

Community-Wide Scheduling

Functionality Brief



The Community-Wide Scheduling functionality in MEDITECH's Scheduling and Referral Management solution acts as both a centralized appointment book and a decentralized one, facilitating patient scheduling and resource management at both single- and multi-facility healthcare organizations. The solution automatically tracks both patient and provider schedules, as well as the availability of necessary rooms, equipment, and resources, simplifying the process of searching for and scheduling available appointment slots.

Highlights:

- Streamline patient scheduling through multi-search criteria
- Minimize scheduling errors and missed appointments
- Automatically check for conflicts during scheduling
- Create appointment reminders and cancellation notices
- Improve scheduling efficiency and resource allocation
- Monitor and evaluate all scheduling activity

Community-Wide Scheduling Enables Schedulers to:

Instantly View Schedules in a Variety of Formats

From a centralized Scheduler Desktop, staff can view and book patient appointments, staff or non-patient meetings, and all of the resources required for those appointments. With six different desktop modes from which to choose, schedulers have at their fingertips all of the functionality necessary to book, edit, and view appointments; and to register or check-in patients, including the ability to:

- Work with a single patient's appointment history and upcoming appointments
- Perform a department-centric appointment search
- Search for appointments based on a specific resource's schedule in either a daily or weekly appointment book format
- Access details of a resource group's pending appointments
- Schedule a series of appointments without leaving the Scheduler Desktop
- Easily cancel or reschedule appointments, while maintaining original appointment criteria, including support for drag and drop
- Book new, or review existing, non-patient meetings and reservations.

Define Criteria to Locate the Most Appropriate Appointments

Community-Wide Scheduling automatically searches for the first available timeslot that matches scheduler-defined criteria. Schedulers have quick access to insurance, resource, and additional information about the selected appointment. Schedulers can use the default patient-centric search mode, or employ a Department, Appointment Book, Resource, Waitlist, or Meeting search. They can also adjust search parameters to meet their needs, with options to define the appointment type, earliest and latest start times and dates, and any specific days to exclude from the appointment search. Appointment series can be scheduled for recurring patients, and they can even schedule appointments at different sites.

Hospital-defined dictionaries streamline the scheduling process. Every event that can be scheduled is first defined in the Appointment Type Dictionary, which allows you to define all appointment criteria at once. For each type of appointment, you can:

- Pre-determine any necessary resources, appointment conflict rules, time parameters, and more
- Specify if appointment types need to be scheduled in a particular sequence or booked within a certain time frame
- Incorporate a user-defined buffer period between appointments.

Efficiently Manage Group Appointments

Community-Wide Scheduling includes a Group Scheduling Desktop from which schedulers can book and manage multiple patients for one or more group appointments at a time, such as group therapy. From this Desktop schedulers can:

- Move group members from one group to another
- Edit, cancel, or reschedule existing booked groups
- Copy single or series group appointments for future sessions
- View details of a booked group, including a group history audit trail
- Record co-payments collected from patient
- Enter group notes at any point during the group management process
- Document patient arrival or unexpected absence, or cancel an appointment
- Trigger charge and collection batches to the Billing Department upon appointment completion.

Minimize Scheduling Errors and Missed Appointments

Schedulers have real-time access to patient information across care settings, ensuring accuracy and providing a safeguard against scheduling errors. User-defined rules flag dangerous or unusual values, preventing schedulers from making harmful or costly errors. Conflict rules are hospital-defined, and can be based on the patient's gender, age, insurance, or other scheduled appointments. Schedulers also have access to view any existing conflicts with resource groups, appointment sets, and other dictionary-defined considerations. Alerts are also available for patients with frequent no-shows or bad debt.

To prevent missed appointments and promote timely follow-up care, schedulers can create templates for letters and messages, helping them better communicate with patients. Hospital-defined trigger events send letters and emails to the print queue, along with appointment-specific instructions. Examples include:

- Appointment reminders
- Cancellation notices
- Health maintenance reminders (mammograms, physical exams, etc.).

Improve Resource Allocation

Community-Wide Scheduling helps your staff manage personnel, rooms, and equipment through hospital-defined resource schedules. Staff can use a basic resource schedule template or create new schedules. In either case, the schedule will reflect any time or use restrictions for equipment and rooms, as well as the practices of specific physicians. When creating resource schedules, schedulers can:

- Link appointment types with specific days or resources
- Determine whether a resource can be overbooked and scheduled during unavailable times
- Use resource schedule templates to easily create similar schedules
- Define the appointment duration based on appointment type and/or resource
- Collect data to evaluate the efficiency and frequency of resource use
- Enable managers to plan and schedule staff meetings.

Manage Waitlists to Optimize Appointment Utilization

Patients awaiting appointments or requiring rescheduling can be added to a waitlist, from which staff can instantly schedule patients. This helps minimize or eliminate unproductive time due to cancellations. The waitlist enables schedulers to:

- Maintain and prioritize waitlisted appointment lists
- Track how long a patient remains on a waitlist
- Easily move patients from the waitlist to scheduled appointment times
- Record latest dates acceptable for patient appointments
- Prioritize lists of patients waiting for specific appointments.

Schedulers also benefit from patient compliancy tracking. For each patient, staff can access: the number of booked or attended appointments, whether the patient was a no-show or cancellation, and the patient check in/out times.

Report on Scheduling Activity

Community-Wide Scheduling features a comprehensive collection of standard reports, to provide your staff with a clear view of all scheduling activity from a variety of perspectives. Some of these reports include:

- Appointment lists, based on patient type, status, cancelled orders, etc.
- Statistical reports, sorted by resource, resource group, appointment type, department, and block utilization
- Resource schedules by individual resource or resource group
- Scheduling Activity Log.

Reap the Benefits of Integration

One of the key strengths of Community-Wide Scheduling is its system-wide integration. As the initial point of contact in the care process, Community-Wide Scheduling captures patient census, demographic, and visit-specific information, and makes it immediately available across the MEDITECH EHR for patient arrival. Other benefits of Community-Wide Scheduling integration include the ability to:

- Select and register a scheduled appointment
- Associate an existing referral with the appointment during scheduling, automatically decrementing units of service and warning against problems
- Automatically trigger charges for attended, no-show, and other appointment statuses and send to MEDITECH's Revenue Cycle solution
- Scan documents at the point of contact and submit to the patient's Echart
- Link appointment types to Order Management to automatically trigger specific orders when booking an appointment
- Send customer-defined screen query information, such as allergy and ICD-10 diagnosis information pertaining to Medical Necessity to Abstracting.

For more information about us, contact a MEDITECH Marketing Consultant.

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