

The velocity of care

Accelerating patient access and outcomes through connected, real-time care journeys



WAVESTONE

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1. Executive summary

In 2026, medical innovation continues to accelerate across biologics, cell therapies, and precision medicine. However, the patient journey to access these therapies remains slowed by fragmented administrative processes.

This disconnect creates a critical gap between clinical intent and therapy initiation. The time between prescription and first dose, often referred to as Time-to-Therapy (TTT), has become one of the most significant barriers to both patient outcomes and commercial performance. Patients do not experience this as operational complexity. They experience it as waiting, uncertainty, and lack of visibility at the moments that matter most.

The Velocity of Care addresses this challenge by transforming disconnected processes into integrated, real-time patient journeys. By connecting data, workflows, and stakeholders across the ecosystem, organizations can compress time-to-therapy, reduce friction, and improve outcomes.

PATIENTS BENEFIT FROM

- Faster therapy initiation with fewer delays
- Clear, real-time visibility into their progress
- Reduced need to repeat information across touchpoints
- Personalized, timely support aligned to their needs
- Confidence in how their data is used and protected

ORGANIZATIONS BENEFIT FROM

- Reduced abandonment before therapy starts
- Improved patient lifetime value and adherence
- Greater visibility into the patient journey
- A first-party data advantage that enables predictive, data-driven engagement

30–40%

of specialty patients remain on therapy beyond a few months without support

TTT

Time-to-Therapy, the single biggest barrier to patient outcomes & commercial performance

2026

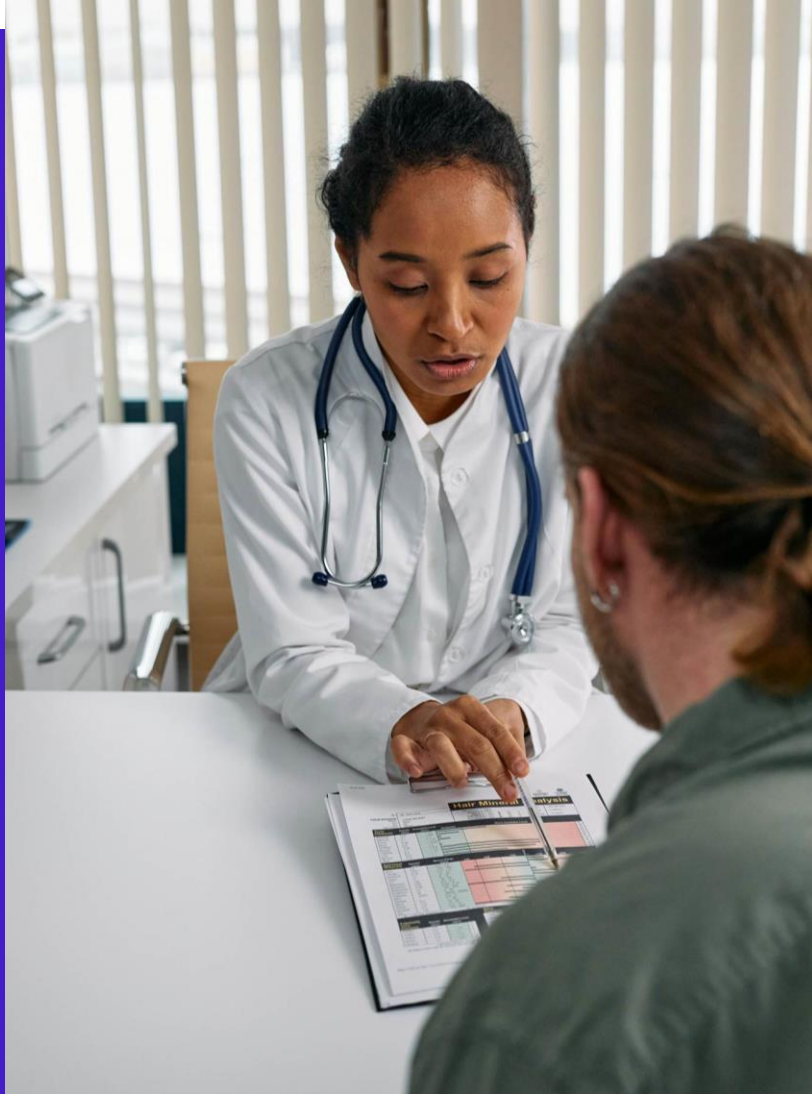
Biologics, cell therapies & precision medicine are accelerating faster than access models

“

Patients do not experience administrative delay as operational complexity, they experience it as waiting, uncertainty, and lack of visibility at the moments that matter most.



