Rapid Response

Navigating the human and business impact of COVID-19

April 2020
Coronavirus is a global pandemic

This health and humanitarian emergency presents a serious threat to people across the planet. The World Health Organization has now upgraded the global risk to “very high,” confirming that this is a serious challenge for humanity.

The priority is to protect the health and safety of people, including in their workplaces. Business leaders must make rapid decisions, and take immediate actions, to protect and support their workers while ensuring that critical business operations continue.

Source: World Health Organization, Situation Dashboard
Health care industry challenges

Providers and Payers need to overcome a spike in demand while facing challenges to their business operations

**INCREASED CARE DEMAND**
Sudden increased demand for COVID-19 testing with limited inpatient room capacity

**SURGE IN SERVICE CALLS**
Uplift in service call volumes from patients and members seeking guidance

**COORDINATION OF RESPONSE**
Manage a cohesive organization wide response in conjunction with government and ecosystem partners

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY RISKS**
Supply chain disruptions, infection of workforces, and testing of business continuity protocols

**MONITORING & REPORTING**
Need to respond to government mandated reporting and restating financial forecasts

**WORKFORCE EFFECTIVENESS**
Employees working from home while experiencing challenges in securing laptops while managing disruptions to their own dependent care

Sources: 1. Modern Healthcare; 2. NPR; 3. Fierce Healthcare; 4. FDA; 5. S&P Global
What now?

In the next week, a rapid response is required to proactively manage - and be ready to react - to the ever changing challenges of COVID-19.
Accenture’s COVID-19 response center framework includes specific market actions, differentiated assets and capabilities, and innovative technology enablers.
The steps to readiness
Health plans and providers are assessing and quickly mobilizing to respond to emerging threats and impacts of COVID-19 using these steps:

**Surge Response**

- Scale virtual care messaging and visits for quarantined and or “concerned well” patients
- Prepare to triage and prioritize scarce assets – assess options to create facility and resource capacity
- Launch and maintain COVID-19 digital communications and virtual assistants
- Create COVID-19 hotlines for members and patients
- Expand contact center virtualization and surge staffing

**Business Continuity**

- Assess and address potential supply chain disruption
- Validate business continuity plans – internal and with external partners
- Prepare to ‘return to normal’ as efficiently as feasible – think long-term
- Prepare and enable telecommuting and remote resources
- Explore options to address employee childcare during crisis
- Assess and report financial impact (i.e., hot reporting)

**Financial Stabilization and Sustainability**

**Payer**

- Address near-term financial response
- Model future scenarios and impacts on financial plans
- Manage reputational risk with transparent financial reporting and community leadership

**Provider**

- Focus on immediate cash flow and liquidity
- Capture charges for new services, assets, and locations
- Deploy interim labor strategies to balance demand, safety, and expense

**Communication and Collaboration**

- Increase community education activities
- Establish employee relations hotline for COVID-19
- Prioritize media and government agency relations activities – establish priority channels and cadence
- Prepare to augment clinical capacity and activate community health resources

**Monitoring and Reporting**

- Continuously assess and monitor potential COVID-19 threats
- Perform COVID-19 specific social media monitoring
- Create and utilize predictive models to forecast potential impact
- Confirm operations census and KPI reporting is available
- Anticipate and prepare for mandated reporting (federal, state, and local)
Accenture’s accelerators are available to help support a rapid response
Asset summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accenture Health BPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Support Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accelerators (ACE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AMBG super agent</strong></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Continuity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Backorder RPA Tool</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procurement Planning Tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workforce Management Tools</td>
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<td>and Capabilities</td>
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<td>Scaling Elastic Workforce</td>
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| Financial Stabilization and |
| Sustainability             |
| **Payer**                   |
| Membership Scenario Models  |
| Revenue / Case Mix Impact  |
| on Providers                |
| SMB COVID19 Navigator       |
| **Provider**                |
| Up-to-Date CARES Act Analysis|
| Cashflow and Working Capital|
| Analytics                   |
| COVID-19 Community Outreach Index|
| Smart Spend Analytics (ZBS) |
| COVID-19 Charge Capture     |
| Backlog Alleviation Ramp-up |
| Methodology                 |

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accenture BPS HR Hotline</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring and Reporting</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media monitoring</td>
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<td>for Panic Score and Risk Spread</td>
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| Microsoft Teams Collaboration   |

**KEY:** Available, Piloted in COVID-19

Accenture provides this information to clients to highlight industry practices based on our background and experience. Recipients should be mindful of their own industry guidelines, laws and applicable policies and seek appropriate counsel and guidance as they implement any solutions. Your Accenture account team will work with you to structure the delivery of those services based upon account specific, applicable regulations and laws governing the health care industry.
What next?

