

Automating Patient Message Triage in Klara

Executive Perspective

As our business scaled, the volume of inbound messages ballooned – 3,000 to 4,000 per day, handled by 120+ people, yet patients still waited 4+ hours for a response. It wasn't the experience we wanted. With perseverance and the right partner, we built our own AI-powered response system inside Klara. It's faster, smarter, and designed for what our patients deserve

Background

A New York based dermatology group using (ModMed) EMR and Klara patient messaging platform faced operational challenges due to the sheer volume of patient messages.

With ~90,000 messages per month (~3,000 per day), staff were overwhelmed and patient response times suffered.

Solutions



The New York based dermatology group implemented an AI-powered automation layer integrated within Klara to triage and streamline patient message handling.

- NLP classified messages into categories (refills, paperwork, acknowledgments).
- Automated workflows routed tasks, generated templated responses, and flagged urgent cases.
- After-hours virtual assistant enabled 24/7 triage and acknowledgments
- Human-in-the-loop for complex/ambiguous queries.

Lessons Learned

1. Define clear message categories before automation.
2. Maintain human oversight for escalations.
3. Automation best fits repetitive workflows (paperwork, confirmations).
4. Integration with EMR ensures real-time context and seamless updates.

Challenges

- ▶ **High Message Volume:** Thousands of daily patient portal messages (paperwork, insurance, prescription refills, confirmations).
- ▶ **Slow Response Times:** Avg. 4.5 hours, with no after-hours coverage.
- ▶ **Employee Impact:** 40 FTEs manually handling queries
- ▶ **Scalability Limitations:** Growth amplified delays, manual workflows couldn't keep pace.

Results

Metric	Before Automation	After Automation
Avg. Response Time	4.5 hours	<30 mins
Messages Automated	0%	65–70%
FTEs Required	40	≈20
After-Hours Coverage	No	Yes

Future Opportunities

1. Expand automation to appointment scheduling and pre-visit instructions.
2. Use AI analytics on patient messages to identify population health trends.
3. Deploy multi-language support for diverse patient communities.