2. The time-to-therapy gap: where the journey breaks down



Across high-impact therapeutic areas such as oncology, immunology, and rare disease, the gap between prescription and first dose remains one of the largest sources of patient drop-off.

From the patient perspective, the journey often includes:

- Delays in enrollment and eligibility confirmation
- Limited visibility during benefits verification
- Uncertainty during prior authorization
- Disconnected handoffs between providers, hubs, and pharmacies

Organizations face a similar challenge, without connected data and real-time visibility, they cannot answer:

- Where delays are occurring across the journey
- Which interventions reduce time-to-therapy
- How delays impact adherence and long-term outcomes

These delays have a substantial impact. The average time-to-therapy for specialty medications frequently exceeds two weeks, particularly when coordination or authorization is required (Russell et al., 2024). This extended timeline underscores how systemic friction across the journey can compound, further widening the gap between prescription and treatment initiation.

These breakdowns create what can be understood as a Time-to-Therapy gap, where each delay increases the likelihood that a patient disengages before starting treatment.

3. The industrialization imperative: why time-to-therapy has become a leadership issue

For life sciences leaders, time-to-therapy has become a strategic constraint. What was once an operational issue is now visible in patient outcomes, revenue timing, and competitive differentiation.

1. Patient expectations

Patients now expect the same transparency and responsiveness from healthcare that they experience in other digital services. When visibility is lacking, frustration increases, often leading to disengagement.

2. Clinical and financial impact

Delays between prescription and therapy start directly impact both outcomes and revenue timing. Each day of friction increases abandonment risk and delays value realization across the portfolio.

3. Regulatory oversight and data governance




speed must coexist with audit-ready compliance. As journeys become more digital, organizations must accelerate access without increasing regulatory risk.

Together, these forces mean that access velocity is no longer a differentiator. It is now a baseline expectation. Organizations that cannot industrialize time-to-therapy performance will struggle to convert innovation into impact.



4. The anatomy of a high-velocity patient journey

Velocity Leaders accelerate care by addressing three critical friction points in the patient journey.

	 Traditional experience	 Velocity approach	 Patient benefit
The enrollment moment	Enrollment is often paper-based or delayed, with follow-up calls lacking context. As a result, patients have limited clarity on next steps.	Enrollment is completed digitally at the point of care, with immediate confirmation and guided next steps. Consent and preferences are captured seamlessly.	Immediate clarity and engagement from day one
The authorization moment	Authorization relies on manual benefits verification and prior authorization, leading to long waits without updates. This often results in rework and delays.	Authorization is driven by predictive, data-based workflows that automatically identify required documentation. Patients and providers have real-time visibility into status.	Faster approvals and reduced uncertainty
The fulfillment moment	Prescriptions are sent to specialty pharmacies with limited visibility, leading to delays from processing queues and coordination gaps. As a result, patients lack awareness of their status and next steps	Fulfillment is coordinated across pharmacies and care teams, with real-time status tracking for full visibility. Delays trigger proactive interventions to keep the process on track.	Faster therapy initiation and smoother onboarding

5. The cost of delay: quantifying patient and business impact

Delays in therapy initiation create measurable consequences for both patients and organizations.

For patients:

- Increased anxiety and uncertainty
- Higher likelihood of abandoning therapy
- Delayed clinical benefit

The clinical impact of these delays is well documented. Delays in treatment initiation are associated with a 1.2 - 3.2% increase in mortality risk per week across several early-stage cancers (Khorana et al., 2019). Prior authorization-related delays have also been linked to disease progression, preventable hospitalizations, and reduced disease-free survival (Murphy et al., 2026).

