



The challenge

Sturdy Health is a community-driven, fully integrated health system with 25 locations throughout Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Serving a population from a diverse range of socioeconomic backgrounds, the leadership team at Sturdy Health found that they needed a better way to account for their patients' needs that span beyond the exam room.

Access to resources like healthy food, stable housing, and reliable transportation may not seem relevant to healthcare, but social needs like these can account for as much as 80% of health outcomes. Sturdy was seeing completion rates of its social determinants of health (SDOH) and depression screenings stagnate around 10%, with only 2% of those screenings showing positive indications of need. Sturdy leadership recognized that these pre-visit screenings were falling short and presented an opportunity to better connect its patients with the care they need, when they need it.

Traditional methods for pre-visit screenings typically require significant manual effort from staff, who must administer questionnaires during check-in, over the phone, or in person, and then manually enter the information into the EHR. The process can be time-consuming and prone to errors. Monitoring responses and coordinating follow-up referrals takes up additional staff time, and it's often impossible to consistently screen all eligible patients, meaning some patients will inevitably slip through the cracks and miss out on the care they need.

As patient volumes increase, it becomes even more challenging for staff to manage the workload and close care gaps, thereby limiting the program's reach and effectiveness.

The solution

Sturdy Health partnered with Notable to automate these essential pre-visit screenings, providing a standardized and consistent form of outreach to its patient population. Through Notable's AI Platform, AI Agents reach out to patients in their preferred channel (SMS, Voice AI, web apps, or patient portals) and language to deliver the SDOH and depression screenings in a user-friendly format. When patients complete the questionnaire, AI Agents extract and structure the responses, automatically entering them into the EHR, and eliminating the need for manual data entry by staff.

The journey doesn't stop there, however. Responses can trigger additional

Solutions Deployed

SDOH and depression screenings

EHR

Market

Southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island

Key outcomes

31,000+

pre-visit screenings automated

55–60%

completion rate

75%

of primary care patient population screened

4 FTEs

staff capacity gained

5,100+ hrs

saved through automation

automated workflows to suit each patient's needs. Care teams can utilize the captured data to identify high-risk patients and implement targeted care interventions, resulting in improved care outcomes and reduced health disparities.

Automation streamlines the SDOH process at every step, working through related workflows and providing valuable insights to the Sturdy Health care team while also giving them more time in the day to provide the next steps in high-quality patient care.

The Results

Since automating its pre-visit screenings with Notable's AI Platform, Sturdy Health has sent over 31,000 pre-visit questionnaires, screening 75% of its primary care population for these essential care factors. Sturdy has seen its questionnaire completion rates skyrocket from approximately 10% before automation to 55-60% with automation. Positivity rates on those screenings have increased from under 2% to a stable 5%. This indicates a greater willingness to share sensitive information when patients are able to complete the forms privately at home rather than in person in their doctor's office.

By offloading this time-consuming task to AI Agents, Sturdy has gained 4 FTEs of staff capacity and saved over 5,100 staff hours. With automation, team members and providers have more time to deliver targeted treatment, while patients are empowered to access care quickly and efficiently.

Automating pre-visit screenings has also provided Sturdy's executives with valuable insights that change how they manage population health across their system today. Sturdy's team has utilized analytics to assess available resources, identify any gaps, and connect patients more efficiently, armed with the data to support the basis for this vital work.