



Individuals' Ability to Electronically Access Their Hospital Medical Records, Perform Key Tasks is Growing

Hospitals have prioritized investment in health information technology (IT) to support the sharing of patient information among clinicians. The value of hospital adoption of electronic health records (EHRs) also extends to patients,

who now have more secure electronic access to their medical information than ever before.

A growing number of individuals also are able to perform everyday health care tasks,

such as making a medical appointment online with their hospital-based care providers. Offering these capabilities allows patients to more easily access their providers and engage in their care.

Vast Majority of Hospitals Offer Individuals Online Access to Medical Records

Individuals request access to their medical records for a variety of reasons, such as reviewing instructions from their physician from a previous visit, checking the results of laboratory tests, or keeping track of their personal health history. In the past, performing these tasks typically involved a formal request to the hospital's medical records department, which could provide a paper copy of the patient's record.

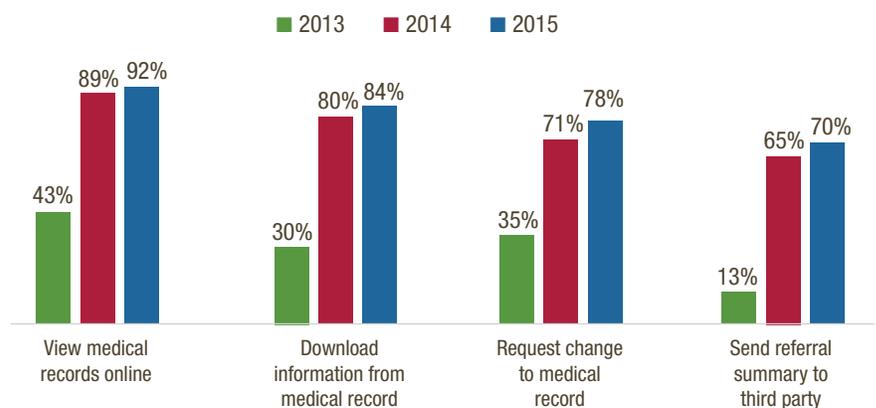
With the adoption of EHRs, medical records are now stored in electronic format. This transition has allowed hospitals to offer individuals online access to their medical records. In 2015:¹

- 92 percent of hospitals offered the ability to view medical records, compared to 43 percent of hospitals in 2013.

- 84 percent of hospitals allowed patients to download information from their medical record, up from 30 percent of hospitals in 2013.

- 70 percent of hospitals allowed a referral summary to be sent to a third party; only 13 percent of hospitals offered this function in 2013.

Over 90% of hospitals offer the capability to view medical records online; most offer the ability to perform related tasks.



¹ Data from the 2015 AHA Annual Survey Information Technology Supplement. All reported results are unweighted.

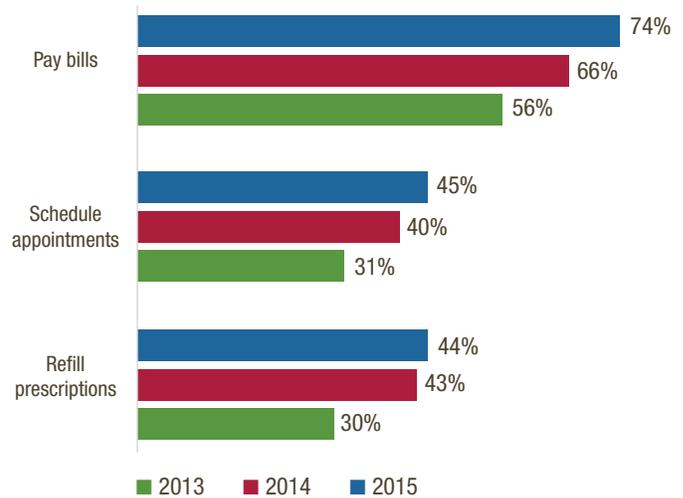
An Increasing Number of Hospitals Offer Individuals the Ability to Complete Routine Medical Tasks Online

Hospitals also are able, in many cases, to offer patients the ability to perform everyday health care tasks online. These capabilities include the ability to schedule appointments, order prescription refills and submit payment.

Offering these functions can be complex, as it integrates data from other areas within the hospital, such as scheduling, pharmacy and revenue cycle systems, which may not be easy to connect. As hospitals invest in solutions to allow online collaboration between units, the ability to offer these services will continue to expand. In 2015:

- 74 percent of hospitals provided the capability of paying bills online, up from 56 percent in 2013.
- 45 percent of hospitals allowed patients to schedule appointments online, in comparison to 31 percent in 2013.
- 44 percent of hospitals were able to allow patients to refill prescriptions online; 30 percent of patients could order refills in 2013.

A growing number of hospitals provide patients the ability to perform routine health care-related tasks online.

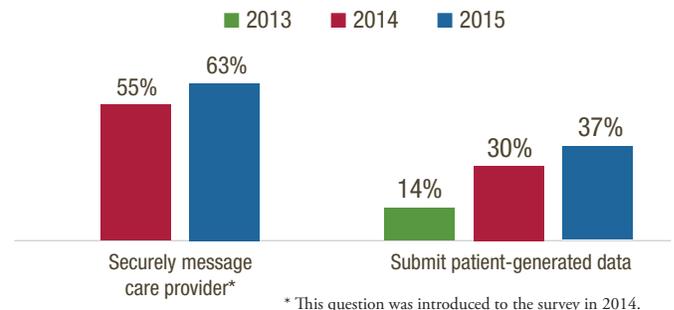


The Ability for Individuals to Communicate Online with Providers Continues to Expand

Between in-person visits, patients may have questions for providers that would otherwise require a phone call or another visit to the office. However, a growing number of hospitals now provide an additional way for patients to communicate with their care providers between visits. In 2015, 63 percent of hospitals allowed patients to message their providers online, an increase of 8 percentage points from 2014.

A smaller, but increasing, percentage of hospitals allow their patients to submit patient-generated data to their provider online, which can help physicians monitor and evaluate the patient's condition between visits. Thirty-seven percent of hospitals provided the ability for patients to submit data in 2015, a significant increase from 14 percent of hospitals in 2013.

The ability to communicate with hospital-based providers online is becoming more commonplace.



Key Takeaways

Hospitals are offering individuals more electronic access to their medical information than ever before. Patients also have a growing ability to interact with their providers and to perform routine tasks online. As more hospitals are able to offer these services, individuals will have more insight into their medical data and the ability to interact with care providers at times and in ways that are convenient for the patient.