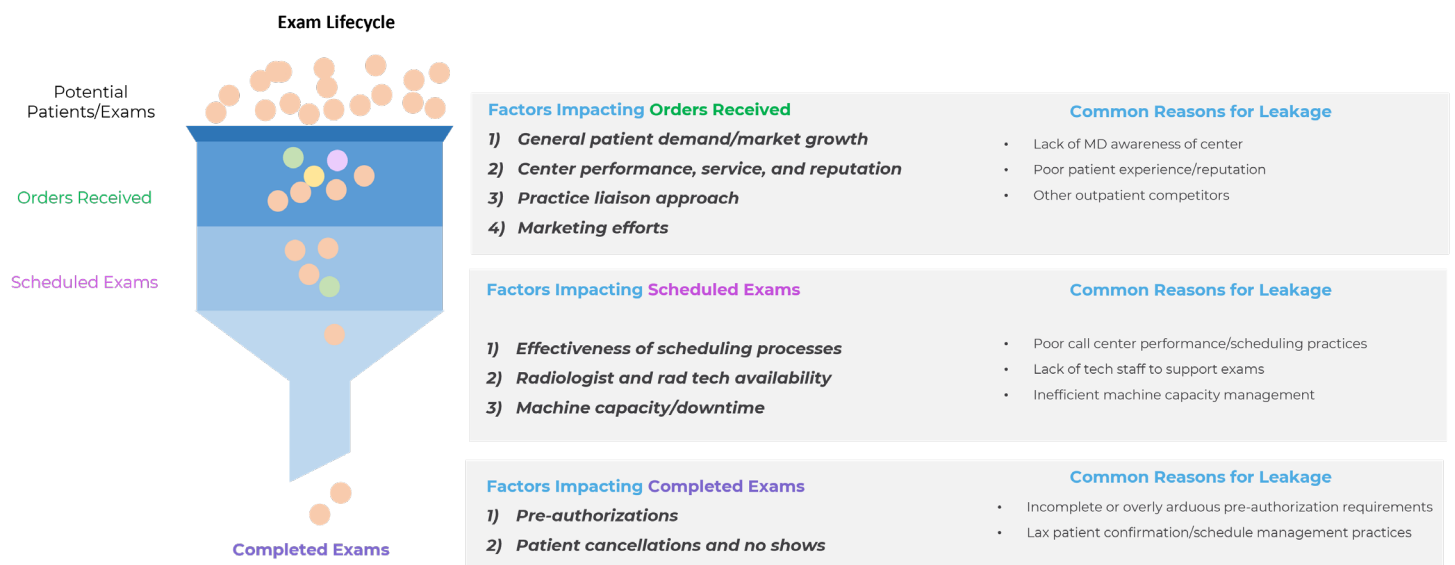While each of the areas listed above has its own set of tactics for achievement, below is a sample of best practices that have been deployed across many of OIA's joint venture centers, to great success:

- Diagnosing exam "leakage points"
- Exam capture dashboards
- Call center optimization and capacity management

Best Practice: Diagnosing exam "leakage points"

The first step to understanding where there may be opportunity to improve patient capture in a freestanding imaging network involves breaking down the process steps from when a center might receive an order from a provider for a patient exam, to when that exam is completed.

Below is an outline of that process, along with details on what might lead to leakage across various parts of the lifecycle.

Exam Lifecycle

Potential Patients/Exams

Orders Received

Scheduled Exams

Completed Exams

Factors Impacting Orders Received
1) General patient demand/market growth
2) Center performance, service, and reputation
3) Practice liaison approach
4) Marketing efforts

Common Reasons for Leakage
- Lack of MD awareness of center
- Poor patient experience/reputation
- Other outpatient competitors

Factors Impacting Scheduled Exams
1) Effectiveness of scheduling processes
2) Radiologist and rad tech availability
3) Machine capacity/downtime

Common Reasons for Leakage
- Poor call center performance/scheduling practices
- Lack of tech staff to support exams
- Inefficient machine capacity management

Factors Impacting Completed Exams
1) Pre-authorizations
2) Patient cancellations and no shows

Common Reasons for Leakage
- Incomplete or overly arduous pre-authorization requirements
- Lax patient confirmation/schedule management practices

While the graphic above outlines all the potential points at which a patient may be falling out of the system, the particular drivers vary from center to center. To accurately determine where an exam leakage problem might exist for any given center, it's important to have visibility into the metrics below:

Metrics Impacting Orders	Description
Number of orders received	It's important to look at your orders received, as well as analyze any trends that may indicate changing patterns by modality or other factors.
Order to schedule conversion rates	The percentage of orders received that are converted to a scheduled exam.
Patient satisfaction metrics	Timely data on the patient experience at the freestanding center; questions used should be tailored to reflect the service quality of the experience at key points in the process (check in, exam, overall experience, etc)
Metrics Impacting Scheduled Exams	**Description**
Number of scheduled exams	It's important to look at your orders received, as well as analyze any trends that may indicate changing patterns by modality or other factors.
Call-center specific metrics	
Total calls received	Total calls received by call center
Call team member productivity	Average scheduled exam per call rep
Call abandonment rates	Percentage of calls not answered by call center staff as a percentage of total calls received; should be analyzed overall, as well as by day of week, time of day
Call team member productivity	Average scheduled exam per call representative
Center operation metrics	
Overall and positions specific turnover rates	Inability to recruit and retain staff can be a major factor in limiting capacity. Analyzing this data frequently is important to identify trends and areas for improvement
Machine downtime	Measuring downtime by machine can help determine if a decrease in scheduled exams is a temporary issue; it can also help with prioritization for replacement capital and
Percentage of appointments filled	Looking at percentage of scheduling minutes used, by machine, and by day, time of day, can help team to fill unused slots and/or identify areas for double booking.
Time to third appointment (MR/CT)	Longer times here can indicate a machine or radiologist coverage capacity issue
Radiologist metrics	
Report turnaround time	Average time from scan completion to radiology report issued

Some of these data can be gathered and analyzed from the EMR; however, a robust view of patient capture metrics should also include:

- Data from CRM to help analyze market trends
- Press Ganey or like-minded patient experience data
- Deep-dive call center metrics
- Data from recruiting and HR system

Perhaps even more important than the data sources themselves, is how easy the data are to analyze and extrapolate from. This requires infrastructure to craft analyses in an automated and replicable manner, as well as benchmarks on these metrics that are specific to the freestanding imaging space, so that it is possible to determine what is poor, good, or exceptional performance.

