# Clearstep

Driving Outcomes through AI Chat-Based Solutions for Triage and
Patient Engagement

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## Clearstep: Driving Outcomes through AI Chat-Based Solutions for Triage and Patient Engagement

### Why This Spotlight?

Facing staffing challenges and an increasingly consumer-centric market, healthcare organizations need software that drives outcomes like improved care flow and decreased burden on nurse triage lines. This report details customers' experience with Clearstep , who offers AI chat-based solutions that facilitate triage, in conjunction with other patient engagement–focused digital health platforms.

### What Does Clearstep Do?
(a customer explains)

*"Clearstep provides a digital entryway for our patients and website visitors to self-assess their symptoms and identify the proper point of care that they need. Clearstep helps users identify their acuity of care need and gives the users confidence in whether they need to see providers or specialists for their symptoms. After users put in their symptoms, they receive recommendations for their next care steps."* —VP/executive

### Bottom Line

Most interviewed customers feel Clearstep is well positioned to have long-term viability in the healthcare market. Key factors in their satisfaction include the triage product, involvement by clinical teams in product development, innovation, Clearstep's receptiveness to feedback, and vendor partnership. Most providers would like to see continued product development—they specifically want to see a shorter workflow, improved symptom-checker capabilities, closure of administrative gaps, and the ability to more fully white-label the product.

### Key Competitors (as reported by Clearstep)
Ada, GYANT, Loyal Health

### Top Reasons Selected
Product's quick impact for patients and providers, cutting-edge innovation, partnership with providers, commitment to the product

### Number of Customers Interviewed by KLAS
4 individuals from 4 unique organizations (Clearstep shared a list of 8 unique organizations; the list represents 100% of the customers that are eligible for inclusion in this study)
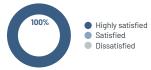
### Survey Respondents—by Organization Type (n=4)

- Large-hospital health systems
- Clinics

| 75% | 25% |
|---|---|

0%         100%

## Clearstep
## Customer Experience: An Initial Look

### Overall Customer Satisfaction (n=4)

**100%**
- Highly satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied

### Time to See Outcomes (n=3)

**33%**
**67%**
- Immediately
- Within 6 months
- 6–12 months
- Over 12 months
- No outcomes yet

### Outcomes Expected by Customers

| ✓ Achieved | ★ Unexpected outcome |
|---|---|
| ⏳ Pending | ✕ Not achieved |

| Outcome | |
|---|---|
| Improved flow of care | ✓ |
| Decreased burden on nurse triage lines | ✓ |
| Translating patient symptoms into actionable steps | ✓ |
| Ability to get patient to the right level of care | ✓ |
| Higher net promoter scores | ✓ |
| High physician buy-in | ★ |

### Key Performance Indicators (1–9 scale)

| Supports integration goals | Product has needed functionality | Executive involvement | Likely to recommend |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A+** | **A-** | **A+** | **A+** |
| (n=4) | (n=4) | (n=4) | (n=4) |

**Would you buy again?** (n=4)
- ● Yes
- ● No

**100%**

**Software grading scale**

| A+ = 8.55–9.0 | B+ = 7.65–7.91 | C+ = 6.75–7.01 | D+ = 5.85–6.11 | F = <5.22 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A = 8.19–8.54 | B = 7.29–7.64 | C = 6.39–6.74 | D = 5.49–5.84 | |
| A- = 7.92–8.18 | B- = 7.02–7.28 | C- = 6.12–6.38 | D- = 5.22–5.48 | |

### Adoption of Key Functionality—by Organization
Percentage of interviewed organizations using functionality (n=4)
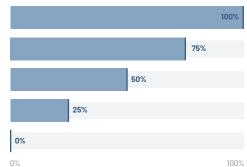
**Virtual Triage:** Empowers patients to self-navigate or triage to the best next steps for their personalized care — **100%**

**Specialist Triage:** Ensures every triage workflow correctly directs patients to a specialist when appropriate — **75%**

**Call Center Support:** Enables non-clinical call center agents to accurately triage patients with the effectiveness of a nurse triage line — **50%**

**Patient Services:** Automates common patient requests and key touchpoints, aimed at reducing administrative burden — **25%**

**Clinical Journeys[†]:** Streamlines patient and care-team communication around post-discharge/diagnosis follow-ups, support, and remote monitoring — **0%**

0%         100%

† Clearstep reports one non-provider customer (not interviewed for this research) uses this functionality.

