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FLEXIBLE RIDES

How SafeRide Health reduced no-shows by 63% and call center volume by 30% with flexible rides

Through its innovative partnership with Lyft, SafeRide Health empowers health plans to simplify NEMT and improve member outcomes.

Founded in 2016, SafeRide Health's mission is to help connect the nation's most vulnerable populations to healthcare by improving the delivery of non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT). They provide access to more than 1 million rides annually by partnering with top transportation providers and transportation network companies to serve Medicaid and Medicare programs.

"We tend to serve the poorest, the sickest, the most at-risk people in this country. Doing something as simple as offering more reliable transportation and creating better access to that transportation has a tremendous downstream impact on health," says Andy Auerbach, Chief Revenue Officer at SafeRide Health. The company has quickly become a pioneer in the NEMT industry, delivering transportation more effectively and efficiently.

"Anything that Lyft can do to help us improve access, and to give members more choice in how rides are scheduled, will serve our membership better. Flexible rides is another one of the tools that we now have to help members access transportation, and it's a really effective one."

—Andy Auerbach,
Chief Revenue Officer, SafeRide Health

SUMMARY

Industry
Healthcare

Challenge
SafeRide Health is a leading technology-first platform connecting members to care. To improve their service, they wanted to create a frictionless, modern way for members to request pre-authorized rides at their convenience.

Solution
By offering flexible rides in Lyft Concierge, SafeRide Health enabled its members to request pre-authorized rides at their convenience.

Impact
- 63% decrease in no-show rate for rides
- 30% reduction in call center volume
- Improvement in operational efficiency
- Increased customer satisfaction

The challenge

In the world of healthcare, *friction* is a term that has become synonymous with the member journey.

Traditionally, when in need of a ride, members call into a call center when they are ready for pick-up after their appointment. A customer service representative will then request a ride for them manually.

Sounds simple, right? Unfortunately, it rarely is.

Brokers have large call centers that take in a myriad of requests: ordering and scheduling rides, canceling rides, tracking rides, listening to testimonials, logging complaints, answering general questions, and so on.

And when call centers assist multiple health plans that serve millions of members, they can get overwhelmed, leading to long wait times for members returning home from appointments.

"You're adding another variable when you require members to call into a call center. And if there happens to be a surge in demand... and call volume happens to be really high at that time, they could have a wait before they're able to get a hold of somebody," shared Auerbach. "We staff appropriately to project when those peaks during the day would be, but it's not a foolproof process."

SafeRide Health knew they needed to improve the way members got to and from appointments without impacting their superior customer service. So, they turned to Lyft to automate this process.

The opportunity

In healthcare, there are many times when same-day ride details are unknown—an appointment could take 30 minutes...or 3 hours. These variables can be challenging to plan for when scheduling a ride sometimes requires up to 48 hours advance notice.

SafeRide Health knew there was a better way, identifying the need for more pre-authorized, self-dispatched transportation options.

Since 2017, SafeRide and Lyft have partnered to deliver best-in-class, ride programs that improve the member experience.

"We have real-time visibility into the Lyft network, and leverage the network to the fullest extent possible, to manage on-demand transportation for Medicaid and Medicare recipients who are ambulatory and have the ability to leverage curb to curb transportation," said Auerbach.

Auerbach notes that on-demand rides make up 70% of total ride volume within SafeRide Health's programs. Being able to automate such a large percentage of ride requests would prove to be a game-changer for the company.

"The only real way to deliver on-demand transportation in the healthcare setting was through the partnership with rideshare companies like Lyft. I think Lyft really recognized that healthcare was a growth area for the business, but also understood that healthcare
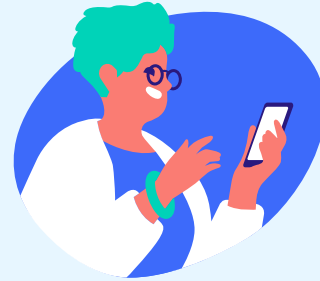
Top benefits include

Seamless pickups

When riders are in control, pickups go more smoothly. SafeRide Health saw a 63% decrease in no-show rates since offering flexible rides—making it easy for riders to request pre-authorized rides.

