

Engaging the 21st Century Patient

Although we have been in the 21st Century for quite some time, the healthcare industry is slow to follow suit in providing access convenience and efficiency that drives positive patient experiences. The patient of the 21st Century has needs that extend beyond traditional coordination and communication mediums that demand 21st Century solutions.

Transformation of Health Care

As the patient population evolves so must the health care industry! In 2006, Michael Porter and Elizabeth Teisberg introduced the concept of Value Based Health Care. In addition, they proposed an agenda that focuses on patient empowerment and clinical outcomes. Health Care Reform heavily relies on these factors, and it will require the American health care system to undergo a paradigm shift. Gone are the days when health care organizations and physician practices measured their success by physician productivity and patient throughput alone. Large scale health systems have complied with the federal mandate to implement an electronic medical records (EMR) system to facilitate communication with patients and promote transparency and accurate sharing of medical information with providers in the patient's continuum of care. In the grid below, Porter and Lee define the gaps in health care's current state, an ideology for the future and a model for needed change.

An innovative IT platform is essential to propel this industry into the 21st Century. Patients have begun to compare the tools and applications available in other industries to those available to them in health care. Many hospitals continue to use siloed, departmental scheduling pods. Much of the information used to perform scheduling is out of date and difficult to access. Coordinators and staff refer to manually accessed operating procedures and scheduling outlines with hand written amendments. All specialties are dependent on clinical triage for new, complex patient referrals. There is a delay in the coordination of care and administration of preventative care measures due to infrastructure inefficiencies. Providers within the care team are also affected by insufficient infrastructure and have resorted to using additional manpower as a stop gap measure. According to Jim Doulgeries, senior health care strategist and author for Physician Practices, "the NIH estimates that 25 percent of the cost of medicine is administrative. Automation reduces those costs and, properly applied, provides a fast and favorable return on investment."

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Table 1: Gaps in the current healthcare environment and a model for change

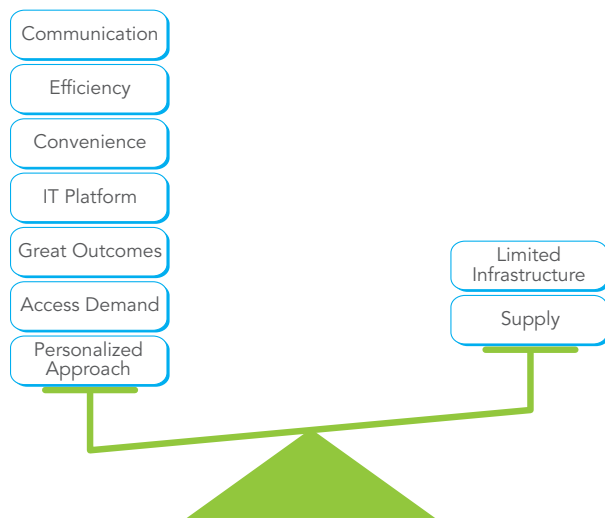
The Problem	Health care worldwide is struggling with rising costs and unsatisfactory quality. No "silver bullet" approaches or incremental fixes address these problems. Without a true solution, physicians will face lower incomes, patients will pay more, and services will be restricted.
The Approach	If we can agree on the overarching goal of value for health care systems—improving outcomes that matter to patients relative to the cost of achieving those outcomes—then we can begin to make progress.
A Model for Change	The strategic agenda for moving to a high- value health care delivery system comprises six interdependent components: organizing around patients' medical condition rather than physicians' medical specialty, measuring costs and outcomes for each patient, developing bundled prices for the full care cycle, integrating care across separate facilities, expanding geographic reach, and building an enabling IT platform.

Porter, M., & Lee, T. (2013). *The Strategy That Will Fix Health Care*. *Harvard Business Review*, 1-19.

Patient Empowerment and Changing Expectations

Patients are empowered to demand more of their providers. Online medical information and access to social media make for a curious and more knowledgeable patient who demands a combination of courtesy and efficiency from their care team that mirrors the service they receive from their online financial institution or retailer. And, although the demand for service continues to rise, patients still expect exemplary outcomes. The disproportion between health care's current capabilities and the innovation demanded from them can be significantly decreased through forward-looking thinking. Patient centric product design, a decrease in non-value added requirements, an emphasis on patient tolerance and the maximization of current technology will drive this paradigm shift.

