

# The Power of Digital Innovation

All-access mobile health platform gives WakeMed Health & Hospitals a powerful tool for creating a seamless patient experience that boosts loyalty.



**Location:** Raleigh, N.C.

**Type:** A private, not-for-profit health system governed by a volunteer board of directors, consisting of 14 members representing the local community. WakeMed is the leading provider of health services in Wake County.

**Facilities:** WakeMed's 976-bed health system features three hospitals, seven emergency departments (EDs), dedicated children's services, 80+ physician practices, virtual care options and more.



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## Introduction

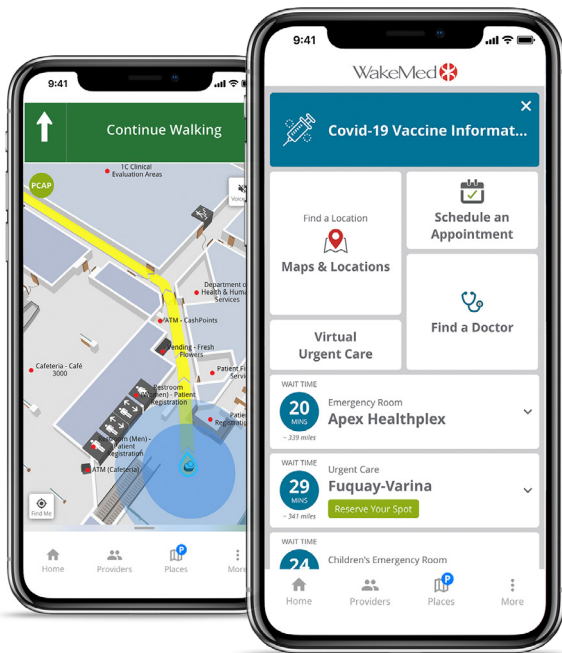
At WakeMed Health & Hospitals, a mobile platform that established a digital handheld experience for patients and visitors quickly became a vital tool to communicate essential, real-time information during the pandemic. The health system's journey toward launching this wayfinding and patient engagement

app began three years prior. Keys to WakeMed's success in mobile engagement: a thoughtful digital strategy, a highly flexible mobile solution infrastructure capable of adapting to emerging needs, and efforts to achieve strong employee buy-in and utilization.

## Challenge: Creating a Better Experience for Patients and Families

Several years ago, WakeMed took a hard look at the obstacles patients and families faced in navigating its large and growing health system. Improving access and engaging with patients at each step of their journey—before, during and after care—is a core value of WakeMed. Leadership knew it needed to strengthen the user experience to not only remain a leader in a competitive market, but to help guide patients to their point of care as well as access the right resources to meet their health needs. Wayfinding assistance alone wouldn't generate strong patient engagement. Success would depend on a robust mobile platform strategy that sought to provide value and access at each stage of the consumer experience, from registration to the point of care and beyond.

The challenge: Most of the mobile apps that WakeMed researched lacked the functionality to be a true “digital companion” for consumers. WakeMed sought a platform that went beyond navigation to improve the patient experience and access to care—a solution that could answer the key question, “What’s in it for me?” from the moments prior to download.



“There were not a lot of well-developed mobile apps that met our expectations and needs for the patient experience. Some were not user-friendly. Others were very expensive. We needed an app with intuitive user interface that offered interactive capabilities for engagement.”

Debbie Laughery, WakeMed Vice President of Marketing & Communications

## Solution: A Customizable, End-to-End Mobile Platform Via Gozio Health

WakeMed found a true partner in mobile strategy design and value in Gozio Health. “We had ideas for mobile engagement, but we didn't know what was possible,” Laughery adds. “The fact that Gozio was already engaged with other large systems was important. It meant that they could not only provide ideas and best practices, but also customize offerings to create a platform unique to our organization, mission, facilities, and patients. That was a game-changer for us and the start of our collaboration around mobile strategy and solutions.”

In 2017, WakeMed and Gozio began to explore what an all-access digital engagement strategy would include, from the ability to determine wait times at local EDs to finding a doctor and registering for care, as well as reserving a seat in urgent care, preparing for the birth of a child, accessing medical records, communicating with the healthcare team, or paying a bill.

“We wanted one solution that people could do a lot of things with, but without a heavy lift for our internal IT team,” Laughery says. “From the start, it was clear that Gozio understood our vision, and they had great suggestions for building on our ideas to optimize value.”

WakeMed worked with Gozio to come up with a preliminary design that aligned with the health system's brand standards, mission, and values. Then, the health system tested the app with employees, looking for opportunities for refinement before the public roll-out to the community. "We went all-in on employee communication, knowing that our 10,000 employees would be key to spreading the word," Laughery says. "We held big launch events at each of our facilities where employees could try out the platform first-hand and share feedback. We also put posters and banners up in each of our facilities to promote the WakeMed All Access App, along with vinyl ads on the entry doors to our hospital parking decks, messaging in our employee and physician newsletters, and television commercials heralding its arrival."

## Outcome: A More Agile Tool for Real-Time Communication

WakeMed's all-access mobile app debuted to fanfare in 2018. Response to the offering speaks for itself:



6k

WakeMed is realizing **6,000 active users a month** and has achieved half a million sessions in two years.



34%

Wayfinding services immediately took off, with **34% of users relying on the app for wayfinding assistance.**



33%

Today, **33% of users use the app to access physicians.** They also find value in such features as appointment scheduling and a search engine that helps them identify and find services and amenities.

When COVID-19 made its way into the U.S., WakeMed quickly made the mobile platform part of its pandemic preparedness strategy, adding features such as telehealth options, on-demand video visits, and targeted push notifications that let community members know when and how to enter its facilities, where to go for testing, and how to schedule a vaccination appointment.

Today, WakeMed's digital engagement offering remains a vital component for continued patient satisfaction. "The wayfinding feature is absolutely invaluable—you've got to have it—but the added value of the other functionality, all in one place in the palm of your hand, is really what makes Gozio's mobile offering unique, and the ease of use is incredible," Laughery says. "I'm so pleased to have Gozio as a partner. They knew what we wanted, and they worked hard to bring it to life."

**"From development to rollout, Gozio understood our vision for mobile engagement, and they helped us achieve our goals without a heavy lift for our IT team. With Gozio, we gained a true partner in digital strategy."**

Debbie Laughery, WakeMed Vice President of Marketing & Communications

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