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**Medication Adherence:
Everyone Wins With
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Healthcare Call Center Times

July/August 2022

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Healthcare Call Center Times is published monthly by HMR, Inc. Jan Michael Lok, Publisher, 4651 Woodstock Road, Suite 208-210, Roswell, Georgia 30075.

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

Manuscripts on topics, issues and programs relating to Healthcare Call Center Times are welcome and may be submitted to the editor for consideration. Photographs, ads, brochures, charts, and graphs should be included where appropriate.

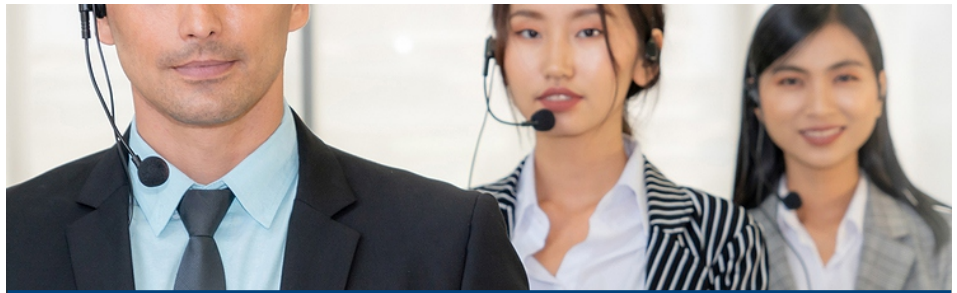
SUBSCRIPTION RATE

\$255 per year. Canadian and international subscriptions \$275 per year. Postmaster: send address changes to Healthcare Call Center Times, 4651 Woodstock Road, Suite 208-210, Roswell, Georgia 30075. Subscribers: Please send notice of address changes or corrections by enclosing mailing address label to: Healthcare Call Center Times, 4651 Woodstock Road, Suite 208-210, Roswell, Georgia 30075. Or call **770-457-6106**

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Healthcare Call Center Times

Looking to Contribute?

The past few years, we have seen and experienced major changes in the healthcare call center industry. This now highly technical field is changing at a rapid pace. The need for efficiently run call centers has never been more important.

Healthcare Call Center Times brings you every aspect of this journey. We seek your input for the benefit of others. If you wish to contribute an article, or to be interviewed for an upcoming issue, HCCT would welcome it. Stories such as:

- Staffing issues
- Technology issues that you are dealing with systems and procedures that are troubling your call center
- New programs that you have implemented in your call center that would be of interest to your fellow call center directors
- Experiences you have had during the pandemic
- Any aspect of call center management that you would like us to report on

We welcome you to contribute.

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Conference of Healthcare Call Centers

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23

Healthcare Call Center Times plans to return for an in-person conference in Summer 2023. This event is designed for healthcare leaders with roles in call centers, contact centers, virtual care and customer service to learn “best practices” through forward-thinking sessions and networking opportunities.



Why Paying Attention to Your Call Center's Culture Matters

By Jessica Levco

Never underestimate the power of a first phone call.

That was the message that Kris Baird, President and CEO of Baird Group—Patient, gave at the Contact Experience Conference (CEC) during her keynote presentation. She cited research that says it only takes four or five seconds to make a first impression by phone. With 88 percent of healthcare appointments still scheduled by phone, organizations are working

hard to maximize their marketing to get that phone to ring.

"Calls will influence 1 trillion dollars in U.S.



Kris Baird

spending each year," Baird says. "Calls are still the most convenient way to get access for many people. But the ugly truth: When it comes to healthcare, 35 percent of first-time callers are not going to call back or return, if they had a negative first impression. If you can't impress them on a first call, you won't get them back."

Spending time coaching and training staff can go a long way in getting off to the right start. Even just the



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basics of a set introduction and conclusion to the call can make a big difference.

She shared the format for a successful introduction call. The four-part intro goes a little something like this:

- Good morning (acknowledgement of the day)
- Mid-Town Pediatrics (share location)
- This is Kris (agent gives name)
- How can I help you? (offers assistance)

She recommends closing the call with, “Is there anything else I can do for you today?”

“I see the greeting and closure as branding bookends,” Baird says. “Your agents can do everything within their power to control the patient experience.”

