

Demand for Digital Connection

To deal with the paperwork required, many Americans admit they have:



Americans prefer doctors who are digitally savvy and demand a connected healthcare experience, a new Surescripts survey finds. Sixty-eight percent of the more than 1,000 respondents to the nationwide survey say that practices that have adopted technology to replace outdated methods of administrative tasks, such as scheduling appointments online, provide patients a sense of relief.

Despite advancements in digital technology, paper is still prevalent throughout healthcare. In fact, many of those polled report they frequently or always sign their names on paper forms (55 percent), have their insurance card or ID photocopied or scanned (54 percent), write their personal information on paper forms (33 percent), or write details of their medical history on paper forms (28 percent).

What's more, 50 percent of respondents said that renewing a driver's licence would require less paperwork than seeing a doctor for the first time. Interestingly, many Americans (49 percent) admit they have gone to the doctor's office earlier than scheduled to handle paperwork.

"Dangerous voids in health information sharing can easily be solved through the use of digital communications and technology. This survey proves patients take notice and are ready for a change," said Tom Skelton, CEO at Surescripts. "As an industry, we need to come together to connect the nation's healthcare system — to enhance the patient experience while improving quality and lowering the cost of care."

Survey respondents had favourable opinions of provider use of technology. About 50 percent said they would be more willing to reach out to their doctor if they could do so via email or text, and 43 percent said that form of communication would make them feel less rushed when asking questions.

The lack of electronic communication between doctors and patients places a burden on patients to connect the dots themselves. Because of this, 29 percent of respondents reported that they needed to fax or physically transport test results, x-rays, or health records from one doctor's office to another.

"Patients represent one of the greatest untapped resources in healthcare, but they can't carry the burden of making care decisions alone," said Leslie Kelly Hall, Senior Vice President of Policy at Healthwise and the Informed Medical Decisions Foundation. "It's clear that patients are willing and able to play a more active role in managing their care, and with improved access to technology and information sharing between doctors and patients, the entire healthcare system will benefit."

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