

Doctors' POV on digital patient engagement

Article

The “news”: Even doctors in small practices are seeing changes in [patient behavior](#), influenced by inflation and the pandemic, per Weave's 2023 Healthcare Business Insights Report.

- Patients want **better in-office digital experiences** and **digital-first solutions**. Weave tapped Qualtrics to survey 360 healthcare providers in practices with 50 or fewer employees and 1,040 patients ages 18+.

The quick take: Weave's survey shows increasing inflation has had a significant influence on patient experience, which has affected their behavior.

- **51% of practices** surveyed have **raised prices in the past 90 days** and **49% plan to raise** prices in 2023.
- **53% of patients** said they've experienced **anxiety** before medical appointments and **62% have felt rushed or not heard** by the doctor in the last 12 months.
- **52% of providers** believe **patient expectations have increased** since the pandemic.
- **40% of providers** say dealing with **demanding patients is the biggest inconvenience** for their healthcare office.

What's a doctor to do? It would be truly shocking if a research survey showed that patients *don't* want better digital healthcare experiences.

The real takeaway is what doctors are doing to improve patient experiences.

- **44% of physicians**—both primary care and specialists—feel **digital health tools help them provide better care**, per AMA Digital Health Research conducted in September 2022.
- That was **up from 36%** who said the same in 2019 and just 33% in 2016.
- Use of digital tools in practices is growing: Doctors used an average of 3.8 digital tools in 2022 vs. 2.4 in 2019.
- While **80%** of AMA's respondents had adopted **telehealth visits**, **68%** had added **patient access to clinical data**; **58%** used digital tools to **enhance patient care and workflow**; and **43%** were using tools for **better patient engagement**. All those categories and more showed growing adoption of digital tools.

It isn't easy: Patients expect their healthcare providers to communicate proactively with them through all digital channels “at the right time and in the right context,” per Redpoint Global research from October 2022.

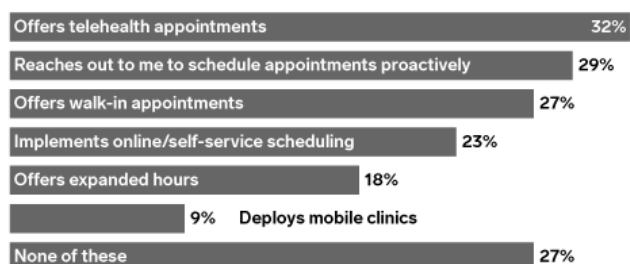
Of course, a patient's age has a lot to do with their preferred communication channel, as Redpoint data supplied to Insider Intelligence bears out.

- **The phone is still used most often** by patients and their providers, from millennials (67%) to boomers and Gen Z (both 63%) and Gen X (60%).

- **Texts are popular with Gen Z (47%)** but less so with millennials (33%), Gen X (25%), and boomers (13%).
- **Social media best targets younger patients** and is used most by Gen Z (34%) and millennials (27%) over Gen X (13%) and boomers (5%).
- **Telehealth video visits weren't as effective as a communication channel.** Surprisingly, just 34% of Gen Z and 28% of millennials used telehealth most often to interact with providers. Only 20% of Gen X and 10% of boomers cited video visits as the way they interacted with their doctors.

Actions Taken by Healthcare Providers to Make It Easier for Their Patients to Receive Care According to US Adults, Oct 2022

% of respondents



Source: BDO, "2022 Patient Experience Survey: Confronting the Care Factor," Nov 29, 2022
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