



MARYLAND
Health Care
Commission



Maryland Health Care Commission
LEARNING NETWORK

Improving Access With a Digital Front Door Strategy

An MHCC Learning Network Event

JUNE 27, 2025



CME Disclosure, Accreditation and Designation Statement



► Accreditation Statement

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint providership of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society and The Maryland Health Care Commission. MedChi is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

► Designation Statement

MedChi designates this virtual meeting for a maximum of 1AMA PRA Category 1 Credits. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

► Disclosure Statement

The planners and reviewers for this activity have reported no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

Learning Objectives



- ▶ Understand why a digital front door is important to improve patient access, engagement, and overall experience
- ▶ Learn how telehealth plays a role in improving accessibility and convenience, reducing costs, and better management of chronic conditions
- ▶ Receive actionable tips to optimize use of patient portals to facilitate convenient and secure access to health information, enhance patient-provider communication, and improve overall patient engagement

AGENDA

- I. **Gene Ransom**, *MedChi*, Opening Remarks
- II. **Melanie Cavaliere**, *MHCC*, Overview of Maryland Landscape and MHCC Practice Transformation Activities
- III. **Alex Nason**, Director of IT Innovation, Frederick Health, Subject Matter Expert
- IV. **Christina Poffenberger**, Practice Manager, Otolaryngology, Frederick Health Medical Group, Practice Perspective
- V. Q&A





Gene Ransom, CEO

**MedChi, The Maryland
State Medical Society
(MedChi)**





Advancing Practice Transformation





Background



- ▶ Advancing practice transformation has been an MHCC strategic priority for more than a decade
- ▶ Maryland law tasked MHCC with implementation and management of the Maryland Multi-Payor PCMH Program from 2011 through 2016
- ▶ The MHCC, MedChi, and the University of Maryland School of Medicine Department of Family and Community Medicine partnered with the New Jersey Innovation Institute to complete practice transformation activities in Maryland as part of the federal Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative from 2015 to 2019
- ▶ The MHCC contributed to planning and policy development for the Maryland Primary Care

Advancing Practice Transformation

Program Overview



- ▶ In June 2021, MedChi CTO was competitively awarded a grant to complete transformation activities
- ▶ A crucial role of MedChi CTO is providing practice coaching on specific transformation topics and approaches, such as quality improvement and tools to help sequence and manage change essential to succeed in a value-based care model
- ▶ Program milestones:
 - Milestone 1 – Readiness Assessment
 - Milestone 2 – Workflow Redesign
 - Milestone 3 – Training
- ▶ Approximately 87 practices have completed program milestones to date
- ▶ Program ends June 30, 2025

Learning Network Events



- ▶ The MHCC convenes peer learning network events in collaboration with local and national health care leaders on topics such as health equity, advanced care delivery, and practice transformation
- ▶ More information on learning network events is available at:
mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/Pages/apc/apc_icd/apc_icd_learning_networks.aspx



Advanced Care Delivery Events



- Prior events available on the [Learning Network](#) include:



**INNOVATIVE CARE DELIVERY MODELS:
IMPLEMENTING CONTINUOUS QUALITY
IMPROVEMENT**

December 2024

Representatives from two physician practices and a subject matter expert discuss areas where care delivery and operations can be improved through data analysis, feedback, and goal setting with clear and measurable targets for improvement. Speakers give examples of how they test new approaches and interventions in their own practices, regularly track progress and adjust as needed to optimize outcomes.

[Watch Now](#)[Download Slides](#)



**OPTIMIZING THE ROLE OF PATIENT AND FAMILY
ADVISORY COUNCILS (PFACs)**

March 2025

Representatives from two physician practices and two subject matter experts discuss the role of Patient and Family Advisory Councils, overview their potential benefits, and highlight success stories and actionable strategies for effective implementation.

[Watch Now](#)[Download Slides](#)

New in 2025: *Beyond the Textbook: Real-World Medicine and Case Studies*



Beyond the Textbook: Real-World Medicine and Case Studies Webinars

Welcome to MHCC's Beyond the Textbook (BTT): Real-World Medicine and Case Studies Webinars. Advanced care delivery is focused on improving how care is coordinated, accessed, and delivered - especially for patients with complex, chronic, or serious health conditions. However, shifting from traditional fee-for-service may require providers to make adjustments to payment structures, technology, workflows, staffing, and organizational culture. The presentations that follow feature a distinguished group of innovative health care professionals discussing key opportunities and challenges in advanced care delivery.



Addressing Health Equity in Primary Care

Sarah Johnson Conway, MD

Interim SVP, *Office of Johns Hopkins Physicians*
Chief Medical Officer, *John Hopkins Clinical Alliance*
Assistant Professor of Medicine, *Johns Hopkins School of Medicine*

Dr. Conway discusses how primary care providers can promote health equity by addressing the social determinants of health, providing accessible and affordable care, and advocating for underserved populations.

Watch Now



Alex Nason,
Director of IT Innovation,
Frederick Health
Subject Matter Expert

Christina Poffenberger,
Practice Manager,
Otolaryngology, Frederick
Health Medical Group
Practice Perspective

Improving Access With a Digital Front Door Strategy

Speakers:

Alex Nason, Director of IT Innovation, Frederick Health
Christina Poffenberger, Practice Manager – Otolaryngology,
Frederick Health Medical Group



Objectives

- Understanding why a digital front door is important improve access and growth
- Lessons learned how telehealth plays a role in improving access
- Lessons learned of the 'Search to Schedule' journey
- The importance of your Patient Portal
- Considerations when thinking about your digital front door



Digital Front Door



Digital Front Door



Transaction-Ready Capabilities

Set of transactional capabilities that allow a consumer to digitally search for and access convenient low-acuity care



Consumer Access & Engagement

1 Acquisition & Growth

- ☐ Online physician finder
- ☐ Online listing management
- ☐ Online ratings and reviews
- ☐ Cost estimator
- ☐ Online scheduling
- ☐ Appointment reminders
- ☐ Virtual triage
- ☐ Digital wayfinding

2 Experience & Engagement

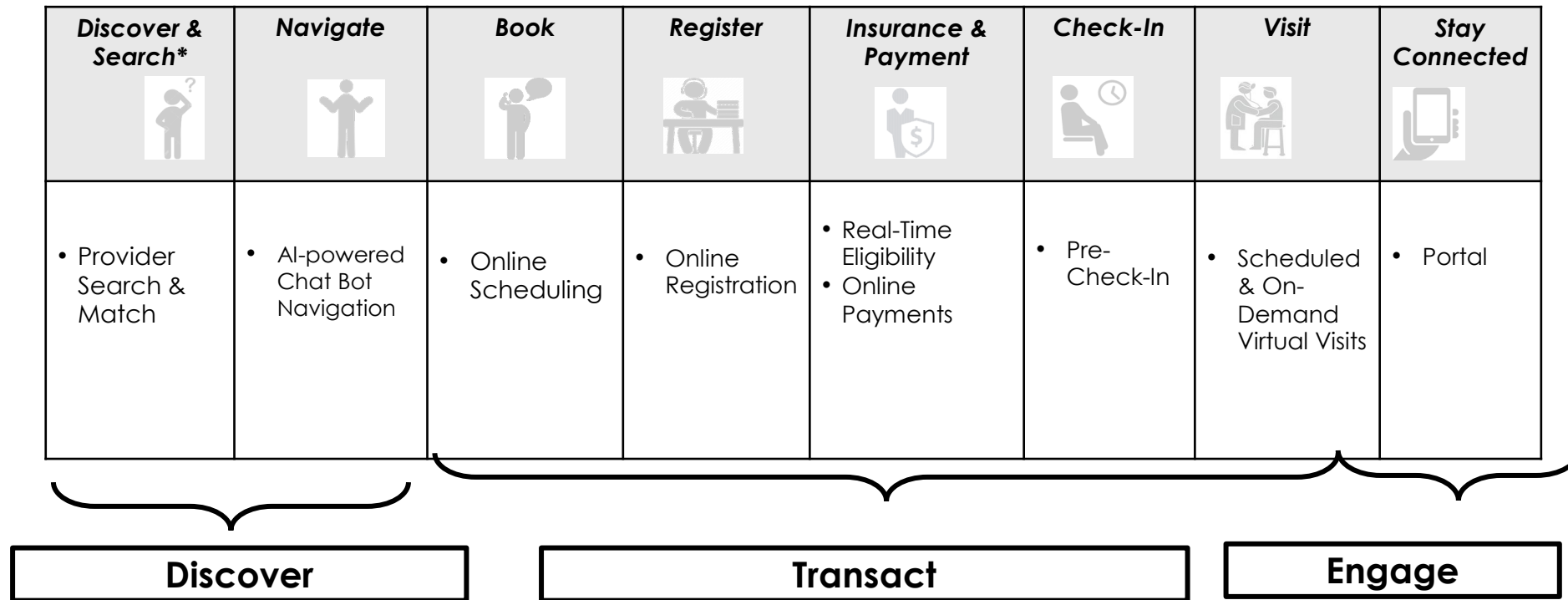
- ☐ Asynchronous telemedicine
- ☐ Synchronous telemedicine
- ☐ Provider home visits
- ☐ Pre-registration/check-in
- ☐ Integrated transportation
- ☐ Access center optimization

