3 TIPS FOR

Improving Quality Patient Engagement

Introduction

"Extensive research has shown that no matter how knowledgeable a clinician might be, if he or she is not able to open good communication with the patient, he or she may be of no help." [1]

Patients perceive that the quality of care they receive is highly dependent on the quality of interactions with their healthcare clinician and team. And those feelings couldn't be stronger today where patients want a personal, human connection with their providers even when they are not in the same room.

While the simplest way to improve engagement starts with day-to-day communication, many organizations struggle to find effective ways to communicate with their patients.

By connecting with patients in the manner they prefer, caregivers are able to create personal connections that are foundational to building trust, leading to increased engagement, and improved outcomes.

With 96% of Americans owning either a cell phone or a smartphone, many choose text messaging as their preferred method of communication. [2]

A recent survey reported that 60% of patients want to use technology more for communicating with healthcare providers and managing their care. [3] With technology at the forefront of the patient experience, healthcare providers are adopting a digital-first approach to managing care.

As providers adapt to the new normal, one thing has become clear. If healthcare organizations want to deliver exceptional experiences that drive long-term patient outcomes, they need the right technology in place.

60%

of patients want to use technology more for communicating with healthcare providers and managing their care. [3]

Source: Accenture

[1] https://healthcarecomm.org/about-us/impact-of-communication-in-healthcare

[2] https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile

[3] https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/life-sciences/coronavirus-patient-behavior-research

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Using Two-way Communication to Boost Quality Engagement

1   **Engage Patients on Their Terms**

Traditional communication methods are no longer as effective today. Patients want to engage on their terms, and in many cases, that means through messaging, not phone calls and emails. In fact, people are likely to respond via SMS 7x more than by phone.[4] It's how consumers communicate important updates and plans to co-workers and loved ones and it's how a growing majority want to engage in businesses.

With 67% of adults not picking up a call from an unknown or identified number, texting is now the most common form of communication.[5] Not only can messaging provide a way to inform and support patients in real time throughout their journey, it can also provide a far more effective way to gather timely feedback.

Often, communicating directly with a patient via mobile messaging before, during and after a patient's appointment is far more beneficial than waiting until the patient has left and there is no way to address any issues along the way. If the results show an unsatisfactory experience, an alert is sent for someone to follow up in the moment. This approach ensures organizations are acting and addressing their concerns in real time.

But it isn't just mobile that is important. Your signal collection toolkit needs to include a range of methods and instruments — SMS text, web chat, messaging apps — that are integrated on the back end to create one source of truth and to catch patients when and how they want to engage.

67%

of adults will not pick up a call from an unknown number.[5]

Source: Pew Research Center

[4] https://snapdesk.app/texting-vs-calling-vs-email-pros-and-cons/

[5] https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/12/14/most-americans-dont-answer-cellphone-calls-from-unknown-numbers/

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2 **Ensure Patients Feel Heard**

The most crucial step in building patient trust and loyalty is making them feel heard. By providing patients with a voice, they can be reassured that you're invested in their health and well-being.

Care teams have an opportunity to listen and capture direct patient feedback in the moment that can be shared with the appropriate teams to take immediate action. With a systematic approach to capturing and sharing feedback, care teams can ensure that this feedback is used to make ongoing quality improvements.

On the other hand, if they don't feel heard, they may continue to seek an outlet to air their frustrations or they may find a new provider. And make no mistake, other patients and potential patients are listening.

A PwC study shows that the reputation of healthcare organizations is shaped by personal experiences, peer recommendations and word-of-mouth. While only about 20% of consumers attributed their choices of retailers, hospitality, and travel services on peer recommendations and personal experience, more than double that number (42%) said those experiences directly influenced their choice of a healthcare provider.[6]

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of consumers attributed their choice of a healthcare provider on peer recommendations and personal experience.[6]

Source: PwC

[6] https://www.oneviewhealthcare.com/what-it-takes-to-meet-consumer-expectations-in-healthcare

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3 Prioritize Quality Service Recovery

Today's healthcare settings are hectic and does not always lend itself to following up on patient feedback. But consider this: 52% of consumers stated that a negative experience they had in the past year could have been improved if they had the opportunity to give real-time feedback and had the company taken immediate action.[7]

It's not enough just to generate feedback. What can build engagement is actually doing something with that feedback — via timely responses and meaningful actions.

Those text messages could be:

• Are you ready for your next appointment?

• Have you checked your blood pressure today?

• Don't forget to drink 8-10 glasses of water today

"When we obtain real-time feedback and use that data to prioritize and respond to patients, we can decrease readmissions, increase compliance, and build trust and loyalty, says Toni Land, Head of Clinical Healthcare Experience at Medallia. "And this is what we refer to as Quality Service Recovery".

There are two elements of prioritization at play:

↩ Investing in technology that can effectively capture and route feedback to the appropriate person who can address the specific problem area(s) and make a lasting impact for the patient.

💬 Building service recovery into the workflows of your frontline teams with two-way communication.

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Source:
Medallia Customer Engagement Now

[7] https://www.medallia.com/blog/enhance-cahps-feedback-with-real-time-capabilities/

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Conclusion

With changing times and greater patient expectations, communication has become more important than ever and the key to driving long-term patient engagement and better care outcomes.

By strategically leveraging technology such as two-way mobile messaging to drive convenience, communication and quality, you can cement the bonds needed to maintain enduring patient relationships in the face of today's evolving rapidly changing and uncertain environment.

To achieve this, partner with a technology leader in patient and employee experience that will offer the right mix of product innovation and industry expertise to drive your organization forward.

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About Medallia

Medallia is the pioneer and market leader in Experience Management. Medallia's award-winning SaaS platform, the Medallia Experience Cloud, leads the market in the understanding and management of experience for customers, employees and citizens. Medallia captures experience signals created on daily journeys in person, digital and IoT interactions and applies proprietary AI technology to reveal personalized and predictive insights that can drive action with tremendous business results. Using Medallia Experience Cloud, customers can reduce churn, turn detractors into promoters and buyers and create in-the-moment cross-sell and up-sell opportunities, providing clear and potent returns on investment.

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