Detailed actions, assets and enablers to remain ready to react, rapidly
Surge response – call center operations

Address the surge of calls

Market actions

1. Launch and maintain COVID-19 digital communications and virtual assistants - prevent calls to the call center by informing patients through web, mobile, social, email, and text communications and AI-powered virtual assistant capabilities

2. Create COVID-19 hotlines for members and patients - launch and run a dedicated COVID-19 patient hotline operation with enabling call scripting and tracking capabilities

3. Expand contact center virtualization and surge staffing - mobilize surge staffing and fully virtualize the contact center workforce to manage the workforce and performance

Other considerations:

• Partnerships with vendors
• Regulatory compliance
• Privacy & security

Assets and capabilities

Communications capabilities
Tools and resources for the leading platforms with access to robust U.S. household data to rapidly launch and maintain digital communications

Contact center virtualization
Operating playbooks and infrastructure frameworks to rapidly expand virtualization and command center capabilities to manage the workforce

Accenture BPS for surge staffing
Mobilize a workforce of licensed and non-licensed agents to support chat and phone interactions

Virtual assistant accelerators (ACE)
COVID-19 assistants and pre-built assets for the leading NLP platforms to rapidly integrate with channels, configure and train the NLP, and transition to live agents

AMBG super agent
Built on NHS Triage Protocols, ready for deployment. Built by Avanade on Azure components

Technology enablers

Natural language processing (NLP) engines
NLP Platform used to understand, process, and respond to patient voice or text input (e.g., Google, Amazon)

Agent and clinician desktops
Contact management platforms for scripting and tracking inbound calls and/or telehealth visits (e.g., Salesforce, MS Dynamics)
Surge response - clinical

Close clinical capacity gaps

Market actions
1. Scale virtual care messaging and or visits for quarantined or “concerned well” patients – scale virtual care operations and enable physicians to communicate with patients through asynchronous texts

2. Prepare to triage and prioritize scarce assets – assess options to create facility and resource capacity – identify and forecast capacity needs to secure resources within the community to address different acuity levels – including assessing options to create facility and resource capacity

Other considerations:
- Partnerships with vendors
- Regulatory compliance
- Privacy & security

Technology enablers
- Virtual support room
  MS Teams based virtual environments providing patients with specific configured canvas for group communication and support

- Patient messaging technology
  HIPAA compliant asynchronous messaging platforms (e.g., Babylon, CirrusMD, 98point6)

- Agent and clinician desktops
  Contact management platforms for scripting and tracking inbound calls and/or telehealth visits (e.g., Salesforce, MS Dynamics)
Predict and plan for challenges across the ecosystem

**Market actions**

1. **Assess and address potential supply chain disruption** - Support the planning and implementation of shortage and backorders of supplies and drugs

2. **Validate business continuity plans – internal and with external partners** - Review business continuity plan and identify any gaps or concerns

3. **Prepare to ‘return to normal’ as efficiently as feasible – think long-term** - Provide tools to structure processes to transition back to normal business operations

4. **Prepare and enable telecommuting and remote resources** - Distribute laptops, configure collaboration tools, and set up virtual communication channels

5. **Explore options to address employee childcare during crisis** - Identify alternative in home childcare options and benefits

6. **Assess and report financial impact (i.e., hot reporting)** - Enable financial forecasting to model and understand impact to financials

**Other considerations:**

- Virtual enablement of response center
- Staff disruptions
- Decision authority

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**Assets and capabilities**

- **Backorder RPA tool**
  Expedite the search for a viable alternative product and supply, leveraging the Symmetric Global Unique Identifier Database and Inventory evaluation tool

- **Workforce management tools and capabilities**
  Tools and resources to deploy, monitor, and manage increased remote work force resources

- **Financial modeling tools**
  Understand how business is being impacted with financial reporting to identify where mitigation is required

- **Procurement planning tools**
  Support planning for determining demand based on key variables

- **Business continuity scenario modeling tools**
  Multi site and country business continuity modeling tools

- **Scaling elastic workforce**
  Support segregated delivery teams with virtual environments specifically configured for clinical or administrative functions

**Technology enablers**

- **Telecommuter deployment and monitoring**
  Acquisition and deployment of tools to support remote employees

- **MS teams collaboration tools**
  Support segregated delivery teams with virtual environments specifically configured for clinical or administrative functions
Financial Stabilization & Sustainability - Payer

Anticipate near-term financial impacts, model future scenarios, and build trust with key stakeholders

Market actions

1. Anticipate impacts from near term financial response – Stand up a dedicated financial monitoring team to continuously assess and budget for regulatory responses while monitoring internal reporting metrics and the financial support required to maintain operations and external commitments.

2. Model future scenarios and impacts on financial plans – Model near-term cash flow implications and liquidity needs including assessing actuarial risk from projected case-mix shifts and product bids. Re-evaluate discretionary costs and capital expenditures. Model scenarios for segment shifts and the resulting risks to revenue and profitability, and update forecasts and future guidance as necessary.