3 Enduring Relationships

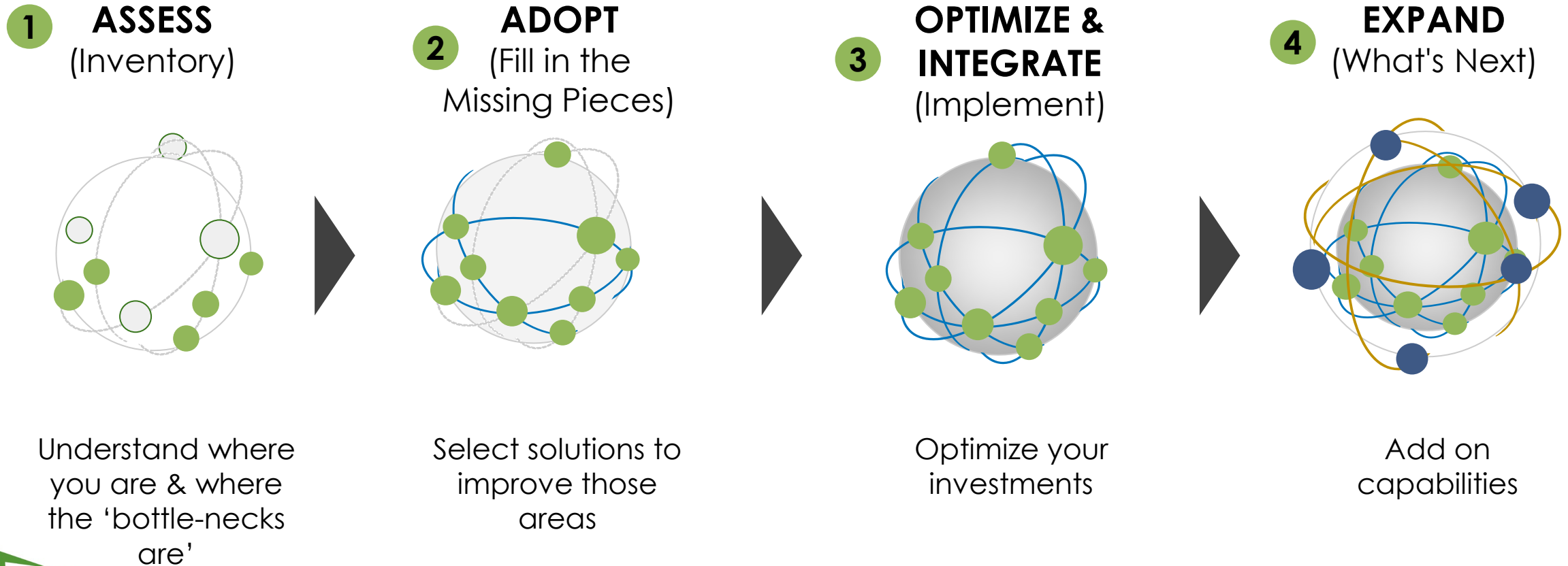
- ☐ Patient Portal (acute and ambulatory)
- ☐ Open Physician Notes
- ☐ Personal health record
- ☐ Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- ☐ Patient messaging
- ☐ Online Bill Pay (including patient payment plans)



Digitizing the Health Care Consumer Journey To Increase Access



How do we get there?



What's on a consumer's mind – Patient Journey



01

Searching symptoms online

02

Searching for a provider online

03

Searching for convenient care

04

Searching for cost & coverage

05

Looking to book an appointment online



Telehealth



Digital Front Door



Transaction-Ready Capabilities

Set of transactional capabilities that allow a consumer to digitally search for and access convenient low-acuity care

