

WHITEPAPER

Modernizing Medical Transportation with Rideshare

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WHY PAYERS AND PROVIDERS ARE EVALUATING RIDESHARE

“I go to dialysis treatment three times a week, and it can be really challenging for me to arrange transportation,” says Ken Jackson, a retired musician who lives alone. “I can’t drive myself and it’s difficult asking my friends for a ride. I don’t want to be a burden and sometimes I feel like it’s easier to just skip my appointment.”

Like Ken, millions of Americans across the country face transportation barriers to care — resulting in roughly 3.6 million missed appointments annually.

To address this challenge, payers and providers alike have relied on non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) to get those in need to and from their care. In fact, NEMT has been a mandatory Medicaid benefit since the program’s inception in 1966. A 2018 survey from the Medical Transportation Access Coalition (MTAC) shows that roughly 58% of Medicaid beneficiaries report they would not be able to make any medical appointments without NEMT.

But traditional NEMT services have significant shortcomings: routine trips to and from the doctor’s office need to be scheduled days in advance, with wait times for the ride itself ranging anywhere from 60 minutes to three hours.

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Source: MTAC, 2018.

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”

– Ken Jackson,
retired musician

While some are able—and occasionally willing—to wait around, many others are not. So, they skip their appointment, and that's when it can really get dangerous.

“If a person has a chronic disease and they can't get to their doctor's appointment, their health will suffer and they're more likely to end up in the emergency room or an extended hospital stay as a result,” says Shea Long, VP of Innovation at Centene Corporation, one of the largest providers of government-sponsored and commercial healthcare programs in the U.S. “If we can intervene by getting them an on-demand Lyft ride to the doctor to help them maintain a healthy life, everyone wins.”

In 2016, Lyft began forming partnerships with leading healthcare organizations to reduce barriers to care and improve access to services that promote health through on-demand transportation. Today, the rideshare company works with the top 10 health plans, nine out of the top 10 health systems and 9 out of the top 10 NEMT managers in the U.S. “Offering our healthcare clients flexible transportation through Lyft can reduce costs, increase patient and member satisfaction and ultimately have a positive impact on health outcomes,” says Daniel Greenleaf, CEO at LogistiCare | Circulation, the largest NEMT manager in the U.S.

“For the chronically ill, adherence to a complex care program is much easier when you have reliable transportation” says Megan Callahan, VP of Healthcare at Lyft. “We're starting to see a consensus in the industry that rideshare can have a positive impact on not just on costs and operational efficiencies, but also on overall health.”

Lyft's healthcare platform is different from its consumer application, in that a sponsoring organization — either a health plan, provider or transportation manager — can order a ride on behalf of the patient through Lyft Concierge, a web-based interface that can also integrate into existing systems through an API. Increasingly, payers and providers are leveraging Lyft Concierge to improve access to not only medical care, but to other places that support an individual's overall health — including the pharmacy, fitness center, community events and more.

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— Shea Long,
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CASE STUDY: CENTENE BOOSTS MEMBER SATISFACTION

As one of the largest health insurers for underserved populations in the U.S., Centene has long recognized the importance of transportation in the overall member experience. “It’s usually the first and last touchpoint for a consumer accessing care and has a big impact on how they engage with the healthcare system,” says Mr. Long from Centene. “When rides aren’t convenient or reliable, it often results in delayed care and a disjointed member experience.”

One of the most significant problems with traditional NEMT solutions is the inability to order rides in real time. “It’s difficult to determine exactly how long a doctor’s visit will last,” explains Mr. Long from Centene. “This makes it challenging to schedule a return trip home, and our members often had to wait 1-3 hours for a ride after their appointment.”

In 2018, Centene worked with its transportation managers to launch Lyft pilot programs at four subsidiary health plans: Buckeye Health Plan (Ohio), Sunshine Health Plan (Florida), Peach State Health Plan (Georgia), and Superior Health Plan (Texas). The goal was to understand how rideshare could improve the member experience for Medicaid, Medicare, Exchange and Dual-Eligible beneficiaries, and address the logistical issues that make existing NEMT options costly and inefficient.

