



CASE STUDY



The Sutherland team became true partners and advocates for our patients. They were able to explain individual circumstances off the top of their heads and find elegant solutions to complex and unique challenges. In one case, our Sutherland partners even got power of attorney so they could help a patient access and complete the paperwork they needed to ensure appropriate and affordable care. 

— Nikki Schleicher,
Director of Patient Financial Services

About the Client

Touchette Regional Hospital has been one of Southern Illinois' foremost providers of healthcare for more than 50 years. At its main location as well as through Southern Illinois Home Care and Archview Medical Center, Touchette helps ensure that the communities it serves realize the best possible outcomes by offering a range of services. Everything from laboratory, radiology, physical therapy, and obstetrics are available, as well as access to a 24-hour emergency department, medical/surgical offerings and intensive care. In home services and a full complement of specialists are also provided. But despite this breadth of services, Touchette knew that more could be done to support its Medicaid and uninsured populations. That's when Touchette turned to Sutherland.

Client Challenge

Touchette knew that to more fully support its Medicaid and uninsured populations — while maintaining a firm financial footing — it had to increase patient outreach so the overall patient experience was streamlined and enhanced. But a cookie-cutter care management program just wouldn't work. The needs of Touchette's target population were too diverse and unique. Touchette challenges were significant, including:

- **Inadequate outreach channels:** patients frequently had unreliable phone service or used disposable phones that were switched out often. A standard outreach protocol would not reach these patients.
- **Bureaucratic barriers:** Medicaid and charity care programs can be difficult to navigate, requiring access to large amounts of information and familiarity with complex and changing processes. A "one time" communication effort relying on uncommitted staff at a generic call center could neither prepare patients nor ensure clinical and administrative follow through.
- **Excessive workload and insufficient reimbursement:** patients and Touchette staff alike were often overburdened by cumbersome workloads associated with Medicaid and uninsured population reimbursement hurdles; as a result, relatively few procedures were fully reimbursed, jeopardizing the financial viability of further community outreach efforts.

In short, Touchette needed a committed partner willing to provide a tailored solution to help streamline the patient experience. The solution Touchette needed would have to minimize administrative hurdles and place the patient at the center of the healthcare equation.

The Sutherland Transformation

Creating customized and compelling customer experiences has been in Sutherland's DNA since we were founded in 1986. To help create a better patient experience for Touchette, Sutherland leveraged this experience and worked hand-in-hand with Touchette to design a solution that not only increased patient outreach, but also ensured that the outreach methods deployed were targeted to the unique needs of Touchette's patient population. Sutherland professionals worked on site to:

- **Facilitate initial and ongoing communication**, extending outreach beyond phone calls—even stopping by patients' homes for convenient, informative, in-person chats.
- **Gather and coordinate patient information**, minimizing bureaucratic barriers and ensuring that the right information was gathered and shared so care plans were followed, deadlines were met, and maximum reimbursement dollars were captured.
- **Reduce workloads** on Touchette personnel and patients, improving the patient experience by returning the focus to the provision of care itself.

The solution continues to get updated and refined as communication methods evolve. Sutherland and Touchette understand that to create a simple experience for Touchette's population, you can't always use "traditional" or "best practices."

Partnership Results

Over the course of our more than two-decade long relationship, Sutherland has helped Touchette realize impressive and lasting results.

100%

Sutherland successfully screens 100% of referred applicants

25%

25% of referred cases garner "above and beyond" attention, which is well above industry standards

10 to 1

Touchette has realized over 10 to 1 ROI on Sutherland's services

60%

60% increase in the number of patients signed up for government-assisted healthcare programs

As a process transformation company, Sutherland rethinks and rebuilds processes for the digital age by combining the speed and insight of design thinking with the scale and accuracy of data analytics. We have been helping customers, across industries from financial services to health care, achieve greater agility through transformed and automated customer experiences for over 30 years. Headquartered in Rochester, N.Y., Sutherland employs over 38,000 professionals spanning 19 countries around the world.