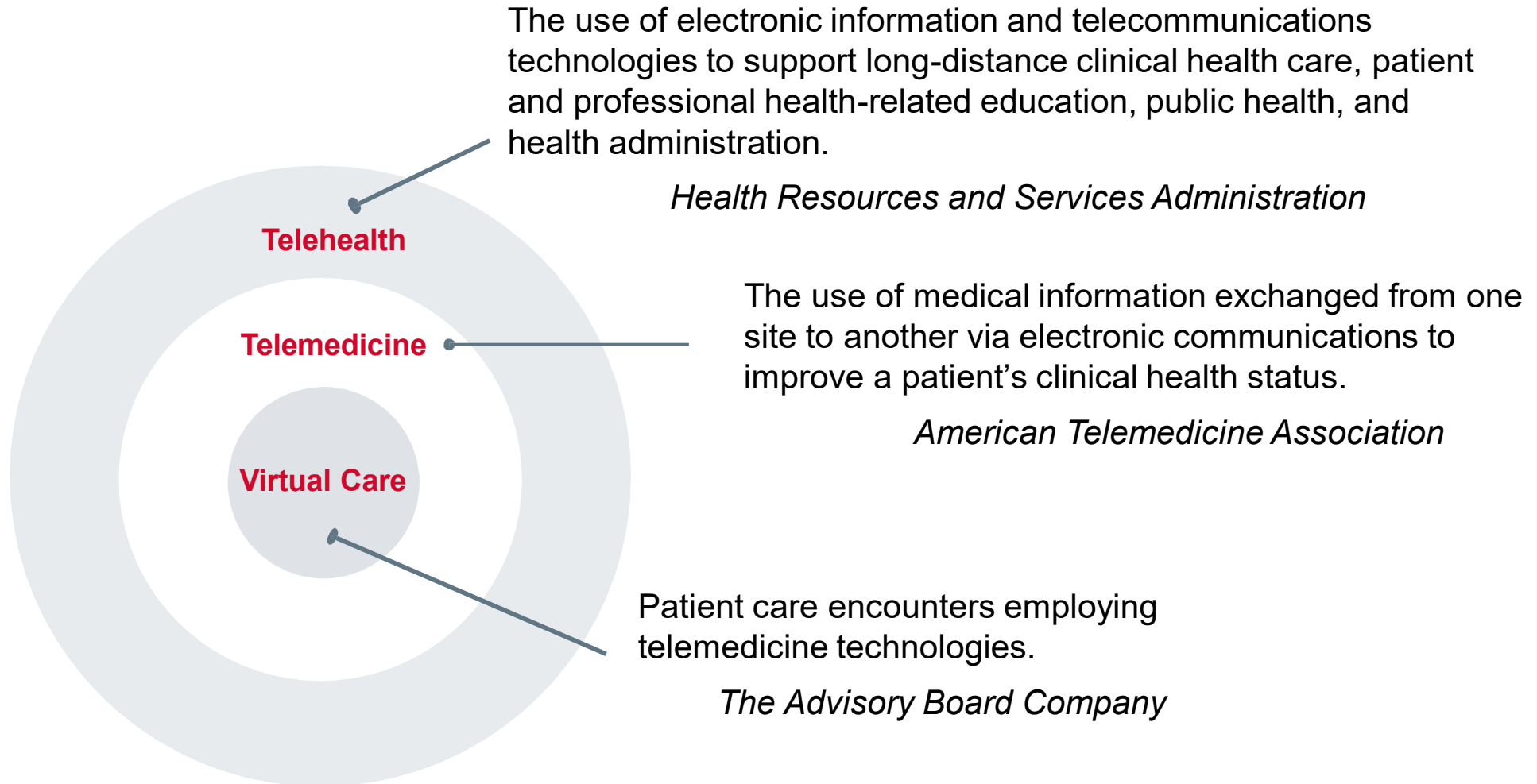


Search to
Schedule

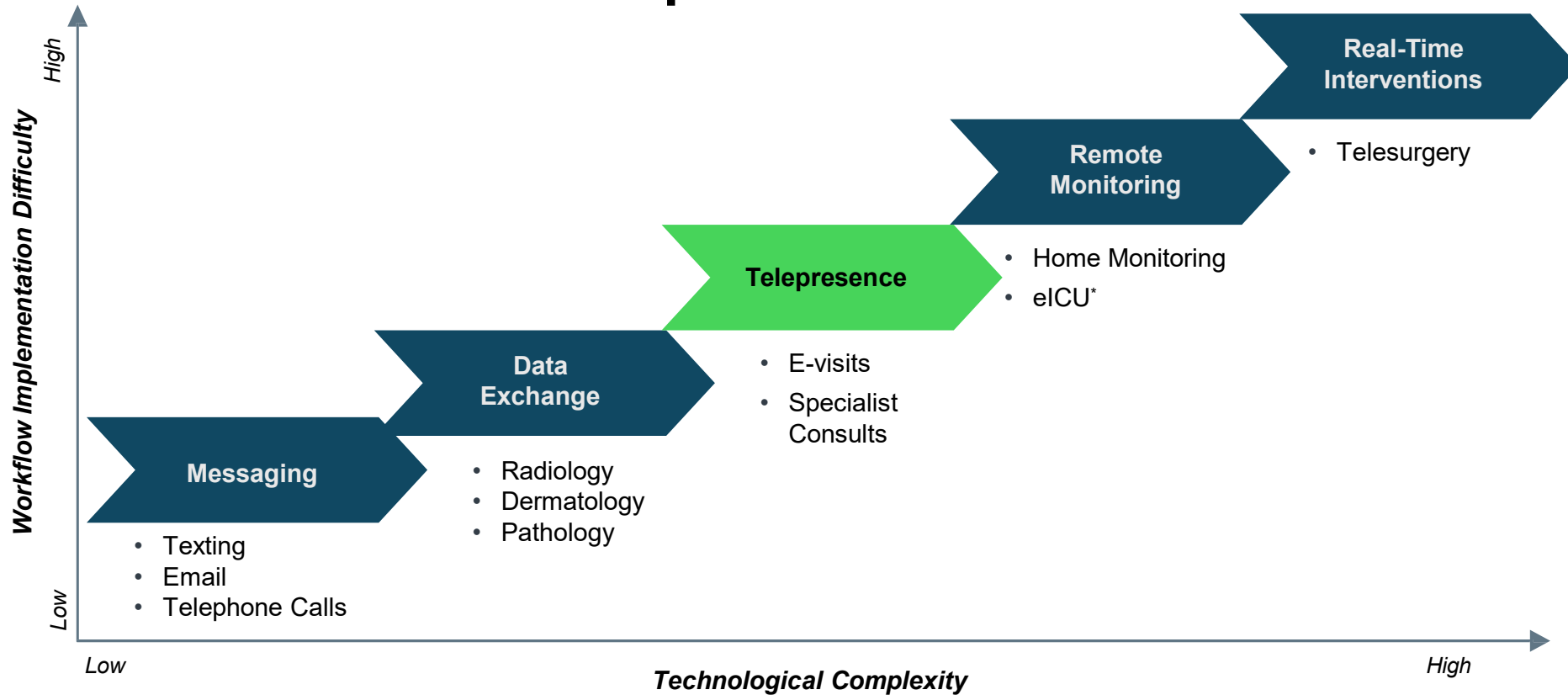
Triage, Navigate
& Treat



Terminology Clarification



The Telemedicine Spectrum



Technical Feasibility

Implementation Timeline

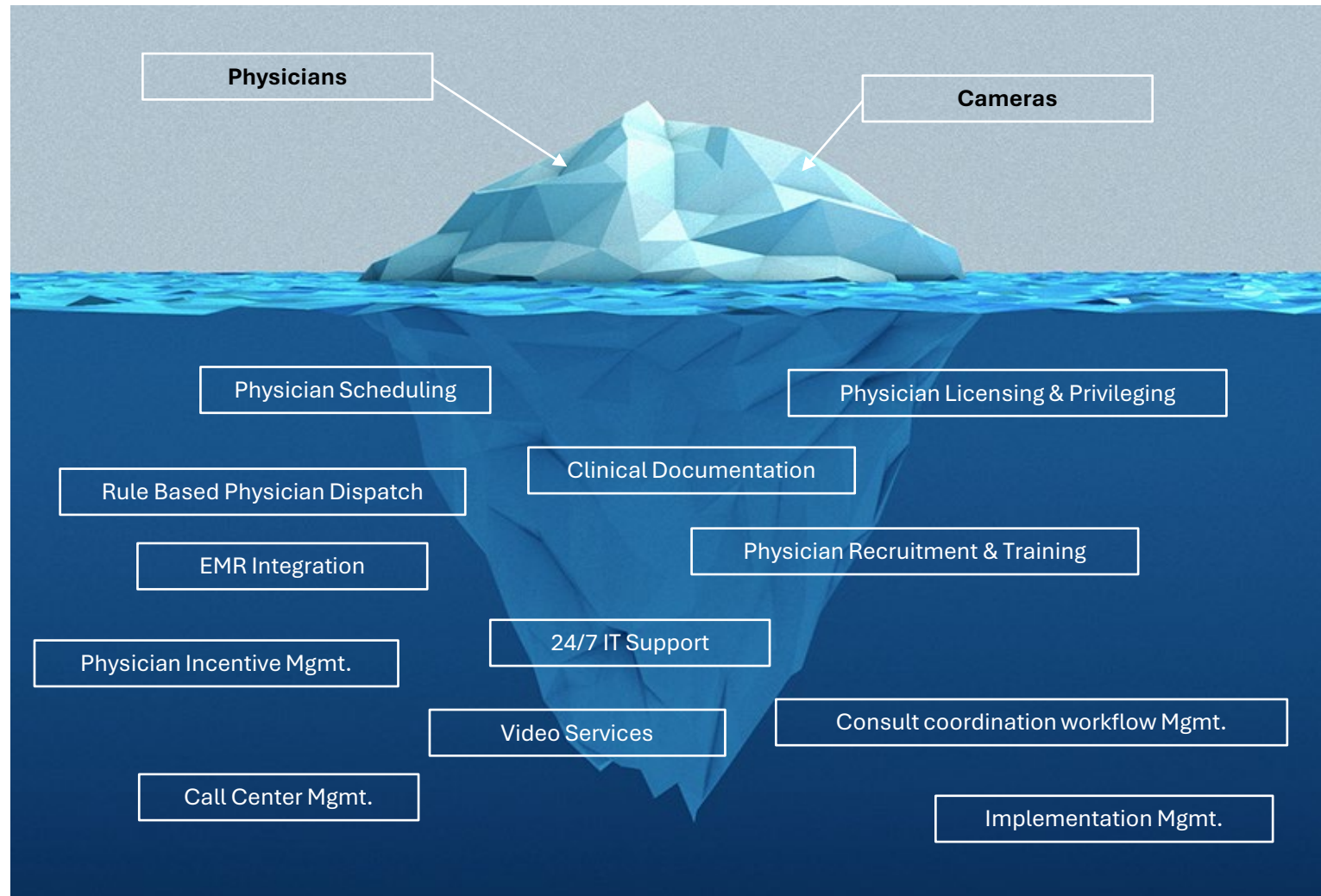
Financial Rewards and Costs

Real Time vs. Asynchronous

Legal and Regulatory Constraints

Delivery and Communication Strategy

The Hidden Obstacles to Success



Good Policy Goes Beyond Coverage Parity



Definition of
Telehealth



Standard of
Care



Patient-
Provider
Relationship



Payment
Parity



Telehealth Pros Advantages and Cons-Worries

Advantages

- Increased Accessibility
- Reduced Hospitalizations
- Cost-Effectiveness
- Improved Efficiency – time, space, schedule flexibility and reduce no-shows
- Avoiding Waiting Rooms
- Direct patients to appropriate levels of care
- Supports value-based care

Worries

- Technical Barriers
- Platform / Infrastructure Costs
- Limitations in Care
- Regulations and Insurance Restrictions
- Privacy Concerns
- Personal Limitations
- Encourage overuse and MORE visits
- Cyber / Privacy
- Fragmented / Siloed Care



Not all patients are benefiting from telehealth

- Ways to improve telehealth access

- Access to devices
- Help patients obtain devices
- Notify patients of subsidized broadband access
- Find creative alternatives
- Digital literacy
- Proactively reach out to underserved populations
- Broadband connection
 - Advocate for change at the local, state, and federal levels to fund equipment, connectivity, and reimbursement parity

