


CUSTOMER STORIES

How Howard Brown  
Health provides  
personalized patient  
experiences with PolyAI.



Industry	Healthcare
Use cases	Appointment Management, Prescription Refills, Emergency Detection, Call Routing, FAQs,
Integrations	RingCentral, Dialpad, Epic EMR, MyChart
Featuring	Lauren Sullivan, Chief Information Officer, Howard Brown Health

### CHALLENGES

- Spiking call volume during health emergencies
- Difficulty meeting multilingual needs of the community
- Ensuring a consistent, timely and accurate patient experience
- Agent burnout keeping up with patient demand

### SOLUTION

- A 24/7 AI agent that greets patients immediately with natural language
- Answers FAQs and routine requests
- Integrates with backend systems including MyChart and Epic EMR
- Identifies patients who need specialized help and escalates appropriately

### RESULTS

- 72% decrease in Average Handle Time for routine requests
- 30% call containment (target 20%)
- 4% increase in patient satisfaction
- Scalability for future health emergencies

Howard Brown Health was founded in 1974 and is the largest federally qualified healthcare organization for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) community in America. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2025, the agency serves more than 40,000 adults and youth in Chicago each year across its diverse health and social service delivery system.



## Challenges

Howard Brown Health faced several challenges in their operations, particularly in managing patient interactions and ensuring efficient access to care. The call center was averaging around 15,000 calls a month, though experienced spikes up to 60,000 calls during public health crises caused by Covid and Monkeypox. This overwhelming call volume strained the call center's capacity at a critical time, making it almost impossible to provide timely and accurate responses to patient inquiries.

Additionally, staffing limitations posed a major hurdle. Howard Brown Health struggled to staff the call center 24/7 and faced language barriers with some patients only able to speak Spanish and Polish. Ensuring consistent, accurate, and timely responses to patient inquiries was challenging, impacting overall patient satisfaction. Call center agents were often overwhelmed with routine inquiries, leaving them less time to handle complex, high-value interactions that required more attention and expertise.

“Being able to contain routine calls freed up our staff to focus on the tasks that are most valuable and require additional nuance.”



Lauren Sullivan  
Chief Information Officer,  
Howard Brown Health

## Solution

To address these challenges, Howard Brown Health partnered with PolyAI to implement a healthcare AI agent that transformed their call center operations. The AI agent, named Alex, provides 24/7 support, handling inquiries in multiple languages, which was crucial for meeting the diverse needs of Howard Brown Health's patient base. The AI agent utilizes advanced Natural Language Processing (NLP) capabilities, offering accurate and natural interactions that significantly improve the patient experience. It is even sophisticated enough to detect when a caller is distressed and at risk to themselves, immediately escalating the call to an agent to provide specialized assistance.

The solution also integrated seamlessly with Howard Brown Health's existing systems, including MyChart. This integration allows the AI agent to guide patients through various processes, such as scheduling appointments, accessing test results, and managing prescription refills.

Every PolyAI agent has universal integration capabilities, so when Howard Brown Health decided to transition from RingCentral to Dialpad, we were able to switch over quickly and simply with minimal downtime.



**72%**

Decrease in Average Handle Time for routine requests

**30%**

Call containment

**4%**

Increase in patient satisfaction

## Results

The implementation of the AI agent led to remarkable improvements in Howard Brown Health's operations and patient experience. Initially aiming for a 20% call containment rate, PolyAI exceeded expectations by achieving 30%. Patient satisfaction scores also saw an increase of 4%, primarily driven by the enhanced ease and efficiency with which patients could schedule appointments and access services.

Operational efficiency additionally saw a substantial boost. The Average Handle Time (AHT) for calls managed by PolyAI was around 58.6 seconds, compared to 3.5 minutes for human agents. This efficiency allowed the call center to manage higher call volumes without the need for additional staffing. By handling routine inquiries, PolyAI's solution reduced the workload on call center agents. This not only improved the quality of service but also reduced stress and burnout among the call center staff.

Furthermore, Howard Brown Health is now better prepared to handle spikes in call volume during future health crises, ensuring timely and effective responses to patient needs. The partnership with PolyAI has positioned Howard Brown Health to meet future demands and maintain their commitment to providing high-quality, affirming care to the LGBTQ+ community.

"I was really taken aback by how accurate and natural the virtual agent was. PolyAI fits the bill for our desire to continue to innovate and make sure technology barriers are as low as possible to get patients as engaged as possible."



Lauren Sullivan  
Chief Information Officer,  
Howard Brown Health





## Future plans

Having successfully implemented phase 1 of the PolyAI agent, as well as transitioned their telephony from RingCentral to Dialpad, Howard Brown Health is excited to move into phase 2, which will include an integration with Epic. With the Epic integration set up, patients will be able to create, reschedule and cancel appointments using the PolyAI agent. On top of that, patients will be able to update their insurance coverage, prescription refills and more with ease.

“Absolutely I would recommend PolyAI to other healthcare providers. I give them a five out of five, they’re a game changer.”



Lauren Sullivan  
Chief Information Officer,  
Howard Brown Health

