

Why the holdup in patient portals?

Patient portals are clearly underutilized as a patient resource. Although their use is increasing among a population hungry for health information, what can industry do to foster and promote their use?



Joe Meadows
President, Think Patients LLC

Content, content, content! Portals are all about patient engagement, the holy grail that eludes both healthcare providers and pharmaceutical brands. But often patients don't make better use of portals because there is limited information available about how to use them and what they are. Pharma can help change that. Providers actually need more information for patients about how to use specific products than they need disease state info (which they usually have). Brands often have this in both print and video. Making that content available by working with an EHR company, aggregator or health system (depending on the situation) gives the patient another reason to visit the portal and supplies providers with content they can't get anywhere else.



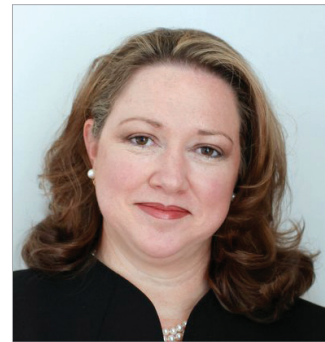
Craig Kemp
Innovative Partnerships, Merck Vaccines

Don't be quick to judge the future of patient engagement health technology. They were mandated by the federal government's Meaningful Use program. What you see today is just the start. The next stage of Meaningful Use will allow consumers to download and transmit their own personal health information. This will drive development of the long-awaited personal health record. Technology companies will soon launch user-friendly PHR apps that will transform patient engagement and open new opportunities at the point of care. Our industry is continually innovating point-of-care patient education to help patients achieve better health outcomes through our medicines. There will be a great need for our educational content in the new patient engagement health technology of the future.



Mark Heinold
CEO, PDR and PoC3 board member

This is another factor in the "virtual point of care" — awareness that communication with patients can and must happen anywhere and at their convenience. But healthcare providers focus on direct delivery of care, so it's difficult for them to catch up with technical and regulatory demands, including Meaningful Use guidelines on a certain percentage of patients who must be using portals. Our first step in making portals more ubiquitous is helping physicians understand their value: to efficiently receive and communicate information, learn about changes in a patient's condition, reinforce therapeutic advice and enhance adherence. Second, we can provide tactics, educational materials and other useful backup to assist HCPs in building the use and effectiveness of their own portals to complete the cycle of care so everyone benefits.



Nanette Oddo
General manager, patient communication, Phreesia and PoC3 board member

Portals can play a critical role in engaging patients in their care by allowing them to access their medical records, communicate with physicians and schedule appointments. But these benefits are only realized if patients actually use them. One solution to boost flagging adoption rates? Leverage the in-office visit as a key opportunity to educate patients about the portal's benefits by registering them before they enter the exam room. The point-of-care industry can enhance adoption and utilization rates by clearly communicating portal value and providing tools for seamless real-time registration.

Got a forum question or comment?

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“One solution? Leverage in-office visits as opportunities to teach patients about portals while registering them”