425,000
Marylanders lack
access to high speed
internet



Frederick Health Ambulatory Telehealth Programs



Frederick Health Medical Group

Primary Care
Specialty Care



Urgent Care

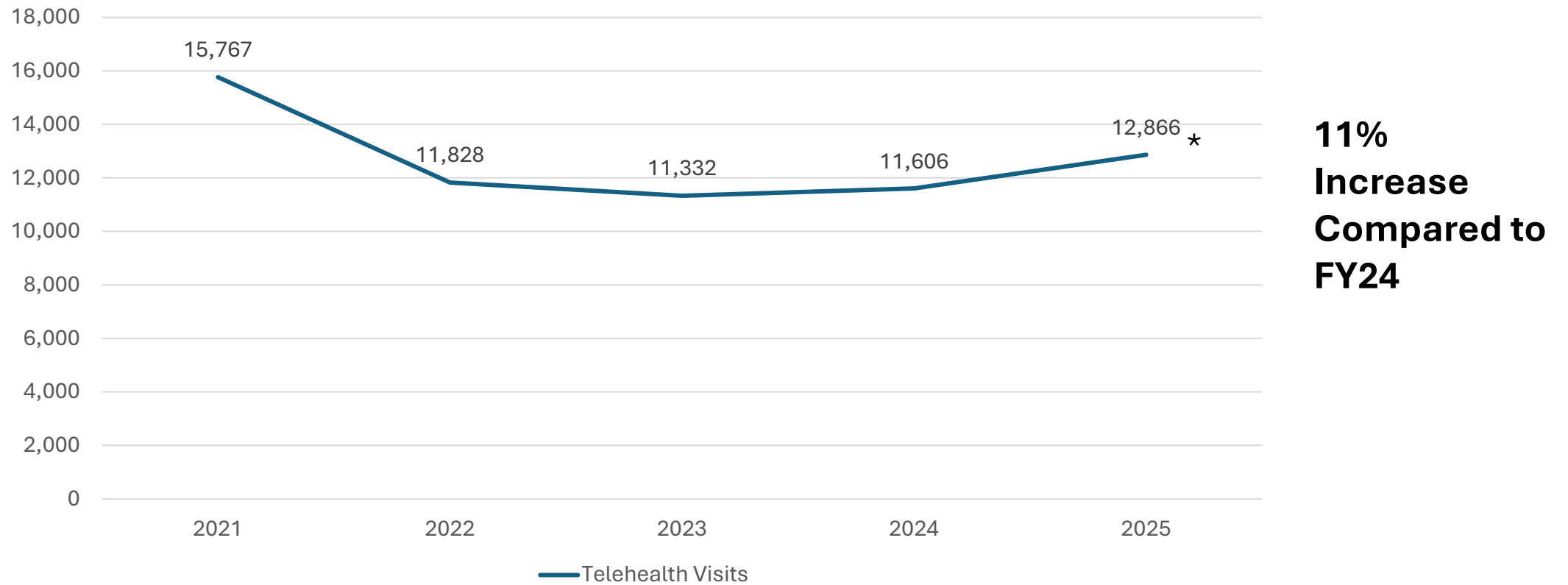
Low Acuity Telehealth

Frederick Health Medical Group Telehealth

- Scheduled ambulatory appointments
- Appointment types are defined as a 'telehealth' appointment type
- Providers must use an approved solution for video
- All clinical documentation is completed in the EMR
- These are billable encounters



Completed FHMG Ambulatory Telehealth Visits* (By FY)

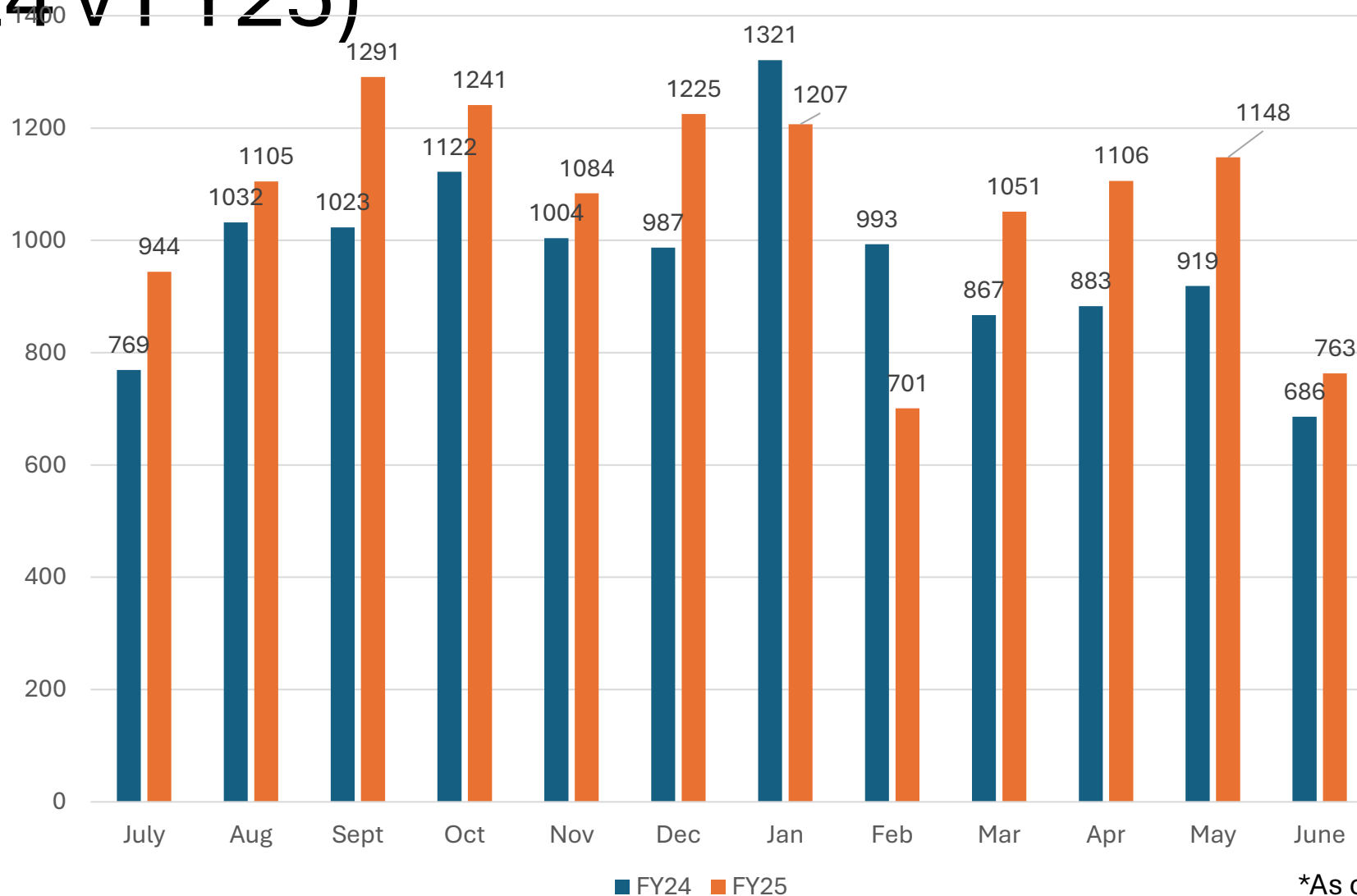


In FY24, Primary Care attributed to 52.6% of telehealth visits

*As of June 22, 2025



FHMG Ambulatory Telehealth Visits (FY24 v FY25)



*As of June 22, 2025



Urgent Care Telehealth

- Targeting low-acuity conditions
- Asynchronous and Synchronous Platform
 - Fabric Health Platform since 2018
- Providers are all FH Urgent Care Providers
- Support high utilization period (flu and cold season)
- Currently do not bill for service