“We recognized that if we were able to integrate rideshare seamlessly into our transportation portfolio, we could provide a better member experience, increase appointment adherence and ultimately improve health outcomes,” says Mr. Long.

During the pilot, Centene saw a marked increase in member satisfaction, with a 66% reduction in member-rider complaints. The average wait time decreased dramatically, from 28 minutes for a traditional NEMT ride to just seven minutes for a Lyft — resulting in 85% of rides receiving five stars, indicating exceptional performance. Moreover, the number of one-star ratings dropped from 10% to 1%. Centene attributed these trends to the timeliness of Lyft rides and an improvement in member safety.

BY THE NUMBERS

66%

decrease in member-rider complaints

85%

of rides receive five stars

99%

on-time arrival rate

“Because of this success, we have been implementing Lyft in every Medicaid market that allows rideshare,” says Mr. Long. “For some of our other products, including Medicare Advantage and Exchange, there are fewer restrictions, and we have moved aggressively to implement rideshare solutions with Lyft in those markets as well.”

As a result of the pilots’ successes, Centene is now adopting a “Rideshare First” strategy in major metropolitan areas for transportation and will start operationalizing programs for its health plans nationwide.

“As we move forward, we’re continuously searching for more use cases where ridesharing can be used to improve the member experience and overall health outcomes,” says Mr. Long from Centene. “Our top focuses will continue to be enhancing member experience, reducing cost, and innovating the transportation benefit in ways that will improve the lives of the members we serve. We intend to start experimenting with rideshare to solve key social determinants of health challenges.”

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— **Shea Long,**
VP of Innovation at
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CASE STUDY: ALAMEDA HEALTH SYSTEM DRIVES COST-SAVINGS

In 2012, *The Waiting Room*, an award-winning documentary, brought problems at Alameda Health System's Highland Hospital in Oakland to international attention. The hospital was known for extremely long emergency room (ER) wait times and diversion rates.

Patient flow was part of the problem. "Many patients were unable to leave the hospital because they didn't have a ride home or to the next stage in their care," says Trevor Hardee, Director of Customer Success at Royal Care Connect, a managed transportation company that works with Alameda Health System. "In particular, transportation is a major barrier for Highland Hospital's many low-income, housing-insecure patients."

The hospital's case managers struggled to coordinate discharge rides, resulting in the ER's overcapacity and a stressful experience for patients. "A lack of reliable transportation can create significant bottlenecks and inefficiencies for hospitals," says Hardee. "We saw an opportunity to partner with Lyft and improve patient flow across Alameda's facilities."

To solve these problems, Royal Care Connect incorporated Lyft into its medical transportation solution for the health system. The customer success team simply integrated Lyft Concierge into the call center workflow, eliminating the need for training or account management for hospital or clinic staff.

As a result of Royal Care Connect's partnership with Lyft, Alameda Health System achieved \$400,000 in cost-savings compared to using taxi vouchers and saw a 50% decrease in emergency room diversion rates due to improved patient flow. In one example, a primary care clinic reduced their patient no-show rates by 73%, increasing staff utilization and reducing avoidable readmissions.

"Our partnership with Lyft has helped improve the way patients flow through Alameda Health System facilities," says Hardee. "We see real value in hospitals and health systems leveraging rideshare as part of their transportation program."

BY THE NUMBERS

\$400,000

in annual cost-savings compared to taxi vouchers

50%

decrease in ER diversion rates

73%

decrease in no-show rates for a primary care clinic

CASE STUDY: AMERIHEALTH CARITAS DC IMPROVES HEALTHCARE UTILIZATION

Like Centene, AmeriHealth Caritas DC has long recognized the importance of transportation. When Medicaid enrollees lack a reliable way to get to medical appointments, they often forego preventive care and delay important screenings, treatments, and follow-up care until situations become urgent, leading to potentially higher-cost interventions, including hospital stays and ER visits.

