



AHA TRANSFORMATION TALKS

STRATEGIES FOR REIMAGINING HEALTH CARE

Advancing Digital Patient Engagement — Opportunities for Differentiation

Rapid advancement in mobile digital health technologies has given consumers greater control over their care and the ability to engage more deeply with providers.

Nevertheless, consumers' experiences are far from consistent as they use virtual care, symptom checkers, chatbots, provider search apps, online scheduling and myriad other tools and apps. Many patients report unsatisfactory experiences related to ease of use, siloed functionality and other factors.

Organizations working to implement solutions have run into challenges of cost and integration complexity and are struggling with creating a seamless user experience on par with familiar and widely used retail solutions.

Findings from a health care consumer survey conducted by Black Book Market Research underscore what this means to consumers.

90% of patients say they no longer feel obligated to stay with a provider who doesn't offer an overall satisfactory digital experience.

88% of respondents younger than 40 say they will choose their next medical provider based on a strong online presence.

83% of consumers will seek providers that offer four fundamental technologies: digital scheduling, online payment options, portal and engagement opportunities, and reporting tools for test results.

This reinforces the importance for provider organizations to develop and implement a tightly integrated mobile strategy that ties together all consumer-facing digital elements to create a seamless experience across the entire patient journey.

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3 Keys to Meeting Patient Needs

Surveys demonstrate some of the most important things patients want in their digital experiences:

- 90% want to self-manage their care leveraging technology, **according to a Practice Builders report.**
- 77% want the ability to schedule, change or cancel appointments online, **notes an Accenture patient engagement study.**
- Nearly two-thirds of consumers plan to continue using telehealth after the pandemic subsides, **according to a 2021 Harris Poll.**

In addition to these areas, a hospital or health system's digital front door also must provide consumers with a personalized mobile experience when accessing electronic health records. Likewise, integrating mobile wayfinding across a health system's multiple campuses and clinics has become a common patient expectation.

Addressing these consumer needs requires a comprehensive digital strategy and platform. It is not a simple matter of "if you build it, they will come." Provider organizations must offer seamless access through their digital front-door channels.

A well-executed digital front-door strategy benefits both patients and providers, making every care point easy for patients to access and simple for hospitals or health systems to manage. The digital front-door strategy also helps health systems tap into automation, translating into greater efficiency.

In short, there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to a digital front-door strategy. It varies by organization. Frame your strategy after a thorough analysis of your organization's critical challenges and areas for improvement.

To help your organization transform, visit the AHA Transformation Talks **resources page.**

Discussion Questions:

1. **Why is creating a systemwide digital front door important in today's health care environment?**
2. **How can this strategy impact patient engagement and care delivery in other areas?**
3. **What essential areas need to be addressed in framing a digital front-door strategy?**
4. **What are some best practices for selecting a platform partner?**