Getting Patients to **Use Your Portal**

**Portals Are Not “Build It and They Will Come”**

**The Path to Increasing Portal Utilisation**

*Imperatives to Increase Portal Use by Patients*

Select a portal leader who prioritises patient needs

- Pick an advocate who truly understands what patients want and need from the technology
- Have one person, rather than a committee, in charge

Turn clinicians into portal advocates

- Don’t undervalue the importance of clinicians for driving usage
- Consider doctors’ attitude a primary indicator of adoption
- Get doctors to write a “prescription” for portal enrollment

Incorporate features that maximise patient convenience

- Consider access for caregivers of children and the elderly
- Allow online prescription refill requests, bill payment, and scheduling
- Provide patient education material

Use every patient contact to promote the portal

- Think creatively—look for opportunities beyond the exam room
- Replace on-hold music with a message promoting the portal as an alternative to the phone
- Use paper mailings, such as lab results or bills, to advertise ease of access and convenience

**Demand can increase quickly so be prepared to scale up.**

**Must-Have Features Are the Foundation**

**Patients Need a Reason to Use the Portal**

*Offer Features Patients Want*

- Secure messaging with providers
- View test results
- View immunisations
- View medications and allergies
- Appointment scheduling and requests
- Account review and bill payment
- Online patient education materials
- Family access

**Features most commonly offered by patient portals**

Group Health Cooperative found that a critical component of their portal was a third-party online health knowledgebase with common language explanations of lab tests, procedures, diagnosis, medicines, etc.

**Families and caregivers want access to:**

- Patient care plan
- Discharge instructions
- Symptom management guide
- Educational materials
- Scheduling information

**PATIENT TURNOFFS**

- Slow response time
- Portals that work only with certain browsers
- Critical information hard to find
- Controls and required fields are difficult to identify

**IMPERATIVES IN ACTION**

**23,000**

Average number of patient portal users added per year between 2003 and 2010

**Group Health Cooperative**

**4.1M**

Total patient portal users added between 2006 and 2014—average of over 500,000 per year

**Kaiser Permanente**

Let us review your patient portal strategy

Email geec@advisory.com to contact your member services team member

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