Connecticut Eye Consultants Engages More Patients and Alleviates Staff and Financial Burdens

THE CHALLENGE

As a comprehensive ophthalmology and optometry practice, Connecticut Eye Consultants manages patient volumes of about 120,000 yearly encounters, and complex scheduling for both routine visits and specialty procedures.

To remind patients of their appointments, the CEC scheduling team used a reminder system that called patients, but it experienced system glitches that led to no-shows and last-minute cancellations.

The recall system involved sending patients three postcards as a reminder to schedule their appointment. Staff members spent time manually tracking patients and pulling contact lists twice per month. Support staff then spent downtime processing postcards and placing up to 10,000 stickers per month.

Meanwhile, their already overextended staff was also responsible for referral outreach. The practice received faxes for referred patients and called patients to schedule them. Oftentimes, patients did not answer, causing staff to call two to three times until they suspended outreach and thus the care that was meant to follow.

Once patients were in the practice, manual intake added time-consuming tasks for both patients and staff. Some paper-based new patient forms were up to three pages long, and the data had to be manually keyed into the EHR, stored, and eventually destroyed.

This high volume of manual workflows for scheduling, recalls, referrals, and intake was not scalable for CEC, and their front desk staff felt the burden of trying to meet patient needs.

THE SOLUTION

The Connecticut Eye Consultants team turned to patient engagement solutions from NextGen Healthcare and Luma Health to automate backend processes, meet patients where they are, and relieve workload burden on their staff.

NextGen Patient Engage, Recalls, and Referrals powered by Luma directly improved patient response times, simplified scheduling, and saved the practice both time and money.

This success drove higher referral-to-appointment conversion rates, as patients and referrals reached out with questions and to schedule specialty appointment types over the phone.

To fully maximize and unify their successful patient engagement, CEC integrated NextGen Navigator and NextGen Patient Pay, so patients can get answers to questions and pay their balances before their appointment.

CLIENT PROFILE

Connecticut Eye Consultants

Background: For over 30 years, Connecticut Eye Consultants (CEC) has been serving Western Connecticut across five locations. Their mission is to serve as a premier ophthalmology group through multi-specialty medical and surgical eye care in an environment that compassionately and efficiently serves patients' needs while supporting their staff and physicians.

NextGen Healthcare Solutions:

NextGen® Enterprise EHR

NextGen® Enterprise PM

NextGen® Patient Engage *powered by Luma*

NextGen® Recalls *powered by Luma*

NextGen® Referrals *powered by Luma*

NextGen® Navigator *powered by Luma*

NextGen® Patient Pay

HIGHLIGHTS

$90,000 saved with automated digital recall

39%

39% referral-to-appointment conversion rate

50%

50% of calls handled without staff intervention with NextGen Navigator

89,000+ appointment reminders sent automatically

nextgen HEALTHCARE

THE IMPACT

Boosting response rates with automated reminders and recalls

Since adding appointment reminders with Luma, Connecticut Eye has automatically sent out over 89,000 reminders.

Patients have responded strongly to receiving direct reminders that include actionable steps to easily confirm their appointment. More than half of all reminded patients (52.1%) have responded, and 46.5% have confirmed their appointment, all without a staff member having to make a call.

Automated recalls drive positive impacts for patients, staff, and practice

Automated recalls have improved engagement, response rate, and revenue, while also closing gaps in care and boosting staff satisfaction.

Rather than waiting until the third postcard to schedule their appointment, or losing the postcard and not scheduling altogether, patients have begun replying promptly on the first or second communication from Connecticut Eye, allowing them to secure appointments to receive care faster.

Simultaneously, the staff appreciates not having to multitask or spend their downtime on stickers and postcards. "They were ecstatic to not have to do those anymore," said Michele Santos, Front Office Supervisor at Connecticut Eye Consultants.

Connecticut Eye estimates that they have eliminated 5 hours of tedious, manual work per week by switching to automated recalls and no longer needing to pull mailing lists, sort postcards, and place stickers. This translates to up to 260 hours saved per year.

