

# Medicare Advantage member outreach closes 4% percent more care gaps

## Personalizing member engagement to improve Medicare Stars rating

### The Challenge: Close more care gaps in the Medicare Advantage population

A multi-state health plan wanted to measure and improve the effectiveness of its outreach strategy to close care gaps in its Medicare Advantage population. Closing care gaps helps to increase a plan's Medicare Star rating.

Improving Medicare Star ratings attracts more members. The average Medicare beneficiary has 33 choices for a Medicare Advantage plan<sup>1</sup>, and more than 75 percent chose a plan with a Medicare Stars rating of 4 or more<sup>2</sup>.

Increasing from a 3-star to a 4-star rating can boost revenue by as much as 17 percent due to higher enrollment and additional bonus payments.<sup>3</sup>

The plan's outreach strategy to Medicare Advantage (MA) enrollees has two components:

- The outbound call program targets members with the most open care gaps
- The inbound call program alerts the health plan's customer service team that the member who is calling has open gaps and advises them on how to close these gaps.

The health plan chose NextHealth Technologies to (1) measure the effectiveness of its outreach strategy and (2) identify the member characteristics and personas to target in future care gap outreach efforts.



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1 <https://www.kff.org/medicare/issue-brief/medicare-advantage-2021-spotlight-first-look/>  
2 <https://achp.org/ma-higher-standards-quality-coverage/>  
3 <https://guidehouse.com/insights/healthcare/2018/medicare-advantage-star-ratings-analysis>

## Rigorous, rapid evaluation yields critical insights

For the first phase of the study, NextHealth leveraged its analytics platform and health plan expertise to analyze the outreach strategy. Independent cohort analyses compared:

- A trial group of members successfully engaged with outreach
- A control group of members from the MA population with open care gaps well-matched to the trial group using propensity score matching

In the second phase, NextHealth combined its platform's artificial-intelligence clustering capabilities and team insight to evaluate utilization variables, eligibility features and demographics to predict the characteristics and profiles of members associated with increased and decreased likelihood of closing care gaps in five key areas: breast cancer, colorectal cancer, diabetes management, osteoporosis and cardiac disease.



**Members receiving  
outbound outreach  
closed 4.4 percent  
more care gaps**



**Members advised  
about care  
opportunities when  
calling customer  
service closed 4.2  
percent more care  
gaps**

## Results

### Member outreach is working to close care gaps

The NextHealth analytics solution demonstrated the plan's outreach efforts are closing more care gaps than no outreach:

- Members receiving outbound outreach closed 4.4 percent more care gaps
- Members advised about care opportunities when calling customer service closed 4.2 percent more care gaps

The second phase analysis revealed how to change member behavior at scale and showed:

- The characteristics of the MA care gap-eligible population that segment into 15 meaningful groups
- How the segments of the population differ in eligible open care gaps and closure rates
- The segments to prioritize for outreach

In less than a month, the plan received actionable insights on who to focus outreach on to optimize gap closures. For example, one impactable group is younger females with low inpatient and ER utilization and a high number of open care gaps and care gaps left.

**“Knowing which  
members to target  
helps improve  
Medicare Star  
ratings.”**

To learn more about how to reduce costs and improve outcomes with our analytics and engagement platform, visit [nexthealthtechnologies.com](https://nexthealthtechnologies.com).

