

Consumers Empowered by Medical Selfies



Taking a medical 'selfie' could be key to patient-centred health confirms study from Queensland University of Technology (QUT).

Dr. Kara Burns conducted the research as part of her PhD and discovered consumers felt reassured when they were able to contact their clinicians with visual updates post-care. The two-part study published in *Journal of Medical Internet Research* consisted of interviews with 30 patients, clinicians and carers, with a follow-up study where this was trialled in practice with parent's sending clinicians updates of their child's progress.

It was found that both studies confirmed that the use of consumer-generated health data this way allowed patients to take autonomy over their care. As with the second trial, 26 parents participated by taking pictures of their children's recovery from a laparoscopic appendectomy every 2 days. It was reported that this improved parents' confidence and also served as a reminder to check on the healing process.

The overall feeling from the study was that this increased the patient-doctor relationship, as patients were able to stay connected to the hospital even post-care. However, the study also highlighted flaws in the areas of service, and allowed patients to move on from doctors not meeting their expectations.

This raises important issues as Dr. Burns states that clinicians should try to integrate photographs, videos and data from health apps into clinical records. With the current issues of privacy and health data this could be a difficult feat. However, Dr. Burns suggests it should be possible to give patients an option as to whether they would want to adopt this method of care.

Source: [Journal of Medical Internet Research](#)

Image Credit: QUT

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