She shared that 35 percent of first-time callers are not likely to return or recommend if they had a bad experience on the phone.

“This isn’t because you have bad agents,” Baird says. “It’s because of bad training, high turnover rates in call centers and broken down processes. If your team is constantly turning over and you don’t have a pool of workers who know the ins-and-outs of



provider preferences and all the nuances, a patient is more likely to have a negative experience on the phone.”

Having a great phone experience comes down to creating a consistently positive patient experience that’s delivered by an engaged workforce.

“Your culture is your brand,” Baird says. “Call center leaders have to create a positive, supportive environment to keep staff engaged.”

She shared a few tips for boosting call center culture:

- **Hire for Fit:** “You might feel pressured to fill a position, but don’t just hire the next warm body,” Baird says. “Ask your team members what they’re looking for with someone they’d like to work with. Get them involved. Ask behavior-based questions during the interview. For example, if you need someone with an even temper, ask: ‘Tell me about a time you had to deal with an

angry customer.’”

- **Onboard for Success:** Look at what you can do as a leader to embrace a newcomer to make sure they feel like they belong. “How do you introduce them to other staffers? Do they have someone to have lunch or coffee with?”

- **Work Hard at Having Fun:** Create an environment where people want to stay. Be a leader that nobody wants to leave. Gamification, earning badges, doling out praise and recognition can go a long way.

- **Connect to Purpose:** Show agents that they are doing more than answering phones or scheduling. “Teach them how that first impression is crucial to the entire brand,” Baird says. “Everybody likes to feel pride, a sense of belonging and working for a brand they can trust themselves.” ■



Medication Adherence: Everyone Wins With the Right Strategy

By Frank Pettinato, CEO, Avantive Solutions

Following a daily medication regimen is a fact of life for most adults; nearly seven in ten Americans between the ages of 40 to 79 used at least one prescription drug in the past 30 days and nearly nine in ten adults over the age of 65 report that they are currently on prescriptions. Taking medications as prescribed by medical professionals for the



appropriate amount of time, or medication adherence, is essential for controlling chronic illnesses and overall long-term health and well-being. We also know nonadherence, when patients either don't take the medication in the correct dose or frequency or abandon treatment completely, is a persistent public health issue which can be mitigated with the

proper medical adherence strategy.

The CDC says 20 to 30 percent of new prescriptions are never filled at the pharmacy. Additionally, medication is not taken as prescribed 50 percent of the time. For patients prescribed medications for chronic diseases, after six months, the majority take less medication than prescribed or stop the medication altogether. Medication lapsing can be caused by members forgetting to refill, needing advice on side effects, feeling better and believing they don't need a refill, and not knowing how to fill their prescription or the medication is discontinued.

Working with one of the largest national healthcare providers, Avantive Solutions developed a proprietary management strategy to target members who needed assistance filling lapsed prescriptions, and increased medication adherence to promote healthier living. This member engagement strategy combined innovative outbound dialing technology, outreach strategies, and data analytics. The use of demographic and geographic data allowed for prioritization of leads and defined the best time to call in order to generate a high

“CVS estimates \$300 billion in unnecessary medical expenses could be saved each year in addition to saving tens of thousands of lives”

patient contact rate.

Avantive Solutions' consultants reviewed prescription adherence benefits with the healthcare member and discussed various program options to help the member stay updated on their critical medications. When a member was interested in renewing their prescription, the consultant reviewed options such as auto-renewal setup or mail order prescriptions before connecting them directly with their pharmacy.

Despite the value and ease of implementing a robust medication adherence program, the average star ratings have

