

# THE 2017 PATIENT ENGAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES STUDY



Discussions about patient engagement – including its potential for reducing healthcare costs and improving outcomes – have moved into the spotlight as the U.S. market evolves from a fee-for-service to a pay-for-performance model. As patients and healthcare providers have a large stake in this increasingly important conversation, **CDW's 2017 Patient Engagement Perspectives Study** examines the topic from two vantage points – the consumer/patient perspective and the provider perspective.

This year's study builds on our 2016 research to explore the drivers, challenges, and influences for patient engagement, as well as the evolving role that communication and technology – including portals and telemedicine – play in its expansion.

## PATIENT ENGAGEMENT CONTINUES TO RISE

**70%** of patients say that they have become more engaged with their healthcare during the past two years – up from **57%** in 2016



### TOP PATIENT CHANGES INCLUDE:

- Joining a patient portal offered by my healthcare provider **74%** (up from **45%** in 2016)
- Speaking to healthcare providers more frequently (**69%**)
- Accessing healthcare information more frequently (**69%**)

When asked what motivated them to become more engaged with their healthcare, patients said their top two drivers were greater online access to personal healthcare records and access to online patient portals

## PROVIDERS ARE TAKING ACTION

- **66%** have noticed a change in their patients' level of engagement with their own healthcare
- **71%** say improving patient engagement is a top priority at their organization (up from **60%** in 2016) and **80%** are working on a way to make personal healthcare records easier to access (up from **67%** in 2016)

### TOP MOTIVATING FACTORS INCLUDE:



**67%**  
Important part of  
improving overall care



**56%**  
Technology  
advancements



**55%**  
Meaningful Use  
requirements

## BUT CHALLENGES REMAIN

Despite progress, just **29%** of patients would give their healthcare providers an "A" for their use of technology to interact with and engage patients



**89%** of patients would like to be able to more easily access their personal healthcare records

## COMMUNICATION IS KEY TO ENGAGEMENT

- Patients have noticed providers supporting engagement through:
  - Encouraging them to access their healthcare information: **83%** (up from **61%** in 2016)
  - Offering them the ability to sign up for a patient portal: **81%** (up from **62%** in 2016)
  - Communicating via email: **53%** (up from **44%** in 2016)
  - Creating a mobile application to access healthcare information: **35%** (up from **20%** in 2016)
- Over the past two years, providers say they've used the following methods to interact more frequently with patients:



**76%**  
Online patient portals



**53%**  
Email



**25%**  
Mobile applications

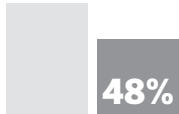


**21%**  
Texts

## PATIENTS SEE BENEFITS TO ONLINE ACCESS

- **95%** of patients have experienced benefits from engagement with their personal healthcare information online. Top benefits include:

**70%**



2017 2016  
Becoming more knowledgeable about personal medical information

**60%**



2017 2016  
Saving time

**50%**



2017 2016  
Increasing overall engagement with personal healthcare

**49%**



2017 2016  
Improving the overall convenience of healthcare

**46%**



2017 2016  
Preventing phone calls/appointments

## THE POWER OF THE PATIENT PORTALS



**98%** of patients say that they can access a patient portal (up from **60%** in 2016)

**81%** of providers who have improved their engagement with patients credit the availability of patient portals

**62%** of patients are using online patient portals more today than two years ago

- Over the last year, online patient portals have surpassed web-based access to healthcare information as the number one method for encouraging patient engagement for both patients and providers
- Older patients are becoming more receptive to patient portals. In 2016, only **34%** of those aged **50+** said they used patient portals at least monthly. This year, **53%** said they used a portal at least monthly
- Additionally, **78%** of patients with access to patient portals say they have helped them take a more active role in their healthcare
- Beyond increasing patient engagement, providers say online patient portals have: improved overall patient care (**43%**), improved records tracking (**31%**), and increased office efficiency (**29%**)

## PATIENTS ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY COMFORTABLE WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

**98%** of patients feel comfortable communicating with providers via online patient portals



**83%**

are comfortable communicating via mobile apps



**77%**

are comfortable with texts



**75%**

are comfortable with online chat



**69%**

are comfortable with video chat



Just

**34%**

however, are comfortable communicating via social media

- **64%** of patients say that if they could, they would submit personal, real-time healthcare information to their provider in an effort to improve their health
  - However, this varies by age – **54%** of patients 50 or older would be willing to submit real-time healthcare information to their provider vs. **74%** of 18–49 year-old patients

## BUT, TELEMEDICINE IS NOT YET GAINING TRACTION

- Today, just **30%** of patients say telemedicine would be somewhat or very valuable in allowing them to become more engaged in their healthcare



Just **9%** of providers are "very comfortable" with the idea of telemedicine;

Another **46%** are "somewhat comfortable"

- As for patients, **20%** of patients are "very comfortable" with the idea of telemedicine; another **29%** are "somewhat comfortable"
- According to providers, one in three practices (**32%**) offer telemedicine today. However, just **23%** of providers with telemedicine capabilities have used them

### PROVIDERS TOP CONCERNS ARE:



**70%**

Their ability to have a thorough consultation over video



**43%**

Privacy concerns



**35%**

Lack of patient's familiarity with the technology

### PATIENTS AGREE AND ADD PERSONAL COMFORT TO THE LIST:

- Doctor's ability to have a thorough consultation over video (**58%**)
- Personal comfort (**38%**)
- Privacy concerns (**36%**)

## PROVIDERS SHARE ADVICE FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

- Understand patients' needs: identify what they are looking for in a portal and implement an easy-to-use interface to ensure patients of every knowledge and education level are able to use the system
- Ensure support is available: consider if you will have enough staff to support the new systems and whether there is IT support to handle any issue
- Educate patients on portals during visits: make it clear how, when and why patients should use the portal to increase engagement
- Safeguard patient information: ensure patient privacy by carefully establishing security measures

To learn more about powering patient care through technology, visit **CDW Healthcare Communit**.