Access barriers further disrupt continuity of care. The introduction of prior authorization requirements has been shown to increase the odds of therapy discontinuation by more than sevenfold and delay subsequent treatment fills by approximately 10 days (Kyle & Keating, 2024). As delays and costs rise, abandonment becomes more likely; between 10–18% of patients abandon newly prescribed oral oncology therapies, with rates approaching 50% under higher cost and delay conditions (Streeter et al., 2011; Doshi et al., 2018).

For organizations:

- Significant patient drop-off before therapy start
- Lost revenue associated with uninitiated prescriptions
- Reduced long-term adherence and patient lifetime value

The financial impact of delayed therapy initiation is equally significant. For specialty and oncology products, each day of delay represents meaningful unrealized revenue, making time-to-therapy a material commercial risk (Smith et al., 2024).

Even modest improvements in time-to-therapy can drive meaningful impact. Reducing delays improves both patient outcomes and commercial performance by ensuring more patients successfully initiate and continue therapy.



6. The four pillars of enterprise patient operations

To move beyond delayed, fragmented care pathways and toward high-speed, coordinated patient journeys, Life Sciences organizations must adopt a **fundamentally different operating** model. Incremental improvements to existing processes are no longer sufficient to meet rising expectations around speed, transparency, and patient experience.

We consistently see leading organizations shift toward integrated experience ecosystems that connect data, workflows, and stakeholders into a unified system. This transformation enables the compression of time-to-therapy while improving visibility, coordination, and outcomes across the patient journey.

The value of this approach is already evident. Optimized patient support programs have demonstrated a **14% reduction in therapy abandonment**, along with lower downstream medical costs (IQVIA, 2021), reinforcing the impact that coordinated, patient-centric interventions can have on both outcomes and overall system efficiency.

This shift is enabled by four foundational pillars that together support the acceleration of care delivery, allowing organizations to operate with greater speed, precision, and measurable impact from prescription to therapy initiation and beyond.



PILLAR 1: THE FOUNDATION

The unified patient care platform

Patient value lead-in: patients benefit when every step from prescription to therapy initiation is connected, transparent, and easy to navigate. A unified patient care platform enables this by eliminating fragmentation and creating a single source of truth across the journey.