Table 2: The healthcare paradigm shift between patient expectations and provider capabilities



Improved Care Coordination

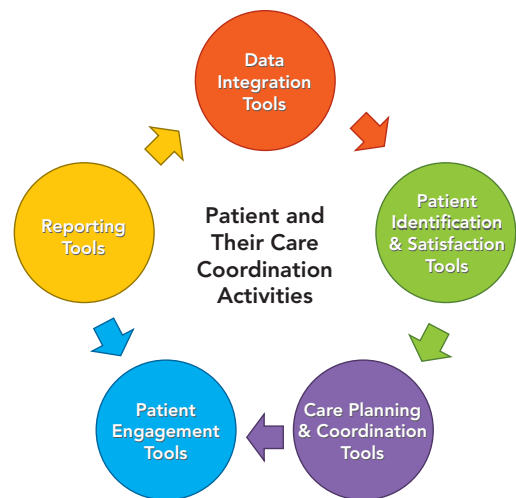
According to Frank Myers and Associates, successful coordination of today's empowered patients must be supported by the appropriate tools and processes designed to integrate data, identify patients, develop patient specific care plans, track their progress, and report the needed outcomes. These tools fall into five categories:

- Data Integration Tools
- Patient Identification and Stratification Tools
- Care Planning and Coordination Tools
- Patient Engagement Tools
- Reporting Tools

Data Integration Tools

In many cases today, two or more of the needed data sources are not connected as part of a healthcare system's toolset. There is a need to integrate data and meaningful information to and from the selected Care Coordination

tool and all patient engagement tools and apps that are used. Developing an end-to-end data strategy including an integration priority list based on expected clinical and financial outcomes and measures is crucial.



Patient Identification and Stratification Tools

Meaningful and accurate patient outreach is absolutely necessary if healthcare systems are to remain successful in impacting long term medical cost increases, slow disease progression and reduce chronic condition prevalence rates – overall improving outcomes.

Coordination Tools

Uncovering every care improvement opportunity, when managing patients is a huge effort. To truly provide scalable care coordination, physicians, nurses and other caregivers need tools that convert the vast amounts of data into actionable information, potential patient alerts and appropriate proactive, personalized patient outreach opportunities. And of course, this information needs to be presented in a workflow friendly way that can be easily integrated into workforce management and back office applications. In addition, it needs to help establish the patient's goals, the development and delivery of patient centric care plans, and assist in developing all the other actions designed to achieve better patient outcomes. From this single care management platform, all stakeholders involved in care delivery process are coordinated. A truly integrated system will take advantage of every point of patient contact – even patient-initiated phone calls, text messages or SMS to the office staff – to identify record and implement care improvement opportunities.

Patient Engagement Tools

Today, a large gap exists between the knowledge of actual patient activity and behavior in between office visits. This gap is one of the largest points of failure in patient care management. In person, care coordination visits have educated the patients, patient centric care plans have

been developed and the appropriate materials have been provided, but now it is up to the patient to follow through. For the most part no one in the care coordination team really knows what is happening with the patient in between the office visits. Tools designed to “close the loop” between patients and their care teams are critical to drive higher patient adherence and improve outcomes. Effective patient engagement tools:

- Are accessible online and by smartphone
- Allow patients to view and interact with their health data
- Include preventative care reminders and wellness programs
- Integrate with an incentives platform and include programs to encourage participation in wellness and healthy lifestyle activities
- Provide the patient’s personalized care plans, and access to both targeted and general educational materials
- Remind patients of their daily tasks, medication compliance and self-management activities
- Connect to an incentives platform and programs, as well as online communities
- Track the patients progress toward meeting their goals and report back to the care coordinator the results to enable earlier intervention and ongoing support

Reporting Tools

Knowing and understanding the measures that will be used to demonstrate your clinical effectiveness is the best place to start on your patient’s experience journey. Evaluate the data needed to support those measures and insure your data integration strategy and data inputs support the ability to report out what is needed. Some essential components to a reporting system include the ability to deliver:

- Standard reporting packages for process, quality and outcomes measures
- Care Coordination reporting including patient engagement rates, process and effectiveness measures
- Patient specific and population based reporting
- Cost and Utilization reporting
- Financial and network contracting effectiveness and leakage reporting
- “Leading” financial indicators

Appointments and Access to Care

The design and implementation of care coordination systems must be optimized to ensure that the scheduling module creates effective patient encounters. These systems must also have the capability to report on patient behavior patterns and preferences in order to make viable changes in an organization’s access strategies. As a result of innovative design and advanced analytics, same day access campaigns

can be deployed throughout a health care system. Leveraging the ability to merge the telephony system and systems such as EMRs can decrease same day cancellation and chronic no show rates. Workforce management strategies that are proven in a call center setting can be tailored to develop seasonal trends and forecasts of access supply and demand by sub-specialty; the analysis can be applied to physician schedules to promote the growth and maintenance of general and specialty clinics. Using workforce management software to predict patient access trends can decrease wait times for new and established patient appointments. These tactics increase patient satisfaction by enhancing the experience of coordinating one or multiple appointments.

