

Optimizing Patient Throughput Through Strategic Staffing, Scheduling & Layout

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» BACKGROUND



Retina Consultants of Carolina [RCC] is a six physician, five location Retina-Ophthalmology practice in Northwestern South Carolina. Since its founding in 1994, RCC has experienced steady growth – both in patient volume and clinical staff.

As RCC contemplated its continued growth trajectory, leadership questioned whether a new, larger clinic space might be necessary. However, before incurring this expense, RCC sought to review clinic operations to identify whether opportunities existed to optimize throughput and performance within its existing space.



» THE SOLUTION

RCC engaged Knowledge Capital Group [KCG] to facilitate a clinic optimization assessment, including an extensive evaluation of staff and physician workflows, roles, responsibilities, and supportive technology. Leveraging the findings of this assessment, KCG then developed and implemented a comprehensive plan to mitigate workflow constraints, drive clinic throughput, and optimize patient and provider experience. This plan focused on three key areas:

- CLINIC LAYOUT:** Although many of RCC's patients suffered from impaired vision and mobility, the clinic's physical layout required that patients cycle through multiple screening, exam, imaging, and treatment rooms during a standard clinic visit. To drive throughput and eliminate unnecessary movement of these patients, KCG worked with leadership to reconfigure the existing clinic layout – converting underutilized clinical and administrative workspaces into multi-purpose rooms. Not only did this enable the practice to improve patient experience, it also allowed RCC to realize greater operational efficiencies, clinic capacity and revenue potential – leveraging space strategically to streamline clinical delivery processes.
- SCHEDULING TEMPLATES:** Even with enhancements in clinical space utilization, RCC's scheduling templates prevented the practice from operating with maximum efficiency. KCG redesigned & implemented customized, physician-centric scheduling templates that supported nuances in physician practice style, patient characteristics, acuity, encounter type and procedure-based workflows. The result was a scheduling template that created a more appropriate and consistent length of appointment, reduced wait times and increased daily clinic capacity.
- STRATEGIC STAFFING:** Historically, clinic staff at RCC were organized by clinical modality. As a result, a single patient appointment might require touch points with multiple technicians – creating inefficient handoffs throughout the visit cycle. To realize the full potential of the redesigned clinic space and scheduling templates, KCG implemented a strategic staffing model that re-organized ophthalmic technicians into clinical 'pods.' In this new model, all technicians completed training across all clinical modalities to ensure competence and coverage at all times, while driving operational efficiencies.

» THE IMPACT

"The work which KCG helped lead continues to pay dividends for our practice. Our clinic throughput in our Greenville office is nearly 60 patients, per physician, per day while exceeding our quality outcome and patient satisfaction goals. We continue to seek counsel from KCG and would wholeheartedly recommend any physician group to work with KCG."

– Dr. Michael Antworth, Managing Partner
Retina Consultants of Carolina



Knowledge Capital Group [KCG] is the management consulting arm of healthcare financial advisory firm – Ponder & Co. Specializing in healthcare strategy and organizational transformation, we help clients convert issues into opportunities, inefficient processes into best practices, and marginal outcomes into sustainable results.