TRADITIONAL MODEL

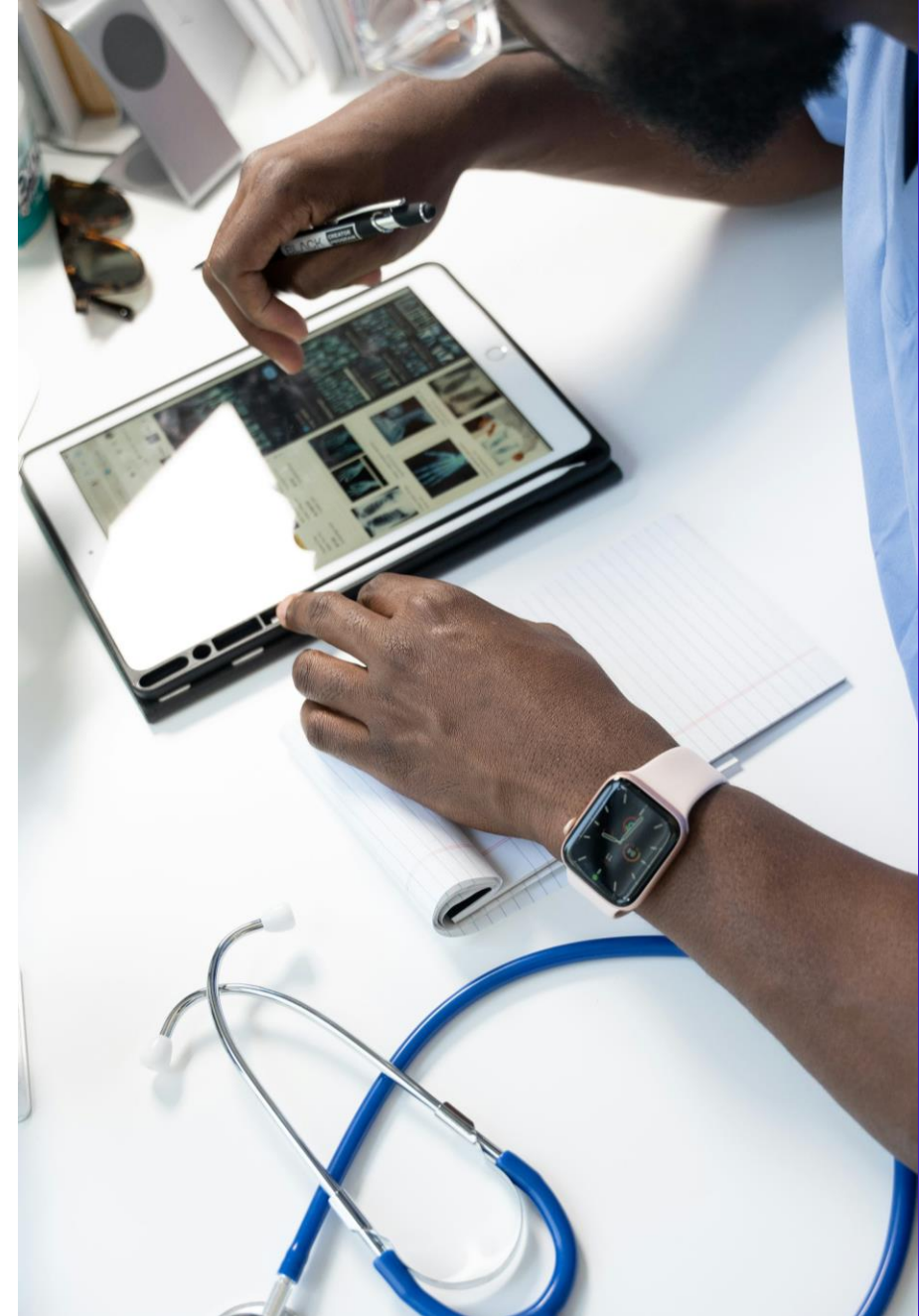
- Data fragmented across providers, hubs, and pharmacies
- Limited visibility into patient status
- Delayed, reactive decision-making

VELOCITY-DRIVEN

- Aggregates data across all care touchpoints
- Patients avoid repeating information
- Real-time visibility into patient status
- Compliance by design

Key capabilities and journey outcomes:

- Identity resolution across systems. No duplication of patient records, consistent support across all stakeholders
- Real-time journey tracking. Patients have visibility into progress from prescription to first dose
- Data integration across providers and pharmacies. Fewer handoffs and reduced delays
- Cross-channel visibility and attribution improved coordination that accelerates therapy initiation



PILLAR 2: THE ENGINE

Coordinated care operations

Once the data layer is unified, organizations can shift from reactive execution to proactive orchestration, focusing on eliminating delays at critical moments in the patient journey.

FROM

- Static workflows
- Linear, disconnected processes



TO

- Dynamic, event-driven care coordination
- AI-enabled next-best-action

Examples of patient-centric outcomes:

● Trigger interventions on delays

When delays occur in verification or authorization, patients move forward without unnecessary waiting