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Multidisciplinary Scheduling – One Stop Shopping

Healthcare systems are shifting from traditional practice models to disease base multi-disciplinary models of care. Patients are assigned to a care path to promote a holistic approach by multiple providers. Decision trees can be put in place to enable clerical staff members to utilize chief complaints, signs, symptoms or diagnoses to drive the patient to an appointment with the ideal first available provider. Decision trees housed within a knowledge base also allow for the infusion of clinical intervention during critical patient interactions. Multiple ambulatory appointments, procedures and tests can be scheduled during one interaction. Decision trees can also assist patients who are scheduling appointments for multiple members of their family. These tools can either be utilized in a call center setting or in an online interface. Workforce management tools ensure that the right staff is in the right place at the right time to manage the patient demand and ensure workforce satisfaction.

Self-Scheduling

Technologically savvy healthcare consumers are accustomed to online self-scheduling and self-service applications. These same individuals also prefer to use similar intuitive applications to manage their own care. Self-scheduling tools can be useful for coordinating primary care and annual preventative appointments. Patients can use an online interface or a mobile application to enter in pertinent billing information and their signs, symptoms and diagnoses. Decision trees can guide patients to the appropriate provider

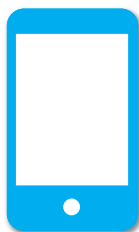
or connect them to a clinical specialist for additional triage. Insurance information can be entered or scanned into the application. Patients would also benefit from utilizing a waitlist feature for a same day appointment with a medical specialist. Patients are placed on a waitlist and in turn receive automated notification through a mobile application when an appointment becomes available. The patient can use the dial pad to indicate whether the appointment time and location are convenient.

24/7 Call Center and Convenient Appointments

24/7 call centers and independent appointment scheduling afford patients the ability to coordinate their care at their leisure. These conveniences also provide patients with the ability to speak to a clinical resource during emergent circumstances. Priority connection lines can link an ailing or anxious patient immediately to a clinician who can provide an appointment or give medical advice. Patients will have more resources at hand than a visit to the emergency room.

Alternative Communication Mediums

Proactive communication mediums such as e-mail, internet modules, texting, outbound calls and interactive educational modules are key to enhanced outcomes, patient retention, and promoting external referral patterns. Patients can request a prescription refill by scanning the medication or the prescription barcode into a smartphone application. If refills are available the request can be sent to the pharmacy. If there are none left, the refill request can be automatically sent to the clinical team for review. Patients can also enter the results to self-administered tests into a self-service application and the results can be shared instantly with a nurse. Clinical intervention can occur immediately depending on the patient's results.



Outbound calls can be used to survey the patients about their health status between appointments. Voice recognition software can capture information which can in turn be used for clinical outcome reporting plus these applications have the ability to use biometrics for authentication of the patient's

identity. If the patient needs to speak with a representative, his/her information can populate automatically on the screen of the receiving agent saving both the patient and clinician time while improving the overall experience. Texting is also very effective tool for providing patients with reminders for upcoming appointments along with directions to the appointment's location. The patient can use text to cancel or confirm appointment through a secure interface and even connect with a representative via phone if needed.

Mobile Applications

Smartphone applications can have a profound impact on patient outcomes. Patients can log into their applications over their secure networks and view pertinent information about their diagnosis, instructional videos for the management of their conditions, as well as a listing of the prescribed medications and corresponding instructions. Patients can call their care team with questions about their treatment plan and receive instant visual aids that can be saved for future use. The use of visual aids during voice calls can transform the coordination of care and decrease unnecessary visits to the clinic.

Mobile applications with GPS capabilities estimate the patient's location and in turn direct him to a convenient medical facility. Patients can now weigh their options to wait for an appointment or travel to another location for an earlier appointment.

Innovation Has Arrived

Health care systems are slowly adopting innovative patient centric applications. The IT Platform exists, and can be tailored to meet the needs of multiple patient demographics as well as most members of the care team. Aspect Healthcare solutions in partnership with Healthcare Intelligence's consulting services can help your healthcare system launch your IT infrastructure into its next phase of evolution. The patient and health care industry will finally connect in the 21st Century.

Your patients will thank you for it...

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About Aspect

Aspect is the only software company with a fully-integrated interaction and workforce optimization platform for enterprise contact centers globally that need to profitably (and seamlessly) orchestrate people, processes and touch points in an era when the contact center is the new center of the customer experience. For more information, visit www.aspect.com.

About About Healthcare Intelligence

Healthcare Intelligence enables Accountable Care Organizations to leverage a combination of technology, process improvement, employee engagement and innovation to create successful patient centric access solutions.