## Strengths

"

**Commitment to excellence through patient-first innovation**

*"I applaud Clearstep for their dedication and commitment to excellence. Clearstep's strength is definitely patient-first innovation. The vendor's mission is really grounded in improving patient care and health outcomes. That is their strength; their purpose and mission are driving innovation, and that makes them a great partner for us to work with." —VP/executive*

**Strong product and partnership**

*"Clearstep's strength is the foundation they have built with a triage tool that supports care navigation. . . . Some other strengths are the vendor's willingness to partner with customers, willingness to work with EMR vendors, and data transparency, which is delivered through the client dashboards that show how the tool is being used." —VP/executive*

**Great people driving product development, open to provider feedback**

*"Clearstep is a very good organization with great people and a good product. They are customer focused and have extremely rapid development. They are very tech savvy. . . . Clearstep will come to us to ask whether they can do things in partnership with us. . . . We selected Clearstep for their entrepreneurial spirit and their devotion to the product itself." —Director*

## Opportunities

"

**Shorten workflows and more white-labeling capabilities**

*"The vendor needs to fine-tune some things. . . . Clearstep could have more of a true white label so that we wouldn't see their branding so much. Some of the workflows are too long as well." —VP/executive*

**Further development of symptom checker, expanding navigation services, and closing administrative gaps**

*"The symptom checker piece that the vendor has started is a good base, but consumers will get frustrated with that piece. As the vendor continues to evolve, navigation services and closing administrative gaps will be the vendor's places of growth." —VP/executive*

## Points to Ponder

### What does a customer need to do to be successful with this solution?

#### Vendor explains

- ☐ **Standardize and maintain provider directories and scheduling templates:** This enables Clearstep online scheduling integration for a more seamless user experience. Customers who have fully integrated online scheduling realize about three time higher engagement and booking rates than customers who have not.
- ☐ **Actively engage and partner with marketing teams:** This ensures Virtual Triage is promoted and prominently positioned on the system's digital platforms in ways that encourage new and current patient consumers actively looking for care resources to take advantage of Clearstep.
- ☐ **Understand how Virtual Triage (and Clearstep's other modules) fit into the organization's strategic road map:** Know what specific goals/expectations are for leveraging a solution like Clearstep (e.g., improved patient routing, improved digital experience, improved patient engagement, new patient acquisition, reducing administrative burdens, etc.)
- ☐ **Make historical, anonymized outpatient visit data available to Clearstep to perform an ROI analysis:** With access to such data, Clearstep can generate an ROI model that outlines where there is the biggest need for more optimal care routing at your system to offload unnecessary demand and bring in higher RVU patients. Our ROI model informs product configuration and marketing strategies.

#### What is the long-term viability of the solution?

Customers feel Clearstep is invested in and committed to being successful in the industry. The product is viewed as highly viable, as well as trustworthy and credible. Customers feel that the product meets patient needs. If Clearstep keeps on their current path, customers say the vendor will continue to be a viable and strategic partner and will be poised for use in multiple healthcare markets.

#### Customers explain

- ☐ **Communicate frequently and openly:** *"To be successful with Clearstep's product, people just need open communication. When I get stuck on something, I ask Clearstep for help, and that has been successful. Being clearly aligned on our business goal or the problem we are trying to solve has taken us very far. Having that partnership is what makes the difference. I don't consider Clearstep a vendor as much as a partner. They are very willing to work with us." —VP/executive*
- ☐ **Take advantage of customization:** *"We can customize several features if we desire. . . . We have done extensive customizations, and the vendor's development team is actually very easy to work with and very open to new ideas and solutions." —Manager*

# Clearstep: Company Profile at a Glance

**Founders**
Adeel Malik (CEO), Bilal Naved (Chief Product Officer)

**Year founded**
2018

**Headquarters**
Chicago, Illinois

**Number of customers**
18 total customers/8 unique organizations live; 5 unique organizations under contract

**Number of employees**
22

**Estimated revenue**
$3.5M ARR

**Funding**
Clearstep has raised $5M in seed funding and plans to raise Series A funding in 2023 or 2024

**Revenue model**
Clearstep is free for end users (patient consumers), and health system and payer partners pay a monthly software licensing fee to leverage a white-labeled, fully configured instance of Clearstep for their system/network. Our licensing fee is also incremented based on product modules and feature selections.