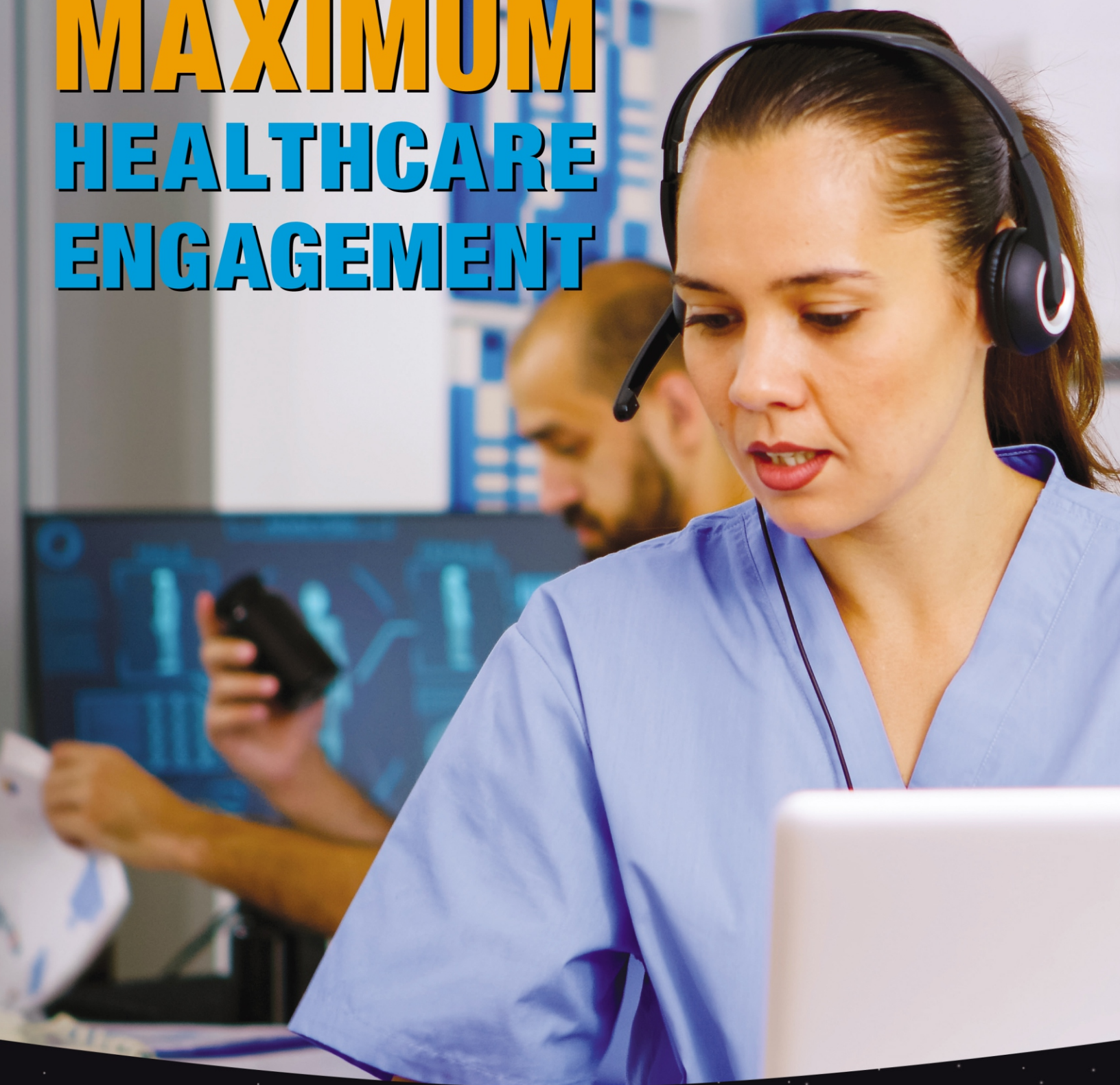
remained at about 3.4 out of 5.0 for the last four years, from 2018 to 2021. In addition to contributing to Medicare STARS improvement, a robust medication adherence program could save lives, reduce unneeded hospital readmittance and help members avoid unnecessary expenses and doctor visits. CVS estimates \$300 billion in unnecessary medical expenses could be saved each year in addition to saving tens of thousands of lives.

To learn more about Avantive Solutions and their innovations in rich call data and advanced machine learning, please visit www.avantivesolutions.com.

Frank Pettinato is the CEO of Avantive Solutions, a global technology and business services company specializing in digital transformation, innovative customer experience, strategic sales, and lead generation solutions. Frank is a purpose-driven executive with a diverse professional background and extensive experience showcasing global business management expertise that produce winning outcomes. Previously, Frank held a variety of leadership roles in the consumer goods, business services, and technology industries. ■



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