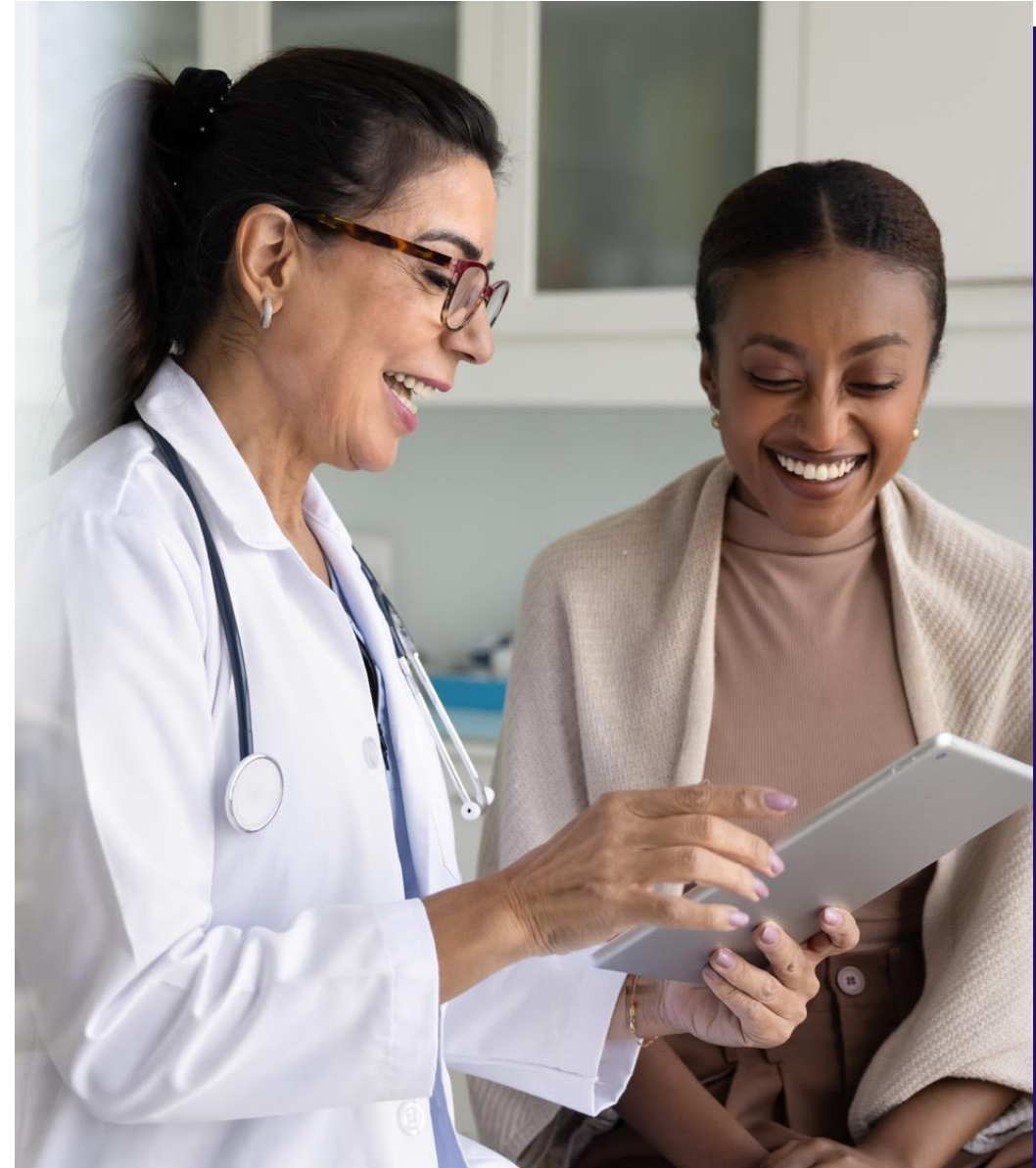
● Proactively resolve fulfillment barriers

Patients start therapy faster with fewer disruptions by resolving onboarding barriers ahead of time

● Personalize engagement in real time

Based on real-time patient status, patients receive timely, relevant support

AI-enabled, data-driven interventions allow organizations to anticipate and resolve issues before they impact the patient, creating a smoother and faster experience from end to end.





PILLAR 3: THE ENABLER

Inspection-ready governance

Patients gain confidence when their data is handled securely and transparently, especially as more of the care journey becomes digital and interconnected. Velocity of Care requires governance that ensures speed does not come at the expense of trust, privacy, or compliance.

Leading practices:

- Privacy-by-design architectures
patients' data and preferences are respected at every interaction
- End-to-end auditability
patients and regulators have confidence in transparency across the journey
- Explainable AI and decisioning
patients experience interventions that are clear, appropriate, and justifiable

Benefits:

- Reduced compliance risk
- Faster adaptation to regulatory changes
- Greater alignment across legal, medical, and commercial teams

PILLAR 4: THE COMPASS

Data-driven insights & continuous improvement

Patient value lead-in: Patients benefit when care journeys continuously improve based on real-world experience, reducing delays and creating more seamless access over time.

