

BEST OVERALL DIGITAL PATIENT EXPERIENCE

UCLA Health Creates a Separate Scheduling Triage for Second Opinion Patients, Enabling a Better Patient Experience

BACKGROUND

No matter the severity of the condition, getting a medical diagnosis can feel overwhelming. This is especially true if a physician recommends a major procedure — like surgery — as part of the treatment plan.

If you have doubts about your diagnosis or the treatment plan recommended by your doctor, you may want to seek a second opinion. But where do you go? And what if you need to act quickly because, due to the severity of your condition, your life is at stake?

PROBLEM

The neurosurgery department at UCLA Health turned to the marketing team to help optimize the patient experience for those seeking second opinions. The head of the neurosurgery department had concerns that the current patient journey was cumbersome, drawn out and stressful — especially for international patients.

Those seeking a second opinion from a UCLA Health provider were lumped into the same scheduling triage as new and returning patients. Despite their urgent medical needs, second opinion patients dealt with scheduling issues, long wait times to get appointments, and insurance/billing delays.

The question at hand: How could UCLA Health cater to this distinct group that has an urgency to get their case reviewed by a top specialist?

INSIGHTS

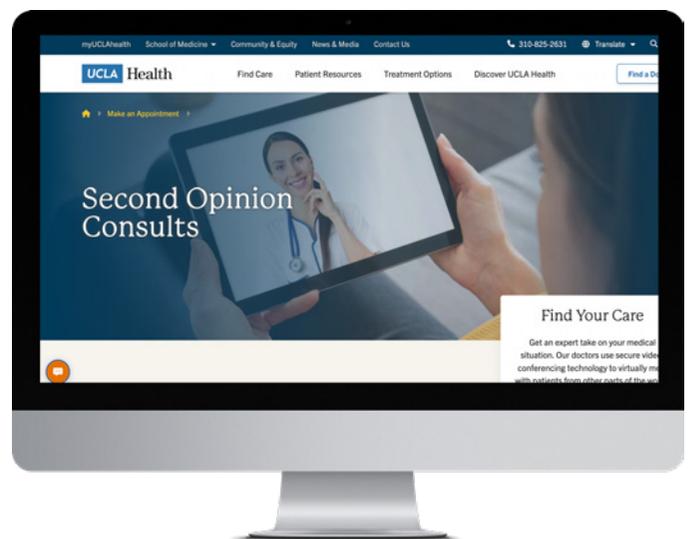
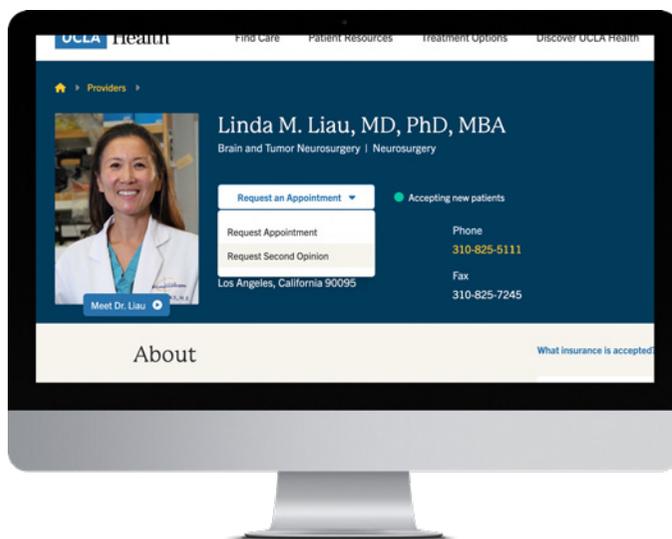
Once the UCLA Health marketing team learned about these challenges, they knew they could leverage the website to improve the patient experience. By creating a separate scheduling triage for second opinions, the organization could better support these patients throughout the entire process.

SOLUTION

Collaborating with multiple departments across the health system, UCLA Health created a separate patient journey that allows second opinion patients to bypass the main call center line. Second opinion requests are now sent to a dedicated call center team that expedites the appointment request, helps patients access UCLA Health's top experts, and gets them scheduled sooner.

Not all specialists are available for second opinion consults. To optimize the new triage process and create the best patient experience possible, UCLA Health used an intricate selection process to identify which providers could conduct these types of appointments. Once the group was chosen, the UCLA Health marketing team added "Request Second Opinion" calls-to-action to the providers' profiles.

The marketing team also created a [Second Opinion Consults webpage](#) that answers patients' questions about the process. The hub not only explains how to schedule a second opinion, but also details what happens during a second opinion appointment and what patients can expect.



METRICS

Between the launch of the second opinion consult features in December 2022 and June 2023, UCLA Health received more than 540 second opinion requests.