

The 6 Principles of Effective Patient-Centered Design

Behavioral healthcare fragmentation exposes deep structural flaws in how healthcare systems organize access, referrals and follow-through. **Effective redesign focuses on six principles: simplicity, speed to care, shared visibility, equity by design, closed-loop coordination and technology that supports human guidance.**



1 Simplicity Over Complexity

Care should be intuitive and easy for patients to navigate

- Care pathways are clear, guided and easy to navigate
- Patients are not required to self-coordinate next steps
- Steps from referral to care are minimized and streamlined

2 Speed as a Proxy for Responsiveness

Delays are a clinical risk

- Time to placement is tracked as a core performance metric
- Outreach and scheduling happen immediately after pivotal moments
- Patients are connected to care before disengagement risk increases

3 Real-Time Visibility

You can't manage what you can't see

- Care teams have real-time visibility into referral status
- In- and out-of-network activity is visible across systems
- All stakeholders operate from a shared view of patient progression

4 Equity by Design

Access works for every patient—not just the easiest to reach

- Workflows support patients with limited digital access or literacy
- Navigation accounts for transportation, language and social barriers
- Processes are designed for real-world patient conditions

5 Closed-Loop Coordination

Referrals should result in care, not uncertainty

- Every referral is tracked through scheduled AND completed visits
- Handoffs between teams are seamless and accountable
- No referral “disappears” without confirmation of next steps risk increases

6 Technology That Enables Human Guidance

Automation should extend care teams—not replace them

- Routine tasks are automated to reduce administrative burden
- Care teams are freed to focus on high-risk, high-need patients
- Human intervention is triggered when clinical judgment is needed

High-performing organizations are demonstrating measurable improvements in care access, utilization reduction and care continuity through structured navigation models. Time from referral to appointment can be up to **8× faster when navigation is activated during the moments patients are most engaged.**

To learn more about how to unify systems to better serve patients and increase real engagement, explore **Bamboo Bridge® or **contact us.****