3. Manage reputational risk with transparent financial reporting and community leadership – Strengthen credibility and trust with transparent and proactive financial communication with the board and investor community while showing community leadership and social impact with customers, providers, and employees.

Other considerations:

- Stop loss & reinsurance implications
- Impacts to contracts and arrangements with providers in VBC arrangements
- Provider payment advances
- Member premium grace periods and benefit design enhancements

Assets and capabilities (in progress)

- Membership Scenario Models
  Understand how payer segment mixes will shift based on increases to unemployment in the group market

- Revenue / Case Mix Impact on Providers
  Forecasts provider case shifts and the resulting claims and provider financial impacts

- SMB COVID19 Navigator
  Solution design that enables payers to proactively support and transition SMB stakeholders facing unemployment concerns/challenges due to Covid-19.

- Smart Spend Analytics (ZBS)
  Rapidly identify and triage cash outflows to tighten organizational spending

Technology enablers

- Revenue Assurance
Financial Stabilization & Sustainability – Provider

Stabilize cash expenditures, capitalize on charge capture opportunities, and review labor strategies

Market actions

1. Focus on immediate cash flow and liquidity – Work cross-functionally to maximize cash inflows and reduce unnecessary cash outflows: Deploy cashflow modeling capabilities to validate working capital efficiency, optimize project investments, capitalize on vendor flexibility, and review opportunities to factor receivables for rapid cash acceleration.

2. Capture charges for new services, assets, and locations – The health crisis is creating a rapid shift in care delivery channels and opening new avenues for government support. Expand existing telehealth capabilities, deploy resources to capture charges, audit activities to eliminate revenue leakage, and take advantage of federal grant opportunities.

3. Deploy interim labor strategies to balance demand, safety, and expense – Employ workforce modeling capabilities to identify labor utilization opportunities. Enact furlough and payroll adjustment plans and redeploy idle resources to perform cross-functional roles to optimize labor spend.

Other considerations:
- Explore payer one-time opportunities
- Market elective surgery pre-payment discounts for services post-COVID crisis
- Review / renegotiate bond covenants
- Model and pursue debt-driven cashflow strategies
**Communication and collaboration**

Interact and coordinate with partners to provide one clear voice through the COVID-19 outbreak

**Market actions**

1. **Increase community education activities** - Build capacity and processes to enable quick communication with the community

2. **Establish employee relations hotline for COVID-19** - Activate an infrastructure to support internal employee questions and issues at scale

3. **Prioritize media and government agency relations activities** – establish priority channels and cadence - Coordinate with media and government agencies to disseminate information via the right channels at the right time

4. **Prepare to augment clinical capacity and activate community health resources** - Coordinate with other health systems in our community to share resources and identify ancillary medical staff to supplement workforce

**Assets and capabilities**

- **Accenture BPS HR hotline**
  Turnkey service for employee relations to handle increased employee inquiries

- **Multi channel communications**
  Prebuilt communication template. Federal and State information dynamically updating. Organization specific content management

**Technology enablers**

- **Collaboration across entities**
  Support segregated delivery teams with virtual environments specifically configured for clinical or administrative functions
Deploy robust data and analytics capabilities to support the need for immediate reporting.

**Market actions**

1. **Continuously assess and monitor potential COVID-19 threats** - Predict high-risk areas and deploy solutions to help mitigate risks.

2. **Perform COVID-19 specific social media monitoring** - Use social media data to extract insight.

3. **Create and utilize predictive models to forecast potential impact** - Use data to predict where potential outbreaks might intensify or where surge locations might be most needed to address local demand.

4. **Confirm operations census and KPI reporting is available** - Monitor and model data to complement existing operational key performance indicators.

5. **Anticipate and prepare for mandated reporting (federal, state, and local)** - Support the reporting of mandated metrics.

**Other considerations:**

- Partnerships with vendors
- Privacy & security

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**Assets and capabilities**

**Data protection framework**

**Social media monitoring for panic score and risk spread**
Analytic models adapted from the NHS H1N1 epidemic for COVID-19.

**Key metrics monitoring and reporting**
Deploy analytics, scorecard for key SLAS.

**Threat assessment framework**
Health specific threat evaluation framework (value and impact tree) and decision-making framework.

**Social media capabilities** *(Sprinklr)*
Tools and resources available 24x7 for the leading platforms with access to monitor, prioritize, evaluate, and engage social media activity.
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To help our clients navigate both the human and business impact of COVID-19, we’ve created a hub of all of our latest thinking on a variety of topics.

Each topic highlights specific actions which can be taken now, and what to consider next as industries move towards a new normal.

From leadership essentials to ensuring productivity for your employees and customer service groups to building supply chain resilience and much more, our hub will be constantly updated. Check back regularly for more insights.

VISIT OUR HUB HERE
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