Organizations that lead in velocity of care use data not only to monitor performance but to actively optimize every step of the journey.

Capabilities and outcomes:

- Track KPIs tied to time-to-therapy and patient progression. Patients benefit from reduced delays and faster access to treatment
- Patients start therapy faster with fewer disruptions by resolving onboarding barriers ahead of time
- Continuous optimization loops. Patients experience smoother, faster journeys with fewer points of friction over time

By embedding continuous learning into the operating model, organizations can systematically compress time-to-therapy while improving both patient experience and long-term outcomes.



7. Reclaiming the First-Party Data Advantage

Velocity of care is enabled by visibility. Organizations that rely on fragmented vendor ecosystems lack a complete view of the patient journey, limiting their ability to anticipate delays and intervene effectively.

An integrated experience ecosystem enables:

- Real-time insight into patient progress
- Predictive identification of delays and risks
- Faster adaptation to payer and market changes
- Ownership of patient engagement data

For patients, this results in fewer delays, more personalized support, and a more seamless experience.



8. From pilot to platform: A 90-day action plan

This 90-day plan is designed to operationalize a Velocity of Care model by identifying where delays occur, designing a more connected patient journey, and rapidly activating solutions that accelerate time to therapy. The approach prioritizes both patient experience and measurable performance improvement.



DAYS 1–30: DIAGNOSE

Focus: Understand where delays occur across the patient journey

Key Activities

- Map the end-to-end patient journey from prescription to first dose
- Identify bottlenecks across enrollment, authorization, and fulfillment
- Assess data fragmentation and visibility into patient status

Outputs

- Clear view of time-to-therapy drivers and friction points
- Baseline of current journey performance

Sample KPIs

- Time-to-therapy (TTT)
- Time in each journey stage
- Drop-off before therapy initiation

DAYS 31–60: DESIGN

Focus: Define the future-state Velocity of Care model

Key Activities

- Design integrated patient, provider, and pharmacy experience
- Define unified data and orchestration approach
- Prioritize high-impact acceleration use cases

Outputs

- Defined operating model and use case roadmap
- Aligned success metrics tied to speed and experience

Sample KPIs

- Target reduction in time-to-therapy
- Faster authorization timelines
- Increased onboarding speed

DAYS 61–90: ACTIVATE

Focus: Launch use cases and validate impact

Key Activities

- Pilot 1–2 high-impact use cases
- Implement tracking and intervention workflows
- Establish governance and monitoring

Outputs

- Initial improvements in time-to-therapy
- Scalable foundation for expansion

Sample KPIs

- Reduction in time-to-therapy
- Increase in therapy initiation
- Reduction in patient drop-off

9. Conclusion

Speed as a strategic advantage

The shift is clear:

FROM: fragmented, delayed processes

TO: connected, real-time patient journeys

velocity of care is not just about improving speed. It is about transforming how patients experience access to therapy and how organizations deliver value.

Organizations that lead in this space will:

- Deliver faster, more transparent patient experiences
- Build trust through secure and personalized engagement
- Improve therapy initiation and long-term adherence
- Capture a durable advantage through first-party patient data

The competitive landscape is evolving. Success will depend on how effectively organizations remove friction from the patient journey and enable faster access to care.



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Wavestone North America is a trusted partner to Fortune 1000 leaders, delivering strategic transformation and measurable business impact across North America and beyond. Backed by a global network of experts and decades of cross-industry experience, we partner with teams across the organization to modernize operations, harness the power of data and AI, strengthen cybersecurity, and drive sustainable growth.

With operations across the US and Canada, our consultants bring a disciplined, execution-focused approach that turns strategic intent into concrete results. Boasting a proven record across complex enterprise environments, we empower organizations to achieve clarity, speed, and confidence—delivering high-impact solutions that turn ambition into results amid complexity and change.