Behind the scenes, the practice also benefits financially from automated reminders. By eliminating postage and the postcards themselves, Connecticut Eye is saving over $90,000 annually.

Streamlined digital intake saves time and money

In addition to postage savings, digital intake through NextGen Patient Engage has helped the Connecticut Eye Consultants team save approximately $112,000 in paper intake form costs in addition to using 93,000 fewer pieces of paper.

The digital format supports patient follow-through, reflected by an 88.2% completion rate, and saves staff time due to direct integration with the EHR. Digital intake has saved 4,365 staff hours, which is equivalent to the work of two full-time employees.

Simple referrals. Stronger outcomes.

Manual referrals created a frustrating game of phone tag for both patients and staff at Connecticut Eye Consultants.

With NextGen Referrals, Connecticut Eye has eliminated these back-and-forth, after-hours calls thanks to an automated system that quickly pushes out a referral appointment link to patients once staff receives the referral fax. This helps put patients in charge of coordinating their own care and takes the burden off staff.

Santos explains the impact of NextGen Referrals on both patient ease and staff satisfaction, saying, "The patient can click on that link, schedule their own appointment, and we're done with it. We don't have staff involved with that at all... the staff has said multiple times how much they love using the referral system now." Connecticut Eye estimates that they save about 10 minutes per referral, adding up to about 180 hours of labor saved altogether.

> "They were ecstatic to not have to do those [spend their downtime on stickers and postcards] anymore,"
>
> *Michele Santos*
> *Front Office Supervisor*
> *Connecticut Eye Consultants*

nextgen HEALTHCARE

This system has helped Connecticut Eye send 1,082 referrals automatically, of which 623 appointments were successfully scheduled. This success fuels approximately $93,000 in referral revenue for the practice.*

The final piece to the platform

By widening their reach, the Connecticut Eye phone lines naturally picked up with specialty scheduling, questions from referred patients, and appointment confirmation calls.

By including NextGen Navigator in their updated suite of automated solutions, the increased volume was handled seamlessly, thanks to its 24/7 access and support for patients.

NextGen Navigator directly integrates into the NextGen Enterprise EHR, so Connecticut Eye knew that they could trust the platform and easily improve their system without tacking on a new vendor.

Additionally, the natural language processing within Navigator means that Connecticut Eye wasn't introducing a phone tree with dead ends to their patients; Navigator handles real conversations, understanding and answering patient inquiries around scheduling, confirmations, cancellations, and routine practice information.

If a patient needs a human to complete a task, Navigator knows when to make the handoff. Within their first 900 calls using Navigator, Connecticut Eye Consultants has seen:

- ~50% of calls handled without staff intervention
- 94.9% patient verification success rate
- 75 staff hours saved
- ~1 minute average call duration
- Up to $39,000 in projected annual labor savings

The right solutions for ongoing success

Automated reminders, recalls, and referrals, coupled with digital intake and NextGen Navigator, deliver a platform that effortlessly connects patients to their practice without adding extra work for staff.

These integrated solutions support Connecticut Eye Consultants with timely care delivery, strong revenue streams, and efficient day-to-day operations — creating a platform that will continue to strengthen the practice as a whole.

> "NextGen Referrals relieves the frustration, especially if our phones are busy. You have patients who are working, they can't call during our hours. Or you have our people calling and they get a voicemail. So Referrals takes away frustration on both ends."
>
> *Michele Santos*
> *Front Office Supervisor*
> *Connecticut Eye Consultants*

Talk to an expert today.

Partner with us at 855-510-6398 or results@nextgen.com

*Values represented by an appt revenue of $150 and the potential of recall revenue based on volume

PE_092326_ConnecticutEye

© 2026 NXGN Management, LLC. All Rights Reserved. NextGen is a registered trademark of NXGN Management, LLC. All other names and marks are the property of their respective owners.

nextgen HEALTHCARE