Leaping from Clinician-Centric Scheduling to Student-Centric Scheduling

Rutgers Student Health has used online portal appointment scheduling since September 2016 using fixed clinician-specific schedules. In September 2021, we switched from fixed schedules to student-centric scheduling allowing students to schedule based on their needs. This led to better access for acute care and less phone calls from students needing appointments. Preventive care (physicals, STI screening and gyn care) did not suffer. New schedules created better distribution of appointments among clinicians.

1. OVERVIEW

Rutgers Student Health has used online portal appointment scheduling since September 2016 using fixed clinician-specific schedules. In September 2021, we switched from fixed schedules to student-centric scheduling allowing students to schedule based on their needs. This led to better access for acute care and less phone calls from students needing appointments. Preventive care (physicals, STI screening and gyn care) did not suffer. New schedules created better distribution of appointments among clinicians.

2. PRIOR TEMPLATE

Multiple blocked time slots for specialty care– colpo, annual gyn reservation, sports medicine–could be switched to acute care reservations, but required real-time checking schedules. Based on preferences/interests of clinician. Created lop-sided booking with some clinicians busy and others underused.

3. “GENERAL RESERVATION” TEMPLATE

“Appointment algorithm” committee set the amount of time for each visit type. GYN visits at only specifically set times eliminated

4. NEW TEMPLATE BASED ON TIME

Current scheduling template color coded for time:
- General Reservation – GREY: appointments available online or by phone
- Block 23 – GREEN: available 23 hours prior to the appointment online or by phone
- Block 8 – BLACK: Opens 8 hours prior to appt time available online or by phone.
- Block 2 RN – YELLOW: saved for triaged RN appointments. Walk-in availability

5. MULTIPLE COMMON APPOINTMENT TYPES

15-minute and 30-minute problem-based time slots (as per Algorithm Committee) available on all schedules. Availability of appointment based on patient preference, type of appointment and clinician’s skill set.