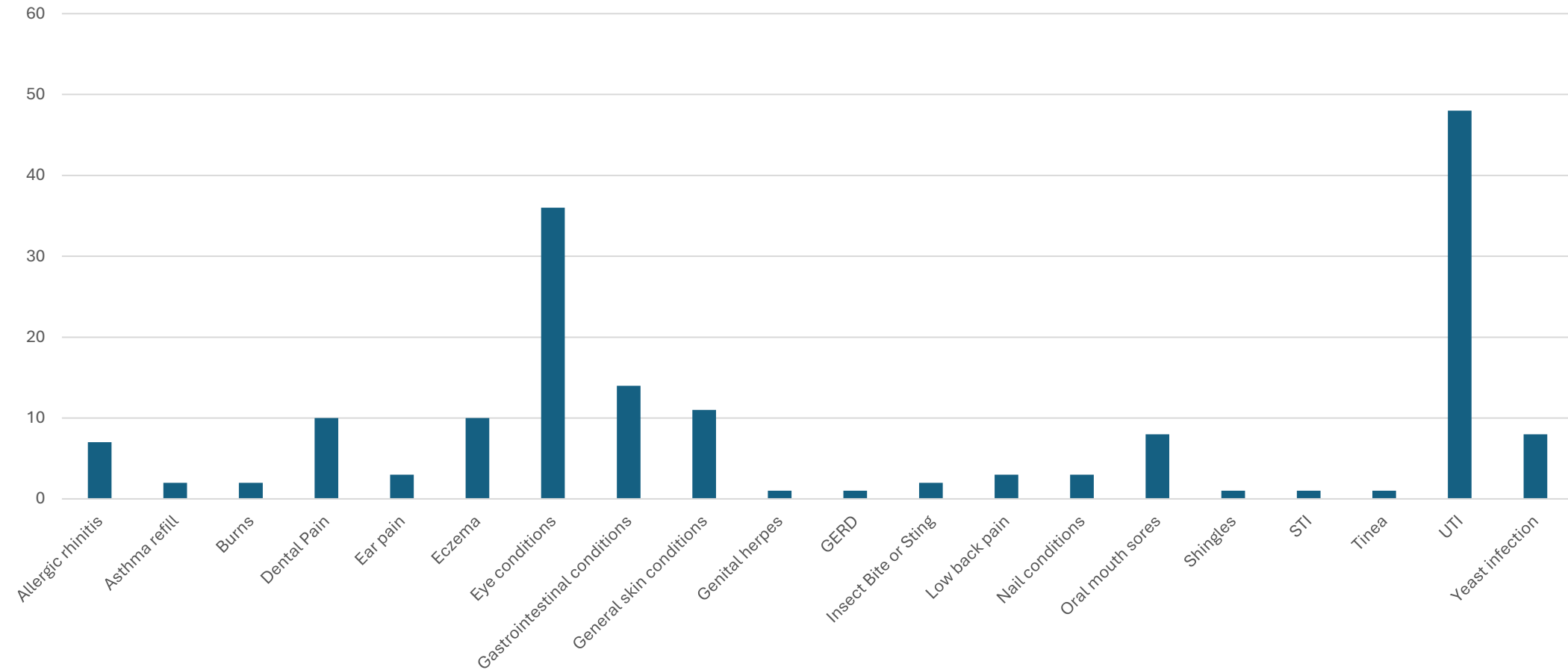


Since 2018

- Total Visits (10,260) – Arrived at the site, but did not necessarily complete the process
 - Completed (6,080) – Patient Completed all information including credit care payment
 - Referral (2,290) – platform determined that telehealth was not appropriate; patient encourage to visit urgent care or call their provider
 - Not Completed (1,887) – patient ‘walked away’ for the process
- Diagnosed (75%) – our provider had enough clinical information to provide a diagnosis and treatment plan
- Clinical Referral (25%)– our provider did not feel they had enough information to provide a diagnosis and treatment plan, so referred to visit urgent care or contact their PCP



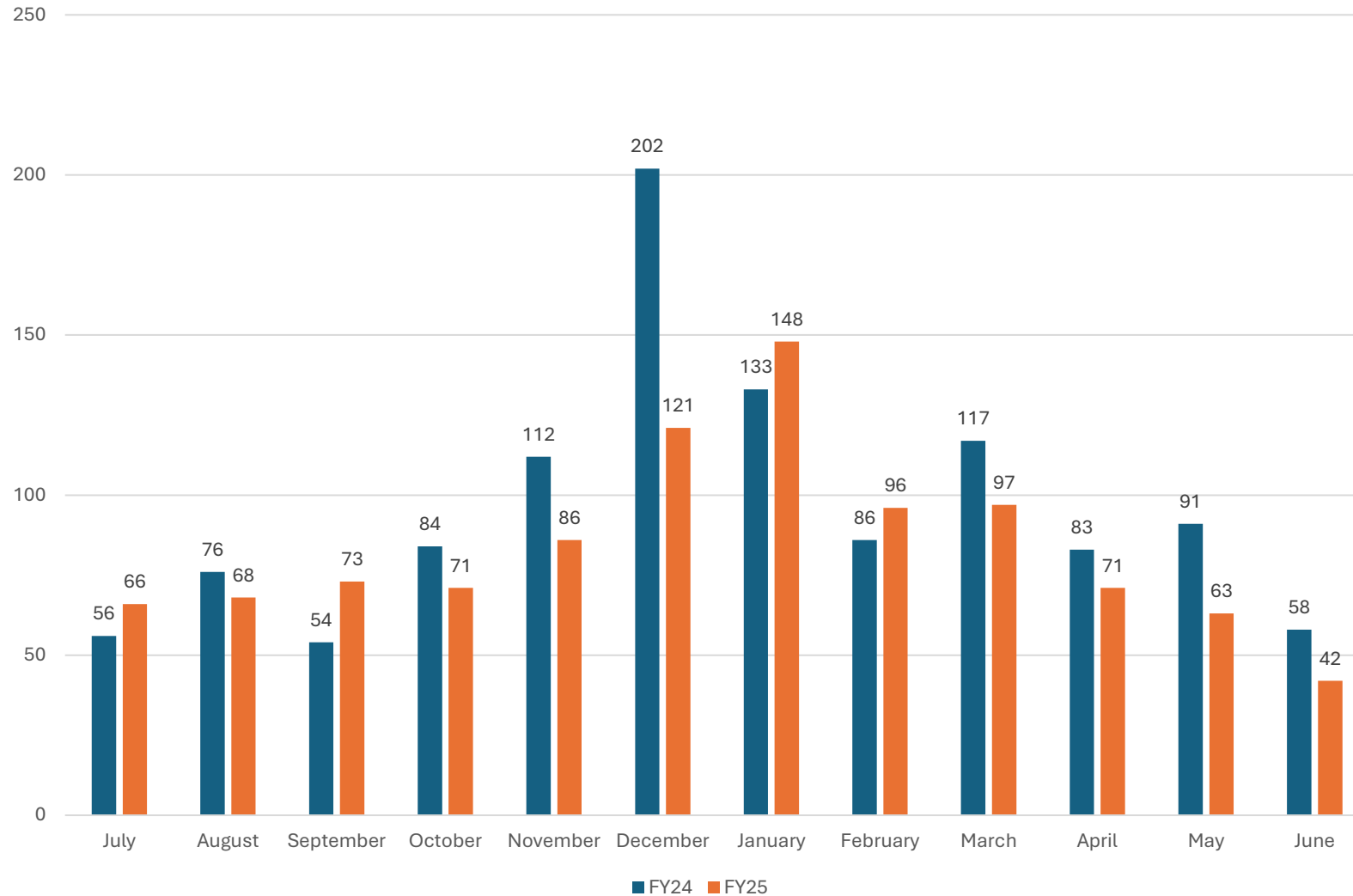
2025 Chief Complaint*



* Excluding URI



Urgent Care Telehealth Visits (FY24 v FY25)



**13% Decrease
Compared to
FY24**

*As of 6/22/25, 2025



Lessons Learned

- Organizations rushed to implement during the pandemic; its time to go back and review our processes
- Telehealth is not the primary delivery method of care
- Patients have embraced telehealth AS AN OPTION
- Patients are seeking ease of access
- Providers become more comfortable to more sessions they do
- Uncertainty with policy creates anxiety
- It is not for everybody, every condition or every type of consult.



Search to Schedule



Digital Front Door



Transaction-Ready Capabilities

Set of transactional capabilities that allow a consumer to digitally search for and access convenient low-acuity care



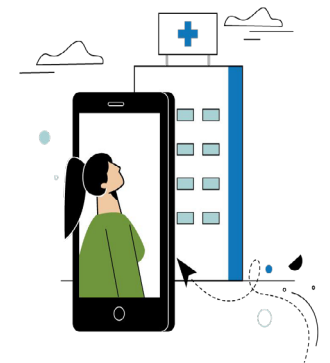
Why Does it Matter?

Consumer Expectations, Experience, and Convenience

- 97% of patients expect to be able to use online scheduling options to engage with their provider
- 60% of patients say they would switch healthcare providers if they could schedule an appointment more quickly
- 43% of appointments were scheduled after hours

Access Capacity and Growth

- 50% Lower no-show rate for appointments booked online compared to those scheduled by phone
- 64% of patients who book online are new patients



Consumer Driven Scheduling Goals

Integrated Workflow

New Patient Scheduling

**Consumer
Friendly & Accessible**

Network Level

Fully White-Labeled

Consistent Patient Experience

Search to Schedule - Scope



Build a consumer
first experience



Dynamic and
easily updated



Patient friendly
display of
provider
information to the
public



Advanced
provider search
and online
scheduling



Web and mobile
friendly

Approach



Provider Search (Profiles)

- Partnership with Marketing
- Clinical Taxonomy per Provider
- Provider Biography
- Employee Indicator



Integrated Online Scheduling

- Partnership with Frederick Health Medical Group

How Can We Help?

**Careers****Find A
Provider****Find A
Location****Patient
Portal**

Your Health Journey Starts Here

Welcome to Frederick Health

Frederick Health's mission is to positively impact the well-being of every individual.

Welcome to Frederick Health! I can help you
Find a Provider and answer other questions
you may have.



Find a Provider

Enter in a physician's name or a particular symptom/condition to find the care that's right for you.

