It may be time to reassess your consumer digital interface

A recent study indicates that new and expanding health care disruptors are outperforming 90% of health systems in providing a seamless, integrated digital experience for consumers. The “Healthcare Consumer Digital Experience Analysis” shows that many provider organizations lack the digital engagement expertise to compete effectively with leading disruptors in health care. The analysis and research were conducted by Navigant, a Guidehouse company, and Centric Digital, which offers a platform to measure an enterprise’s core digital footprint.

Among the findings:

- Only about one-third of health systems publish emergency department (ED) wait times on their websites vs. 60% of the top urgent care facilities.
- Less than half (45%) of health systems allow prospective patients to search for available appointment times or request appointment information without logging into a portal, compared with 75% of health care disruptors.
- Disruptors outperform health systems by 34% in search engine optimization for care needs.
These and other data in the analysis suggest that provider organizations are at risk of losing consumers to disruptors offering more patient-friendly ways to access routine, lower-acuity care.

There was some good news for providers. Health systems scored in the excellent range for providing safe and secure browsing and communication. They were also classified as leading for screen and device responsiveness on the availability of content and ease of use when accessed through different mobile screen sizes and operations.

4 takeaways for a consumer-friendly digital experience

Make it easy for consumers to consider you: Lehigh Valley Health Network was cited as a best-practice example for the site’s ability to get consumers to consider contacting the organization. The site makes a strong first impression by presenting an uncluttered user interface with obvious calls to action on how to learn about walk-in care, video visits, scheduling appointments and finding a doctor.

Respect consumers’ time: Posting current ED wait times and making other essential information easy to find on your website matters to patients.

Make the digital consumer experience a priority: Develop a sense of urgency and budget appropriately so that your online experience meets consumer expectations.

Know your competition: It’s not just about the other health care providers in your area. Disruptors have set a high bar on meeting consumer digital expectations that must be met. Budget accordingly and always design with the consumer in mind.

ALEXA CAN NOW ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT 1,500 MOST-PRESCRIBED DRUGS

Amazon continues to grow its partnerships with health care technology companies as it expands its access points with consumers. The latest move: a deal with drug and medical
database company First Databank (FDB) that will allow Amazon’s Alexa voice-assistant users to ask for information on the 1,500 most commonly prescribed drugs in the U.S.

The initiative will leverage concise clinical drug information authored specifically for Alexa by FDB clinicians, based on their reviews of the most relevant content from each company’s proprietary drug information monographs. The project also provides custom content that allows consumers to ask about a drug’s effects — interactions, side effects, precautions and the drug’s class. The custom data file will provide information in English and Spanish and will be updated regularly.

The feature adds a new dimension of care management to Amazon’s HIPAA-compliant voice assistant, which now has a 70% share of the U.S. home voice assistant market, according to Healthcare Dive. FDB officials argue that the information provided by the service will lead to improved medication adherence, a reduction in adverse drug events and better patient outcomes.

DISSECTING HEALTH CARE’S DISRUPTORS

Disruption is taking hold of health care, with major pharmacy chains, payers, technology companies and others making their presence felt. A new AHA Center for Health Innovation Market Insights report “Disruption in Health Care” examines some of the key moves by Amazon, Apple, CVS Health/Aetna, Google/Alphabet, Walgreens and Walmart over the past year. The report also explores how these developments may support the firms’ larger ambitions and provides insights on what moves these disruptors may make in 2020.

We want to hear from you! Please send your feedback to Bob Kehoe at rkehoe@aha.org.