



True Understanding of Patient Engagement and its Impact on Healthcare Systems

Sima Marzban*

Gillings School of Global Public Health, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA

***Corresponding author:** Sima Marzban, Gillings School of Global Public Health, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA.

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic draws stakeholders' attention to strategies highlighting the patients' potential role and responsibilities in improving healthcare outcomes. Before outbreak, there has been a constant effort to inform and educate patients to be compliant and adhered to the treatment pathways that are planned for medical conditions based on existing evidence, insurers' policies, and providers' preferences. But rapid healthcare market transition reveals the game-changing impact of patients' priorities and personal decisions on how they behave and respond to the available services. Facts supports the crucial need for in-depth understanding of Patient Engagement that prefers patients valued, informed, heard, activated to contribute to all aspects of care, even to the changes in care policies, decisions and processes. Patients have the right to access health records, prescriptions, and sources of information to take responsibility and control over their individual care. At the same time, they have the capacity to change decisions and personalize the care process based on individual variables in order to improve the system design and circumstances. As a result, passive unilateral patient engagement efforts such as patient and family education should evolve to active two-ways hearing of the patient voices incorporating their needs and expectations in individual care planning as much as health systems redesign and development. This evolution will be built on two fundamental changes;

- how patient-centeredness and patient engagement is defined and directed by payers, providers, and supplier industries,
- how accreditation and healthcare quality institutions measure, assess and evaluate patient-oriented interactions and reports.

Patient engagement requires exploring clinical and non-clinical insights from patients' eyes in addition to the other stakeholders' perspective to reduce the gaps between therapeutic systems' and patients' actual needs and preferences.

Introduction

Patient engagement is a growing scheme around healthcare systems. It is also a strategy to adapt to a situation (like the pandemic) in which patients are less likely to visit clinical providers in order to receive treatment alternatives. The Medical Institute (IOM) considers access to appropriate medical information and clinical knowledge to be a source of control over individuals' health-related decisions [1]. While available information and patient education seems to be only a part of the concept. Activating patients to the extent that they take responsibility and actions to prevent

further disease progression and obtain better wellness status depends on approaches beyond patient education. Nonetheless engaging patients guarantees better quality and lower cost, return on investment, improved outcome measures, informed adherence to care plan, and medication [2].

As regards, patient-related issues such as shortcomings in social determinants of health including health literacy, income, nutrition, and housing, causes patient engagement barriers [3]. That is why inequity drivers would negatively influence patients and families'

capacity to take an active role in engagement. It looks critical to know to what extent existing patient advocacy/engagement programs or technological solutions have enabled and mobilized patients to play crucial role in improving individual treatment or population outcomes. Eventually, how current engagement strategies are aligned with patients' expected outcomes.

Patients Role Evolution

Patient engagement is primarily understood by the smooth flow of information between providers and patients to ensure timely access to the needed resources. To this end, technology developers have designed numerous versions of platforms facilitating appointments, documentation, monitoring, and evaluation of clinical performance. Furthermore, artificial intelligence fulfills digital communication platforms through analytics of big clinical databases to predict future trends in the clinical environment. Achieved insights accommodate supplier industries, insurers, and clinical providers' intensity to obtain insights on the business environment and plan for proactive changes in their professional performance.

On a higher level of deliberate, patient engagement requires cultural views and an organizational atmosphere that values the patients as health right owners, efficient sources of improvement, and investment partners. In that situation, patient empowerment is presumed beneficial not only for patients and families but also for policy developers and clinical providers. Transformative thoughts and beliefs are needed to support patients for being an honest advocate and organizational partner who puts his/her health in our hands for the best of actions to achieve scientific, professional, and business goals. Smart organizations are sensitive to customer insights in which the user experience, behaviors, and decisions mirror the gaps in care and communication. In a mature type of organization, patient engagement embeds in policy, practice, management, and evaluations, in addition to the cultural values and leadership initiatives. Keeping patients active and influential to the clinical teams subsequent a chain of activities that bring "patient insights to tangible impacts."

Patient Insights and Healthcare Improvement

Traditionally, quality improvement efforts are designed by reviewing clinical facts and audits conducted and recorded by providers. Numerous studies indicate that patient-driven insights, which are provided from cognitive and behavioral data sources, guarantee informed decisions for improvement [4]. There is a remarkable difference between clinical insights and patient insights. Electronic medical records drive clinical insights to support clinical decisions and actions by providers. Most clinical insight systems are designed to capture, track, and save documents of clinical dimensions such as symptoms, signs, appointments, billing process, diagnostics, and results [5]. Payors and providers recognize the included data categories. Whereas, patients experience emotional changes, life quality challenges, behavioral needs, economic concerns, information gaps, decision requirements, employment issues, cultural conflicts, and family situations that influence the healing process somehow more influential than medications and clinical interventions. Patient insights exponentially add the value of medical data processing to draw a full picture of elements that influence the patient's health outcomes.

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Conflict of Interest

Author declare no conflict of interest.

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