Search

Find a Provider



Enter in a physician's name or a particular symptom/condition to find the care that's right for you.

knee injury

x

Search

13 providers found

☐ Show Map

Sort By

Recommended

Filter By

Distance within

Any miles

Of

Enter address, city, or zip code

Apply

Specialty

Any

Gender

☐

Male

☐

Female

Languages

Any

Provider Availability

Accepting New Patients

☒

More Filters

Frederick Health Provider

☒

Frederick Integrated Health Network

☒

Jennifer Cavanagh, MD

Orthopedics

Frederick Health Provider

Frederick Integrated Health Network

Accepts New Patients

Call (301) 663-9573

Frederick Health Medical Group - Orthopedics & Sports Medicine
501 West 7th St, Frederick, MD 21701



Alan Dombrosky, PAC

Orthopedics

Frederick Health Provider

Frederick Integrated Health Network

Accepts New Patients

Call (301) 663-9573

Frederick Health Medical Group - Orthopedics & Sports Medicine
501 West 7th St, Frederick, MD 21701



Therlinsie Fleurizard, MD

Orthopedics

Frederick Health Provider

Frederick Integrated Health Network

Accepts New Patients

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Frederick Health Medical Group - Orthopedics & Sports Medicine
501 West 7th St, Frederick, MD 21701



Jennifer Gannon, PA-C

Orthopedics





Jennifer Cavanagh, MD

Orthopedics

Frederick Health Provider

Frederick Integrated Health Network

Accepts New Patients

About Expertise

About Jennifer Cavanagh, MD

Dr. Cavanagh is honored to serve the community by providing top-quality, compassionate care for General Orthopedic Surgery. She specializes in nonoperative and operative treatment of muscles, bones, and joints in both adult and pediatric patients. Dr. Cavanagh is fellowship-trained in Shoulder and Elbow Surgery, and has a subspecialty focus in shoulder arthritis, shoulder replacements, shoulder injuries, and arthroscopic shoulder repairs. Outside of work, you can find her going on outdoor adventures with her 3 children of the same age, exploring the bountiful farmer's markets, and just enjoying this wonderful life.

Appointments [Request an Appointment](#)

Appointments [Call \(301\) 663-9573](#)

Specialty [Orthopedics](#)

Gender [Female](#)

Languages [English](#)

[Call \(301\) 663-9573](#)

Locations Jennifer Cavanagh, MD practices at



1. Frederick Health Medical Group - Orthopedics & Sports Medicine

501 West 7th St
Frederick, MD 21701

Phone: [\(301\) 663-9573](#)
Fax: [\(240\) 566-7840](#)



Click to Schedule

[← Back to Results](#)

[Share](#) [Print](#)



B. Shanes, MD
Family Medicine

Frederick Health Provider

Frederick Integrated Health Network

Accepts New Patients

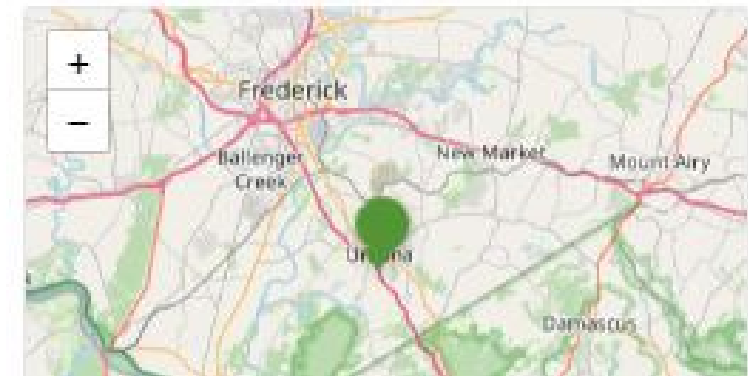
[About](#) [Expertise](#)

About B. Shanes, MD

Call (240) 215-6310

[Book Appointment](#)

Locations B. Shanes, MD practices at



EXAMPLE

Find Care & Schedule

No matter what c

internal medicine

Search

75 providers found ☐ Show Map

Sort by

Recommended

Show appointment availability

Compare provider appointment availability in results. Availability changes depending on the patient and visit type.

 See Availability

Filter by

[Clear Filters](#)

Distance within

Any miles

Of

Enter address, city, or zip

To view accurate appointment availability, please answer the following

Information inputted here will affect appointment availability

Have you had an appointment with one of our providers in the last 3 years?

Yes

No

What type of appointment do you need?

Select a visit type...

New Patient Visit

Sick Visit



< Back to Search

Book Appointment



time left to
book



B. Shanes, MD
Family Medicine

Frederick Health Provider

Frederick Integrated Health Network

Accepts New Patients

Wednesday, August 16th, 2023

8:00 AM

9:30 AM

1:00 PM

3:30 PM

Thursday, August 17th, 2023

8:00 AM

9:30 AM

10:00 AM

10:30 AM

11:30 AM

1:00 PM

2:30 PM

3:00 PM

3:30 PM

5:00 PM

Friday, August 18th, 2023

8:00 AM

3:30 PM

Back

Next



[Back to Search](#)

Book Appointment

06:50
time left to
book

- 1 Patient Status
- 2 Appointment Details
- 3 Personal Information
- 4 Reason For Visit
- 5 Insurance
- 6 Review
- 7 Complete Booking

Please enter patient's personal information.

First Name
John *

Last Name
Lennon *

Date of Birth
11 / 11 / 1950 *

Male

Female

Nonbinary

Address
123 Elm St. *

Thursday, August 17, 2023 at 5:00 pm

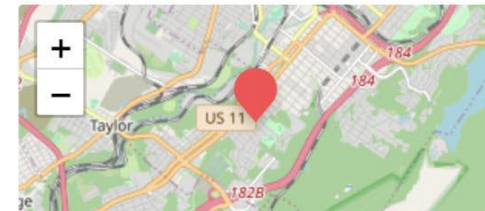


B. Shanes, MD
Family Medicine

Frederick Health Provider

Frederick Integrated Health Network

Accepts New Patients



Back

Next



Book Appointment

- 1 Patient Status
- 2 Appointment Details
- 3 Personal Information
- 4 Reason For Visit
- 5 Insurance
- 6 Review
- 7 Complete Booking

✓ Your Appointment Has Been Booked!

📅 Thursday, August 17, 2023 at 5:00 pm

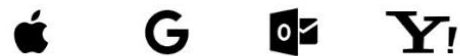


B. Shanes, MD
Family Medicine

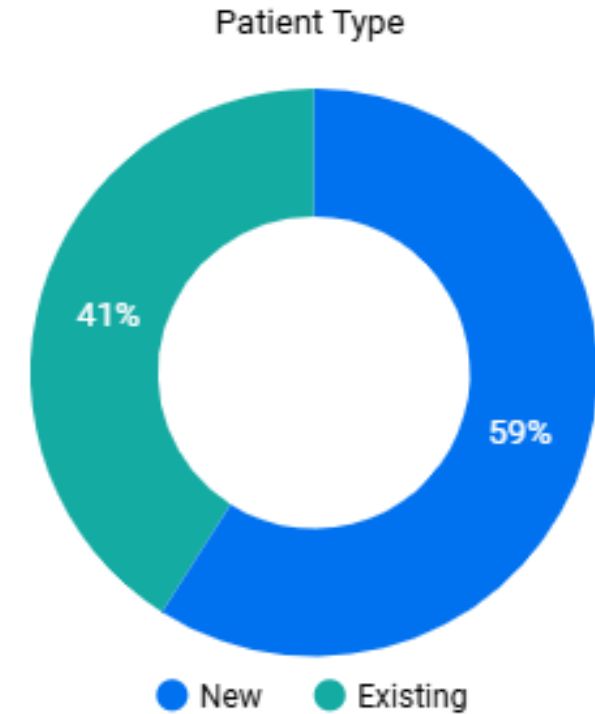
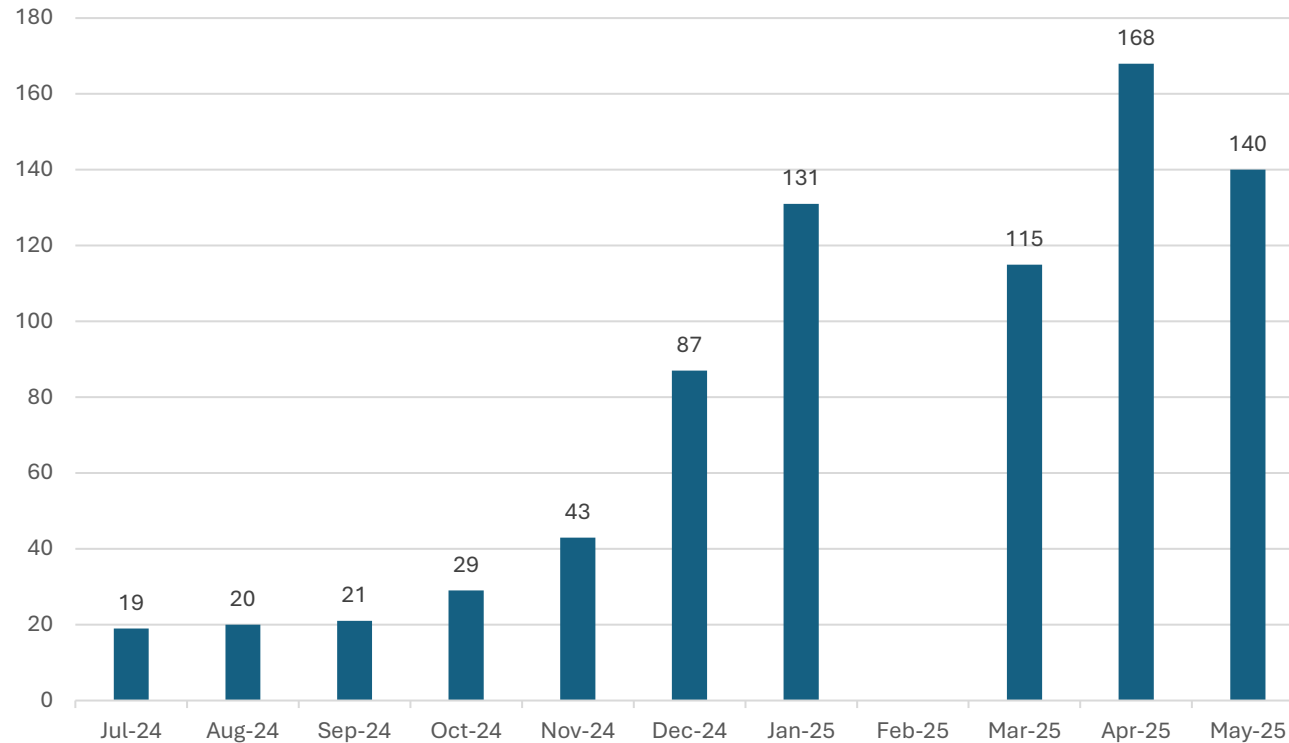
Frederick Health Provider
Frederick Integrated Health Network
Accepts New Patients



