Awareness

Patient Experience

Awareness / Inciting Event

Miley, 40 hasn't been feeling like herself. The hot flashes come suddenly, her emotions swing without warning, and she's stretched thin between caring for her children and her aging parents. She brushes it off, telling herself she's just tired, stressed, and too busy – but deep down, she knows something is changing.

Needs

Miley needs clear, early information to understand what's happening to her body.

Pain Point

Stigma, shame, and lack of education around menopause keep suffering silent.

Cottage Experience

Description

Miley's primary care provider reviews her chart and notices several urgent care visits for fatigue, mood changes, and poor sleep—all with normal labs. She sees a quiet pattern emerging, the kind often hidden behind words like "stress" or "busy," and knows how often women downplay these symptoms.

People Involved

PCP

Systems Involved

Epic-Patient Information

Seeking Treatment

Patient Experience

Seeking Treatment

At her annual checkup, Miley finally opens up to her primary care provider, who refers her to a menopause specialist at Cottage OBGYN. The earliest appointment is two months away, leaving her to manage on her own. She turns to ChatGPT, online research, and friends for advice, eventually signing up for an online personalized hormone therapy program. After weeks on a non-FDA-approved, customized hormone cocktail with no real relief, she stops the treatment, disappointed, confused, and alone.

Needs

Miley needs timely, reliable access to menopause care and guidance.

Pain Point

Long wait times for appointments can push patients to unsafe online resources

Cottage Experience

Description

The Primary Care Provider meets with Miley and, after listening to her symptoms, recommends that she see a colleague at Cottage OBGYN. The Primary Care Provider submits the referral through Epic, which is then sent to the Cottage OBGYN office.

People Involved

PCP, Clinical Coordinator

Systems Involved

Epic-Referral

Patient Experience

Continuing Care

When her appointment at Cottage finally arrives, Miley meets with her OBGYN and shares everything she's tried. Her OBGYN recommends non-personalized, FDA-approved hormone replacement therapy. Miley hesitates but agrees, hoping this time will be different. The new treatment offers improvements, but Miley is wondering what else she can do to help her feel better, such as supplements, nutrition, or exercise. She messages her OBGYN on MyChart asking for resources on these topics.

Needs

Miley needs coordinated, ongoing support that treats her as a whole person.

Cottage Experience

Description

The OBGYN discusses Miley's menopause symptoms and recommends FDA-approved hormone therapy over unregulated personalized options. She isn't comfortable advising on nutrition or exercise, recommends some classes from the nutrition staff at Cottage and shares best-practice guidelines on lifestyle support, hoping this is enough.

People Involved

OBGYN

Systems Involved

Epic- Chat

Pain Point

Lack of support in nutrition, exercise, sleep and mental health resources outside of HRT.

Patient Experience

Leaving Cottage Health

Miley wasn't satisfied with the limited resources Cottage Health offered and wanted a more holistic approach that included nutrition, movement, and whole-body wellness. Feeling her care focused too narrowly on medication, she began looking elsewhere. When a friend invites her to an open house at Coastal Well Woman, she's excited by their holistic approach to wellness through a curriculum of hormones, nutrition, exercise, and mental health. Miley decides to switch providers.

Needs

Miley needs a holistic approach to addressing perimenopause

Pain Point

Patient's desire for holistic services drives them to seek alternative care.

Cottage Experience

Description

At Cottage Health, the care team notes Miley's improvement with hormone therapy but recognizes her need for nutrition and movement support, which the clinic does not currently offer. When she misses her next appointment, the clinic coordinator calls to follow up, and Miley shares that she's continued her care elsewhere.

People Involved

Clinic Coordinator, OBGYN

Systems Involved

Epic - Patient Chart, Phone Call

Pain Point

Cottage Health is losing patients to competitors because there is not enough support for nutrition, mental health, and exercise.

Outcome

Patient Experience

Resolution

Miley's menopause symptoms have eased, and she feels more balanced. Her care team—a menopause specialist, nutritionist, physical therapist, and counselor—works together in tandem to support her. With better sleep, steadier moods, and renewed energy, she now mentors younger colleagues and feels informed, empowered, and at peace in her body.

Needs

Miley needs integrated, proactive care that adapts to her changing body and supports long-term wellness.

Cottage Experience

Description

The Cottage team notes in Miley's chart that she's transitioned care to an external provider. This sparks internal conversations about integrating lifestyle and wellness programs into women's health services at Cottage Health.

People Involved

Clinic Coordinators

Systems Involved

Epic- Patient Chart