Best Practice: Exam Capture Dashboards by Center

Analysis of the data points above can help to determine what might be causing suboptimal exam capture. In most cases, improving performance will require implementation of a number of tactics across different parts of the exam lifecycle.

While plans need to be customized based on the unique circumstances of each center, creating exam capture management dashboards allows you to quickly pinpoint performance gaps, create a relevant action plan, and drive accountability on plan execution.

For these to be effective, they must have the following elements:
*   Timely quantitative data (by center): number of orders, order to schedule conversion, scheduled exams, schedule to completed exam conversion rates, machine downtime, open positions.
*   Timely qualitative data (by center): market-related changes that could impact exams.
*   Be reviewed with center leadership on a frequent basis to understand drivers, and drive action plan for inflection.

Below is a sample dashboard for four centers. As you can see, while Center A is struggling with orders received and machine downtime, Center C is having difficulty getting scheduled exams completed. As these have completely different causes, the action items to resolve (listed at far right) are similarly different and directly tied to the cause of the leakage.

	Conversion	Downtime	Staffing	Market Factors	Action/Timeline
Center A	Orders/Day 🟩 Sched Exams/Day 🟩 Orders to Sched Visit 🟨 Sched to Completed 🟨	Hours: None	• Two MRI positions remain open • Two x-ray positions remain open	No big issues	1. One PRN MRI Tech and one FT MRI tech have started. M Marx top open schedules for remainder of month 2. Big volume push 4/29 & 4/30
Center B	Orders/Day 🟥 Sched Exams/Day 🟩 Orders to Sched Visit 🟩 Sched to Completed 🟨	MR machine down Tuesday	• Two MRI positions remain open • Two x-ray positions remain open	No big issues	1. Review recruiting plan. 2. Meeting on 4/17 to review additional hours 3. Avg orders entered is low. Devon to confirm if data reflects order in queue only
Center C	Orders/Day 🟩 Sched Exams/Day 🟩 Orders to Sched Visit 🟩 Sched to Completed 🟥	Hours: None	• None	New competitor opening	1. Opening Sunday hours via PRN and beginning immediately 2. Marketing campaign on exceptional service and access
Center D	Orders/Day 🟩 Sched Exams/Day 🟩 Orders to Sched Visit 🟩 Sched to Completed 🟨	Hours: None	• Need tech to support extended hours to include Saturday	Big ortho group lost MDS	1. Extend Saturday hours

Given the large network of centers OIA operates, discussing these challenges between different center administrators allows for group problem solving and streamlined sharing of best practices to improve patient capture.

Best Practice: Call Center Optimization and Capacity Management

Another very important factor in actively managing patient leakage is how effectively the call center operates. Using standardized training approaches, staffing productivity, and queue management processes, OIA's call centers operate below 5% call abandonment rate levels, meaning, 95% of calls are answered, and appointments are scheduled appropriately.

At times, the ability of the call center to schedule a patient is impacted by the appointment availability at the center. While this can be driven by a number of factors, extended hours, flex staffing, and modality expansion are needed to allow for timely care of patients.

OIA creates additional portfolio capacity to support volume growth

OIA also provides a call center, scheduling and front-end support to decrease patient and scan wait times

Call Center Capabilities:

OIA offers robust, centralized call center operations and front-end support to decrease patient wait times, improve scheduling and support patient satisfaction

How it works →

✓ OIA call center operated market-by-market, with schedulers in respective regions
✓ OIA closely tracks call center metrics via reports
✓ OIA offers openDoctor, enabling patients to self-schedule

OIA's average call center abandonment < 5%

Call Center Sample Report

Inbound Call Metrics	Q4 2020 Baseline	1/25/20
Total Calls Received	1302	11
Total Calls Answered	1204	11
Total Calls Abandoned	98	
Abandoned %	8%	
Average Queue time in Seconds	61	
Avg Talk Time	3:11	3
% SLA	56%	9
Calls answered within 20 seconds	670	10
Logged in Time	171:37:54	320:11:
Average Logged in Time Per Day	34:19:35	64:02:

Source: OIA Internal Analysis 2022 full-year data.

Adding Portfolio Capacity:

Extend Evening Hours

Add Weekend Days

Flex Staffing

Expand Modalities

Create capacity through existing operating hours and adding weekend days; most markets can support continued volume growth

Reduces scan wait time from 14+ days to 3.5 days for non-contrast MR.

About OIA

Outpatient Imaging Affiliates (OIA) is a premier provider of comprehensive outpatient imaging services, dedicated to delivering exceptional patient care and innovative solutions. OIA partners with healthcare providers such as health systems, academic medical centers, and radiology groups to develop, market and operate quality, patient-friendly, service-oriented outpatient imaging centers. Their strength is in their dedication to excellence in serving the needs of patients, referring physicians, employees, and venture partners.

Interested in learning more? Visit oiarad.com or send us a note at BD@oiarad.com