



Important Trends in Innovation and Consumer Behaviour



With the technological and behavioural landscapes in healthcare changing faster than ever before, experts apply their knowledge to identifying future trends that may introduce radical advancements within the industry. In October, during [a Becker's Hospital Review event in Chicago](#), panelists discussed several important trends in healthcare innovation and consumerism.

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Adaptation to Competitive Delivery Times

One of the trends outlined at the event was that for health systems and care delivery organisations to succeed, they must be competitive in terms of retail healthcare delivery times. In other words, they should develop efficient processes through incorporation of the latest technology and creation of such a culture that welcomes innovation.

An example of how competitive the market is becoming (listed in the [recent Time's overview of revolutionary healthcare technologies and concepts](#)) is Walmart's expansion into the sector. In September 2019, the world's biggest retailer opened its first Health Center, a 'medical mall' providing services such as primary care, vision tests, laboratory tests, counselling, and many more for affordable price. If this initiative succeeds, repercussions will be numerous and omnipresent as medical professionals will have to adjust to the retailer's everyday low prices.

The Nature of True Innovation

To be truly disruptive, technology in healthcare should be applied appropriately, the panellists pointed out. If this is achieved, it will lead to radical changes in the current model of care delivery and allow for cost decrease for all stakeholders.

Drone use for the delivery of medical essentials, like drugs and transfusable blood, has been a recent hype and an evident case of a proper application. UPS have been [granted the approval](#) to expand to 20 hospitals around the U.S. over the next two years, while Wing, a division of Google's parent company Alphabet, is [collaborating with Walgreens and FedEx](#), and Zipline, a California-based startup, is [delivering medical supplies in Ghana and Rwanda](#).

Power of a Gadget

More people rely on their phones for various tasks. The experts believe that access to healthcare services may soon be one of them in terms of interaction between a consumer and healthcare providers, visit arrangements (real-life or virtual) or bill payment. Healthcare personal management is gravitating towards the same ease as is present in today's personal banking.

In this regard, numerous wearable and pocket-sized [devices](#) that connect to a smartphone may help to democratise healthcare on multiple dimensions. It may also lead to a significant [decrease](#) in doctors' time spent on a patient or even [protect the staff from violence](#).

Pricing and Payments Changes

Healthcare services and products are more attractive to consumers if the costs are known upfront, the panellists agreed. With bundled payments and [price transparency](#) some ambulatory surgery centres find it easier to market their service to patients while consumers are more protected from [possible market abuse](#).

Prudent Technological Advance

Introducing new technology may be challenging for staff and physicians. Therefore, as was discussed at the panel, CIOs and project leaders strive to balance the additional administrative burden. A good example of how a technology may be overwhelming is the [use of medical scribes](#) — professionals who document physician-patient encounters during clinical visits — by some clinicians which helps to reduce the time spent managing electronic health records and increase the number of patients seen.

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