Click to add to your calendar



Online Web Scheduling Results (July 2024 –May 2025)

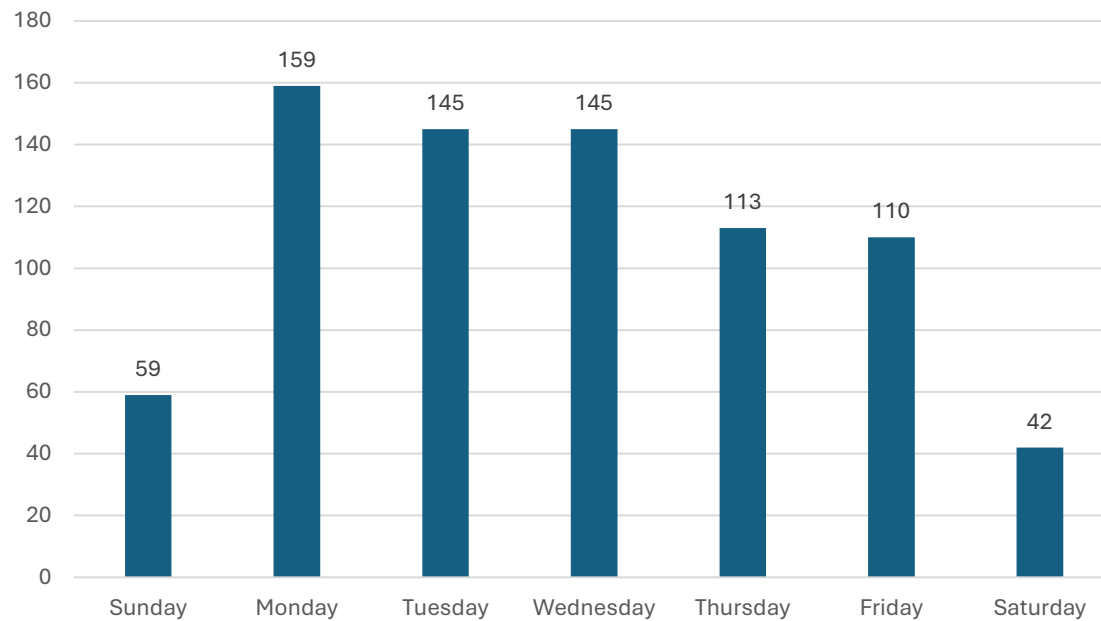


- **8744 Sessions**
- **773 Appointments**
- **9 % Conversion**

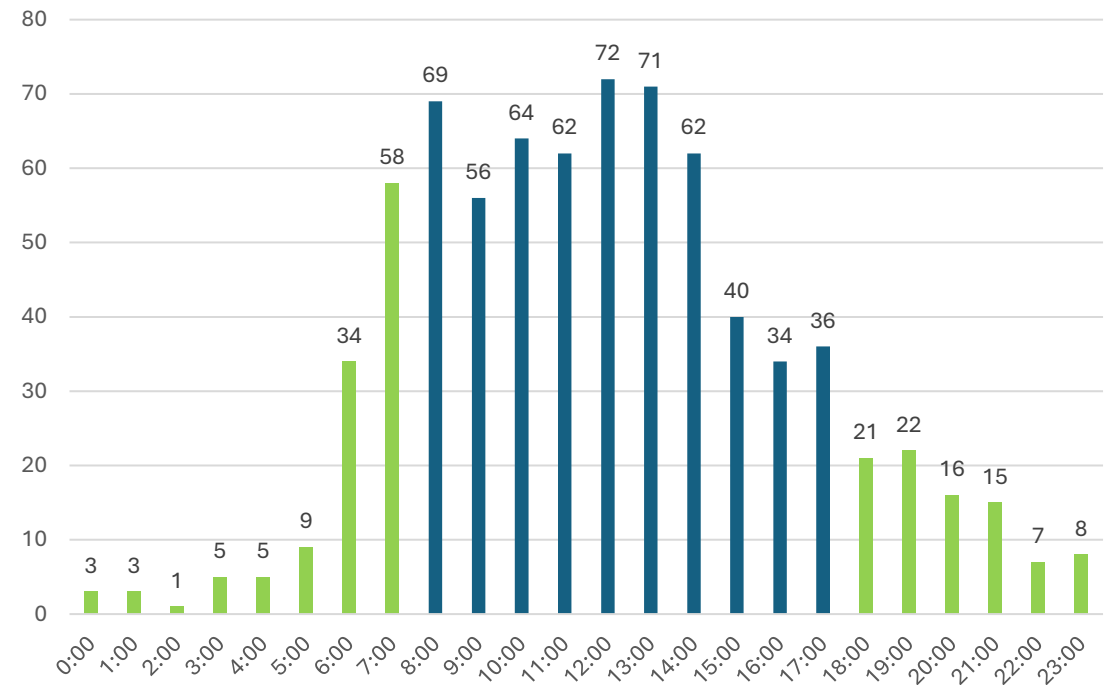


Day / Time Insight

Appointments by Day of the Week



Appointments By Hour of Day



39.2% Scheduled After Hours



Specialty Appointment Challenges

- Too many one-off appointment types
- Need staff to review these appointments to make sure they are slotted correctly
- Insurance and Referrals information is critical
- More complexity in surgical area (e.g. Ortho - some do joints, some do just shoulders and hips, etc.)



Lessons Learned

- Started Slow (3 Providers); Grew to 45
- Very Conservative in Our Approach
- Integration Back to the EMR Was / Is a Challenge
- Patient Matching Can Be Complicated
- Patients LOVE this Ability
- Patients Think About Their Care 24/7/365