Traditional NEMT options offer a poor experience, typically requiring 48 to 72 hours advance notice for trips to the doctor. Often, traditional NEMT providers use multiload vehicles (either vans or sedans), which group multiple enrollees together and results in members having to endure several stops and unpredictable wait times before and after their appointments. For most enrollees, this can lead to hours of lost work, excessive day care expenses, and missed appointments — discouraging them from using the NEMT service altogether.

“When enrollees don’t have access to reliable and convenient transportation options, they often have to choose between keeping important medical appointments and the cost of taking time off from work and possibly paying for extended day care — which can be a significant expense for an hourly worker,” says Keith Maccannon, Director of Marketing and Outreach at AmeriHealth Caritas DC. “Unfortunately, this can lead to less preventive screenings and timely follow-up care, which can be drivers of poor health outcomes and increased healthcare costs in the long run.”

In 2017, AmeriHealth Caritas DC partnered with Lyft on a pilot program to get enrollees to urgent care, follow-up and prenatal appointments. In the first month of the pilot program, enrollees booked approximately 150 trips. As word of mouth spread about the partnership with Lyft, demand exploded and AmeriHealth Caritas DC quickly expanded the types of medical appointments for which the service could be used.

BY THE NUMBERS

40%

*decrease in ER
utilization*

15%

*decrease in LANE
utilization*

12%

*decrease in
ambulance utilization*

45%

*improvement in
compliance for 42
key HEDIS measures*

In 2018, AmeriHealth Caritas DC contracted with Access2Care, an NEMT manager that partners with Lyft, to oversee its transportation program. Between April 2018 and April 2019, there were more than 150,000 rides provided for 11,400 enrollees. During this period, for enrollees utilizing the service, AmeriHealth Caritas DC experienced a statistically significant 45% improvement in the compliance rate for 42 key Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measures (one of the most commonly used quality metrics used in the industry to evaluate health plans and providers).

In addition to showing a strong impact on preventive care and quality measures, AmeriHealth Caritas DC observed a strong correlation between enrollees' Lyft rides and improved healthcare utilization. Based on claims analysis conducted 4 months before and after the initial ride with Lyft, these same 11,400 enrollees experienced a 40% reduction in ER utilization, a 15% reduction in low acuity non-emergent (LANE) ER utilization, and a 12% reduction in ambulance utilization.

"We've seen a significant improvement in emergency services utilization for our enrollees utilizing Lyft, which we believe is a strong indicator that this service is helping to shift utilization from emergency services to primary care — a key driver of improved utilization and cost," says Jerome Schorr, Director of Quality Management for AmeriHealth Caritas DC.

"Access2Care's partnership with Lyft has helped us deliver a successful transportation program for AmeriHealth. This is the type of program we are executing nationally for Medicaid and Medicare managed care organizations," says Sven Johnson, Chief Operating Officer of American Medical Response (AMR), which owns Access2Care.



“

We're thrilled about the support we're able to provide for our enrollees. Based on preliminary results, there appears to be a significant reduction in inpatient stays, ER visits, and emergency ambulance utilization for enrollees taking Lyft trips.

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— Keith Maccannon, Director of Marketing and Outreach at AmeriHealth Caritas DC

THE ROAD AHEAD: SCALING RIDESHARE ACROSS THE HEALTHCARE ECOSYSTEM

Today, ridesharing is commonplace in cities and communities across the U.S. By applying the same technology used by everyday passengers to NEMT services, healthcare organizations can ensure that transportation is never a barrier to care.

“People now expect their medical experiences to be similar to their consumer experiences,” says Callahan. “Healthcare does not have a great reputation here — there’s a huge opportunity to create a human, consumer-oriented experience that members and patients expect. That’s what we’re building at Lyft and why top payers and providers work with us.”



About Lyft in Healthcare

Lyft is reimagining the way patients access care. Every year, over 3.6 million people can’t get to their medical appointments due to a lack of transportation — an issue we are uniquely positioned to address through our work with thousands of healthcare organizations across the country. We’ve partnered across the healthcare ecosystem — from the largest health systems, top transportation brokers, health plans and integrations with a leading EMR — to improve the patient experience and reduce costs. To learn more, visit lyftbusiness.com/healthcare.