



# Waiting Rooms Will Disappear

VERSION 1

*Last Updated: Aug. 17, 2020. Updox's Practice Transformation Series provides evidence and expert opinion on the future of healthcare and shares best practices on how to transform your practice to deliver the best in-person and virtual care. Waiting rooms are a source of frustration for patients. The 2019 Qualtrics Industry Pain Index reported that unpleasant waiting rooms were the single-most cited reason that patients said they would stop returning to a healthcare facility, whether it's a primary care physician office, emergency room or urgent care facility.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, confidence in the care provider and perceived quality of care have been shown to be negatively associated with longer wait times.<sup>1</sup> This guide will assist your practice with the creation of a virtual waiting room to enhance patient experience and boost office productivity. To learn more, visit [updox.com](https://www.updox.com).*

# Get Started

Set your practice up for long-term success by implementing these essential steps to get started.

1

## Identify Practice Champions

Selecting one or more individuals to champion the implementation of your virtual waiting room is critical for long-term success. The practice champion(s) will:

- Determine and evaluate goals
- Evaluate and pilot technology
- Develop workflows
- Lead trainings
- Implement a patient communication plan

2

## Review Federal and State Laws and Regulations

It is important to review federal and state laws and regulations for documentation and communication requirements.

Requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Consent
- Liability
- Licensure
- Prescribing
- Privacy and Security
- Reimbursement

3

## Familiarize Yourself with Updox Resources

Updox has resources available to ensure your practice's success.

- [Updox Website:](https://www.updox.com)  
updox.com
- [Updox Community:](#)  
Our online customer community allows users to ask questions and view best practices on using Updox products. We also have an extensive Learning Center to get started
- [Updox Support:](#)  
Our support team is available live via chat or by email to assist

# Convert to Electronic Forms

Use this checklist to inventory paperwork and identify other items collected from patients in a waiting room that can be converted to electronic forms.

## Administrative Forms

- New patient information
- HIPAA release
- Financial policy acknowledgment
- Records release
- FMLA certification
- Telehealth consent

## Clinical Forms

- Screenings and assessments (See [Table 1](#))
- COVID-19 screening (See [Sample Script](#))
- Past medical history
- Medication history
- Medication refill request

## Other Items

- Driver's license
- Insurance
- Health logs  
(ex. Blood glucose, blood pressure, weight, and others)
- Medication lists

**TABLE 1:** Screening and Assessment Codes and Examples<sup>3</sup>

CODE	PURPOSE	EXAMPLES
<b>96110</b>	Childhood instrument-based screening for failure to develop and/or achieve skills according to the expected time frame (e.g., expressive and receptive language, motor skills)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ages and Stages Questionnaires Third Edition</li> <li>• Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status</li> <li>• Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers Revised with Follow-Up</li> </ul>
<b>96127</b>	Instrument-based assessment of potential emotional and/or behavioral problems (e.g. depression, attention-deficit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient Health Questionnaire-9</li> <li>• Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (administered for the benefit of the mother)</li> <li>• NICHQ Vanderbilt Assessment Scales</li> </ul>
<b>96160</b>	Instrument-based assessment of the patient's risk for certain health conditions and behaviors that may negatively impact health, and pros and cons for initiating behavior change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini Nutritional Assessment-Short Form</li> <li>• Acute Concussion Evaluation</li> <li>• Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test</li> <li>• HEE-ADSSS (Home, Education, Eating, Activities, Drugs, Sexuality, Suicide Depression, Safety) assessment</li> <li>• CRAFFT (Care, Relax, Alone, Forget, Friends, Trouble)</li> </ul>
<b>96161</b>	Instrument-based assessment of the caregiver's risk for certain health conditions that may impact his or her ability to care for the patient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Environment for Every Kid</li> <li>• Caregiver Strain Index</li> <li>• Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (administered for benefit of the child)</li> </ul>

# Create Text Templates

Texting lets you interact with patients by engaging them where they are—on their phones. Create templates for common text messages ahead of time to boost office productivity. See **Table 2** for examples of commonly used text templates.

**TABLE 2:** Examples of Text Templates

TEMPLATE TITLE	TEMPLATE TEXT
<b>New Patient Information</b>	Welcome to our practice. Please click the link and fill out the new patient forms prior to your first visit. Thank you.
<b>Telehealth Consent</b>	Hello. Before your telehealth visit, please click the link and fill out the consent form. Thank you.
<b>Check-In and COVID-19 Screening</b>	Hello. When you arrive, stay in your car and click the link to check-in and complete the COVID-19 screening. Thank you.
<b>Health Screening or Assessment</b>	Hello. Before seeing your provider, click the link and complete the health screening. Thank you.

# Design Your Workflow

Combine the power of electronic forms and text templates to design a virtual waiting room. Make these key decisions ahead of time to customize the workflow of the patient's virtual waiting room.

## 1. Review your visit types

Make a list of the visit types your practice offers and determine what messages and electronic forms need to be sent to the patient.





## 2. Select the timing

Determine when the electronic form needs to be completed by a patient. Sending administrative paperwork several days prior to a visit will allow the patient adequate time to review and complete. Many clinical screenings and assessments are time sensitive to best assess symptoms and should be completed on the same day of the visit.

## 3. Workflow visual

A visual showing the steps of the virtual waiting room will allow providers and staff members to understand the workflow. See [Table 3](#) for an example of checking in a patient for an in-person visit with COVID-19 screening.

**TABLE 3:** Example “No Touch Check-In” Workflow

 <b>Pre-Visit</b>	Prior to the visit, the practice sends the patient a message and link to check-in form via text or email.
 <b>Patient Arrival</b>	Upon arrival to the practice, the patient remains in his/her car and clicks the link to complete the check-in form with COVID-19 screening questions.
 <b>Check-in</b>	The practice receives the completed check-in form and sends text to the patient to confirm receipt.
 <b>Rooming the Patient</b>	When ready for the patient, the practice sends a text to notify the patient to enter.

## Resources

1. Qualtrics. Healthcare Pain Index 2019. Retrieved from [https://www.qualtrics.com/m/assets/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Healthcare\\_PI\\_Report.pdf](https://www.qualtrics.com/m/assets/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Healthcare_PI_Report.pdf).
2. Bleustein C, Rothschild DB, Valen A, Valaitis, E, Schweitzer L, Jones R. Wait Times, Patient Satisfaction Scores, and the Perception of Care. AJMC. 2014 May;20(5):294-400. Retrieved from <https://www.ajmc.com/view/wait-times-patient-satisfaction-scores-and-the-perception-of-care>.
3. Hughes C. Getting Paid for Screening and Assessment Services. Fam Pract Manag. 2017 Nov-Dec;24(6):25-29. Retrieved from <https://www.aafp.org/fpm/2017/1100/p25.html>.
4. Robeznieks A. Use this COVID-19 screening script when reopening your practice. 2020 May 15. Retrieved from <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/sustainability/use-covid-19-screening-script-when-reopening-your-practice>