Patient Portal

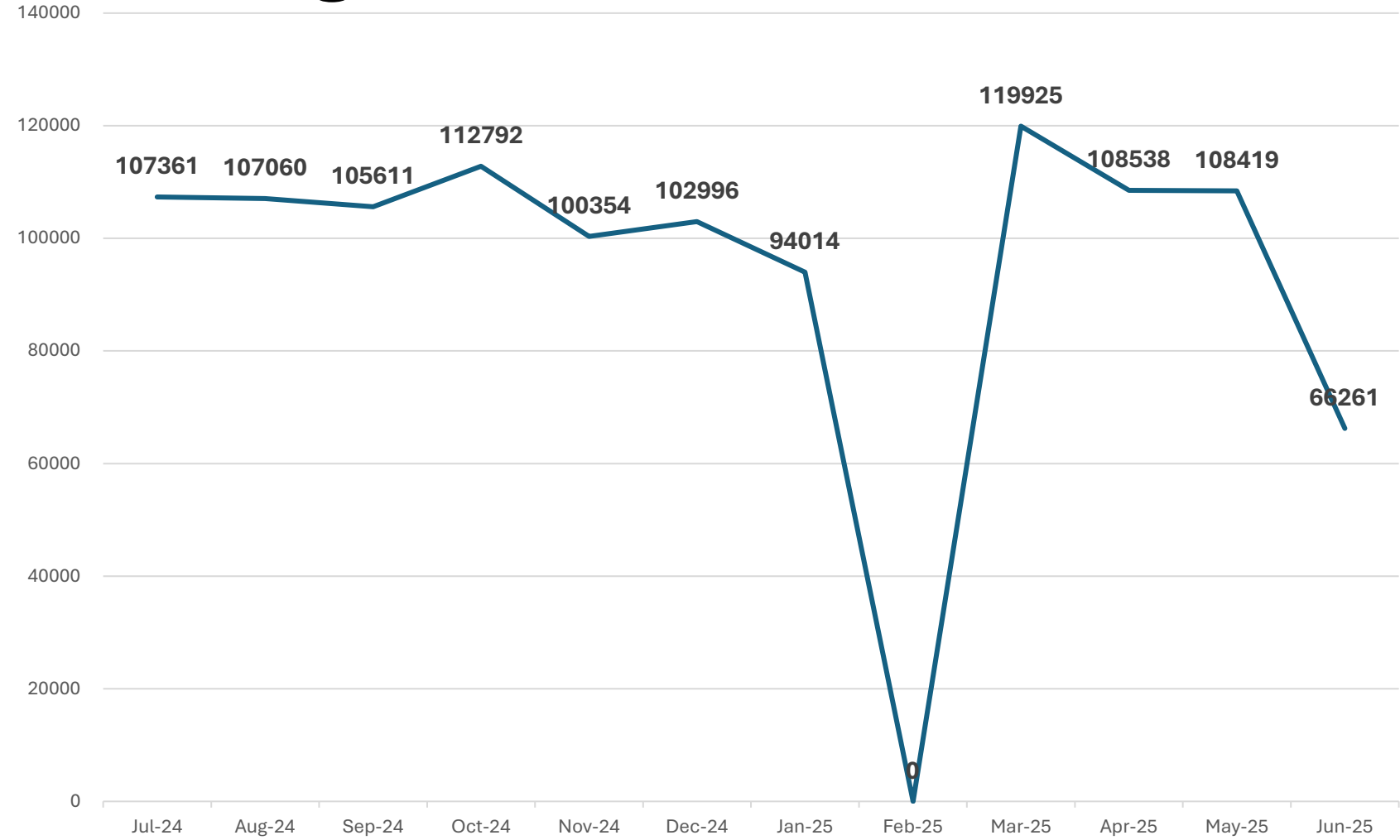


Portal & Patient Engagement

- **INFORM** - Sharing knowledge between patients and providers about managing health conditions
- **ENGAGE** - Being actively involved in decision-making and health management
- **EMPOWER** - Empowering patients to participate fully in their care results in better clinical outcomes, greater patient satisfaction, and lower costs.



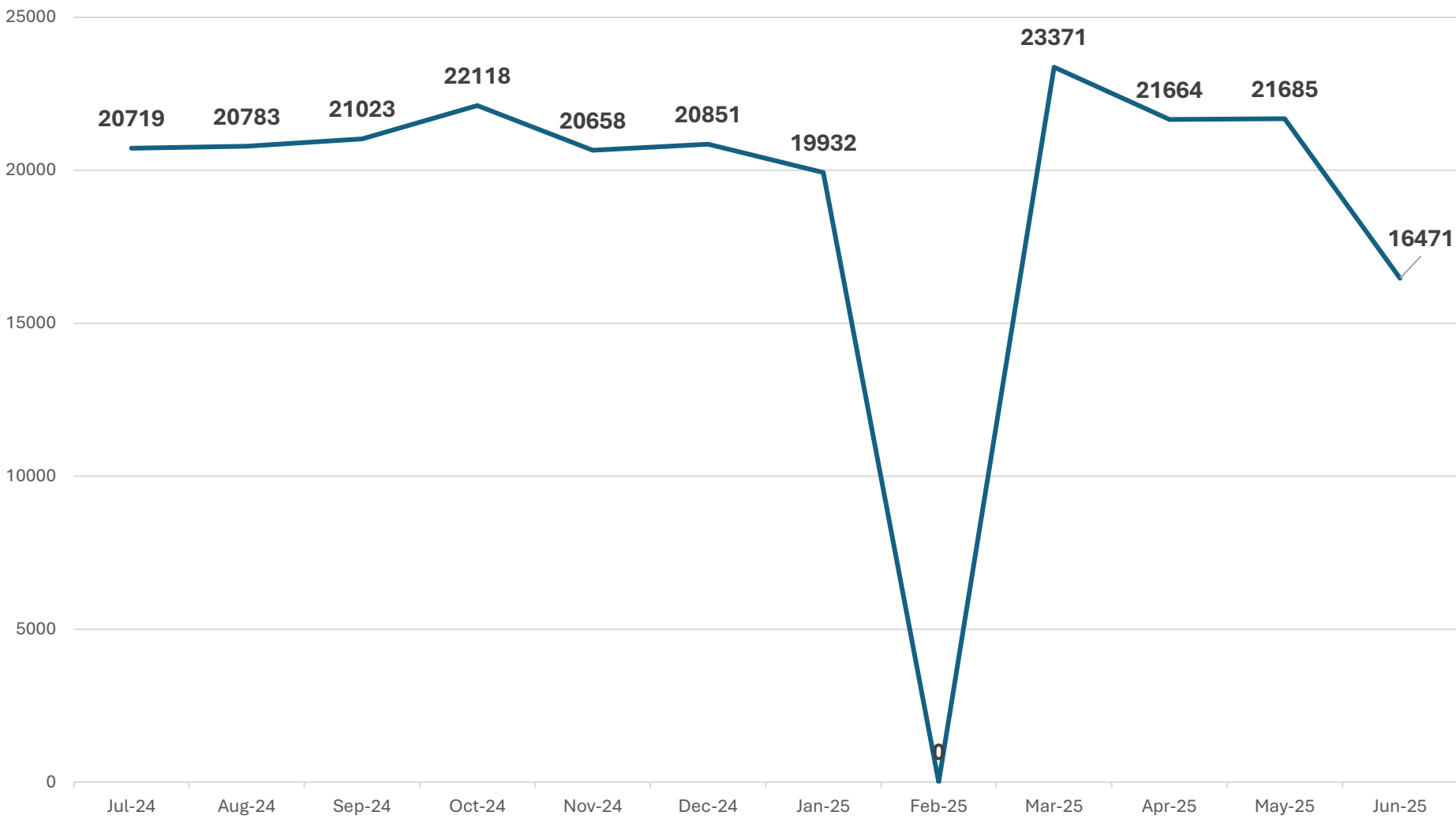
Total Portal Sign on



• As of June 15, 2025



Total Unique Logins



• As of June 15, 2025



Final Thoughts

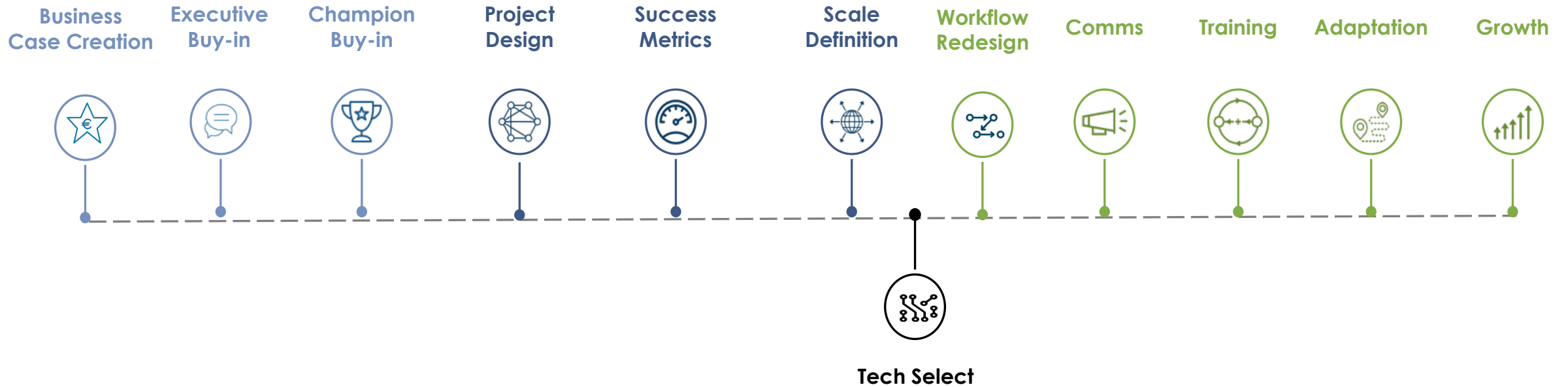


The future of healthcare is omnichannel, not digital- first

- The next chapter of healthcare delivery will not treat virtual health as a separate system, but as a part of a broader omnichannel healthcare delivery model that balances virtual and in-person care, thus providing the best patient experience.
- Many healthcare providers who went through a digitalization "big bang", underestimating the value of patient experience management, now must figure out how to provide a connected experience across each online and offline channel.



Speed - Execution is not about tech select



Thank You





THANK YOU



Melanie Cavaliere

Chief, Innovative Care Delivery

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mhcc.maryland.gov