**Target customer**
Health systems, multi-specialty medical groups, pharmacy retail organizations, payers

## Healthcare Executive Interview

**Adeel Malik,**
CEO

**Bilal Naved,**
CPO

### What is your background?
Clearstep's founders have backgrounds in healthcare consulting and in biomedical engineering. Clearstep's CEO came from doing biomedical R&D at Johns Hopkins to working at Accenture to shape the digital health road map of large technology and retail health players. Clearstep's chief product officer has more than a decade of biomedical R&D experience, generating >10M in funding by age 25, and was in the midst of his dual MD/PhD program at Northwestern when he founded Clearstep.

### Why was Clearstep started?
Clearstep was started to make healthcare easier. We envision bringing the same frictionless and transparent experience we've come to expect from all other industries to healthcare. We strive to democratize access to healthcare information by enabling each one of us to receive clinical care guidance, tailored to our insurance plans, location, and personal preferences, by responding to <15 questions. From the onset, we wanted to build a solution analogous to Zocdoc combined with Intercom, but with the intelligence that Watson was trying to achieve, all accessible via the same entry points that many already seek healthcare guidance from (Google and their health system).

### What are Clearstep's biggest differentiators?
Clinical intelligence is our foremost differentiator: our triage is evidence-based, built off gold-standard content, and is the only chat-based triage solution on the market built off Schmitt Clinical Content. Other differentiators include a fast AI chat and an NPS 4x the industry average, and Clearstep is the most configurable care-routing solution available. We are white-label, offer plug-and-play features, and allow configurability. Finally, our Virtual Triage focuses on directing patients to the correct level of care and not differential diagnosis. Providers often prefer Clearstep because patients are given a single best step rather than a list of possible diagnoses, each with its own respective step.

## Solution Technical Specifications (provided by Clearstep)

**Cloud environment**
AWS

**Development platform**
Go, GinGonic back end, Preact front end

**Database environment**
PostgreSQL

**Mobile application environment**
Progressive web application for mobile web; API is an option for customers

**Security platform**
ISO 27001, SOC2

**Confidentiality**
HIPAA compliant, BAAs with each partner

**Data encryption**
SSL and Key Management Service (KMS) (256-bit Advanced Encryption Standard [AES] keys)

**Integration approach**
HL7/FHIR; integrates with Epic, Cerner, athenahealth, and eClinicalworks healow

**HITRUST certification**
Clearstep is HITRUST compliant and can fulfill the certification need upon client request

**AI**
Yes

# Report Information

## Clearstep Performance Overview
All standard software performance indicators

### Culture

| Culture | | |
|---|---|---|
| Keeps all promises (percent of respondents who answered yes) | (n=4) | 100% |
| Proactive service (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |
| Product works as promoted (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |

### Loyalty

| Loyalty | | |
|---|---|---|
| Forecasted satisfaction (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |
| Likely to recommend (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |
| Overall satisfaction (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A |
| Part of long-term plans (percent of respondents who answered yes) | (n=4) | 100% |
| Would you buy again (percent of respondents who answered yes) | (n=4) | 100% |

### Operations

| Operations | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ease of use (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A |
| Quality of implementation (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A |
| Quality of training (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A |

### Product

| Product | | |
|---|---|---|
| Delivery of new technology (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |
| Overall product quality (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A |
| Product has needed functionality (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A- |
| Supports integration goals (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |

### Relationship

| Relationship | | |
|---|---|---|
| Executive involvement (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |
| Quality of phone/web support (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A+ |

### Value

| Value | | |
|---|---|---|
| Avoids charging for every little thing (percent of respondents who answered yes) | (n=4) | 100% |
| Drives tangible outcomes (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A |
| Money's worth (1–9 scale) | (n=4) | A |

### Software grading scale

| | | | |
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# KLAS
## RESEARCH

### Our Mission
Improving the world's healthcare through collaboration, insights, and transparency.

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