Drop in call center volume

Pickups can be a major pain point for agents who deal with anything from cancellations related to incorrect locations, premature departures, or poor communication. SafeRide Health transferred 21% of on-demand requests to flexible rides, which, on average, reduced incoming calls by 30%.

Operational efficiency

Advance authorization with flexible rides helps remove human intervention and improve SafeRide Health's operational efficiency.

Satisfied customer membership

Empowering members to take transportation into their own hands results in a more positive user experience.

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needed to be treated differently and managed differently," shared Auerbach.

SafeRide Health focused on achieving one goal: simplifying member transportation to and from medical appointments.

The solution

To avoid increased volume at their call centers, SafeRide Health implemented Lyft's flexible rides feature in Lyft Concierge. It's a scalable solution that enables members to request pre-approved rides when the member is ready to travel, making pickups smoother and return trips easier to arrange. With flexible rides built into the Lyft Concierge API integration, SafeRide Health's staff can set up pre-authorized, on-demand rides up to 30 days in advance.

As an early flexible rides adopter, SafeRide Health has successfully saved time for customer service representatives and created better pickup experiences. Call centers are an essential resource to members, and minimizing unnecessary call volume related to initiating on-demand rides is a monumental shift for driving stronger operational efficiency.

To address high call volumes, SafeRide Health diverted 21% of their on-demand requests to flexible rides. This change, on average, reduces incoming calls by 30%. With flexible rides, SafeRide Health staff workload is managed without disrupting regularly scheduled care or other urgent medical needs. Additionally, SafeRide Health noticed that integrating flexible rides had a positive impact on member satisfaction and engagement.
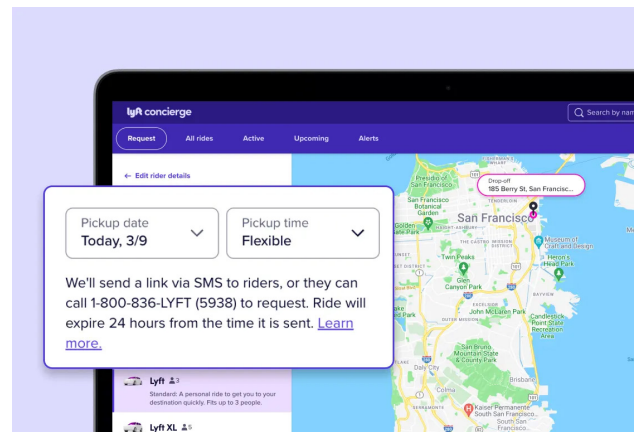
"Flexible rides puts the power back in the members' hands. They can bypass calling into our call center which provides a more responsive experience," shared Auerbach.

Likewise, SafeRide Health saw a 63% reduction in member no-shows when members requested flexible rides, further demonstrating Lyft's ability to provide access to reliable transportation when people need it most—and quickly.

"This is a great example of how Lyft thinks in lockstep with SafeRide Health as to how to better serve the healthcare market. Flexible rides are critical in offering as many access points as possible," shared Auerbach. "We want to give members as many different channels, and as many different ways to access and schedule transportation, as we possibly can."

Here's how it works

A customer service representative will set up a ride request to transport the member to the approved destination. Then, they select a date for the ride and choose the 'flexible' option as the pickup time. Next, members will receive an SMS text notifying them of their upcoming ride, inclusive of the trip details such as pick up and drop off locations. Once ready, the member can request the ride by clicking on the link in the SMS text and tapping 'Request now' or by calling a dedicated phone line.

Flexible rides are especially easy for riders who need transportation to and from a medical appointment. This feature meets members where they are, allowing them to initiate rides whether they have a smartphone, flip phone, or landline.

Looking ahead

"Lyft's going to be a meaningful part of our network for the foreseeable future. We have a great relationship in sharing feedback and helping each other understand the collective needs of the population we serve," said Auerbach.

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