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### Robin Farmanfarmaian

VP of Strategic Relations, Singularity University; Founding Executive Producer, Exponential Medicine (FutureMed)

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## Meet the Unpatient: How We Can Enable Patient-Driven Healthcare

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Healthcare is evolving rapidly. New technology has ushered in an age of patient empowerment, allowing patients to monitor, track, and analyze their own health and fitness in real time.

Today, patients have the platform and the confidence to communicate and collaborate with their doctors and take control of their own health outcomes, making healthcare a joint effort, rather than a one-sided conversation.

Though still in the first stages of this transition, the patient-driven healthcare model has the potential to significantly change the roles of doctors and patients and improve patient care overall. Here is what we can expect from this industry shift, along with the steps healthcare professionals and patients need to take to get there.

### The Shift in Patient-Doctor Relationships

Before the emergence of health monitoring technology and the wealth of information that's available today, patients lacked the resources to actively participate in their own medical outcomes and relied primarily on their physicians for feedback and health management.

This came in the form of a 15-minute conversation if patients were lucky, with 10 of those minutes spent watching the physician pore over outdated charts and test results.

By sharing patient health data and shifting to a collaborative relationship, patient-driven healthcare has the potential to fundamentally change modern medicine. Access to more information will empower patients to take responsibility for their own health, which will improve the quality of care overall.

In the patient-driven healthcare model, **patients can expect:**

- To save time and money by making fewer unnecessary doctor appointments.

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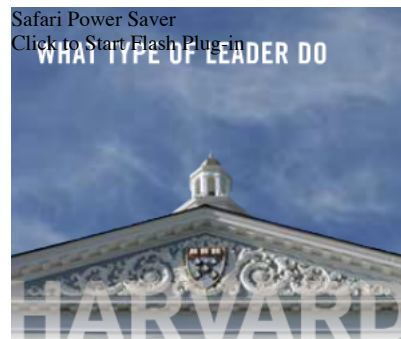
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Patients will be better equipped to track and monitor their health on a daily basis, at home or on the go.

- To have a better understanding of their bodies through improved access to lab results, X-rays, and other diagnostic testing results.
- To learn how to analyze and interpret the data and metrics gathered by their monitors and gadgets.
- To feel more empowered by the information they personally gather and more comfortable consulting with physicians during appointments.

With the rise of patient-driven healthcare, **doctors can expect:**

- To have more time to listen, discuss, and consult with patients, rather than running preliminary tests or reading through old files.
- To have more productive appointments. Knowledgeable patients will be more engaged in their healthcare, resulting in more compliant and active participation in their own health outcomes.
- To have access to more detailed, timely information as patients track and monitor their health and share that information with physicians.
- To spend fewer hours doing paperwork as more information is generated, stored, and transferred electronically.

**Setting the Model in Motion**

The patient-driven model of healthcare is only beginning to have an impact on the industry as a whole. To reach its full potential, there are a few hurdles the healthcare industry will have to overcome:

- **Patient willingness:** Simply put, patients must *want* to become active participants in their own healthcare. Doctors must encourage patients to set goals and track their progress, but the responsibility will shift to the patients themselves.
- **The approval process:** The FDA has been slow to move many patient-driven programs and gadgets through its approval process, which has kept many life-saving technologies from patients who need them. Companies need to work harder to speed up this process and make systems and devices available to consumers faster.
- **Determining contributions:** A new business model means determining who pays for what, and so far, the industry has been slow to make any definitive decisions on this. Physicians, tech companies, and insurance companies must collaborate to define the distribution of costs and payment at each level.
- **Patient education:** There are several new [tools](#), [gadgets](#), and [programs](#) available to help patients monitor and track every aspect of their health, but patients need to be educated on these technologies. They need to know what's available, how to use these devices correctly, and what to do with the information that's gathered.

We are on the brink of revolutionizing the healthcare system by making a valuable transition to patient-driven care. Accurate, accessible, and convenient technology can make the doctor-patient relationship much more personable and effective. We only have to be willing to take the final steps to get there.

*Image: Shutterstock*

Posted by:



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
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**Yannick R.**  
**M.Eng Candidate at McGill (Brain Imaging)**  
 There are some pitfalls to avoid though (here are 2 of many).  
 1) Misinformation : Internet is half-full of useful information and half-full of crappy information. I think it's better for a patient to know that he doesn't know instead of thinking that he knows when he doesn't know.  
 2) Self-treatment : When a patient thinks they have enough information and they don't need a professional to treat themselves (physically and mentally). When they become a pseudo medical-expert of their own case.  
  
 So I believe that to succeed in a patient-driven model, we really need to guide the patients to the right tools and the right information and not just put the technologies out there. We need to emphasize that it is still a "team" patient-professionals, but that now, the patient is an active member of the team.  
 Like(5) Reply 5 days ago  
 👍 [Fran London](#), [Michael C.](#), [Robin Farmanfarmaian](#), +2


**Diep V.**  
**Research Associate**  
 Thanks for the article! I think patients today are always curious about their health and refer to the internet/friends to find out more information. Hopefully they keep an open-mind when seeing their doctors and are still encouraged to ask questions about staying healthy.  
 Like(2) Reply 5 days ago  
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**Jerilyn M.**  
**Experience Design Strategist, Researcher, and Evangelist**  
 patient empowerment and technology cannot come at the cost of real human interaction and accountability. but incredible all the same.  
 Like(2) Reply 5 days ago  
 👍 [Shameet L.](#) and [Robin Farmanfarmaian](#)


**Roy J.**  
**Supply Chain Services at Salem Health**  
 Great post Robin...agree that it's only the beginning. Many disruptive changes ahead. Thanks. Enjoyed @Phillip B. post re:"Impatient" as well....in any case, many of tomorrow's "patients" will be neither "in" nor "out" and will not be patient(s).  
 Like(1) Reply 5 days ago  
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**BizMentor S.**  
**Consultant Health Care Allianz**  
 Good article  
 Technology is indeed changing the way patients interact with doctors. This is just the beginning.....  
 Like(1) Reply 5 days ago  
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**Alba G.****Advanced Registered Orthopaedic Resource Technologist at Trillium Health Partners**

Educating oneself is always good. Arming the Physicians & Medical staff with as much info as possible pertaining to the patient's reason for visit, will result in creating a treatment plan best for patient. This also makes the patient a bit more accountable for their own care.

Like(1) Reply 5 days ago

Robin Farmanfarmaian

**Phillip B.****CEO of Northwind**

To this summary, I would introduce the "Impatient". Patients who now want to access to care at times and places convenient to them. New care delivery options along with proactive steps from employer groups and medical entrepreneurs are aggressively enabling the "Unpatients" as well as the "Impatients". These are exciting times! Thanks for sharing Robin!

Like(1) Reply 6 days ago

Phyllis A. O.

**Les B.****Army Veteran with 20 years in Healthcare Leadership**

I agree that the market is heading towards a Patient Centered model but it will be awhile before we understand what "right looks like". I believe healthcare systems will have to take the lead with patient education that include more of the "town hall" Q & A sessions.

Like any other consumer product people are going to also have to seek education and be willing to learn. Many Americans are just learning for the first time that healthcare actually costs money and is not funded by some ambiguous pile of money. It will be interesting to see how patients respond when their insurance rates are based on health and prevention and THEIR participation. The patient centered model will rightly include more responsibilities for the patient as we move from treating sickness to preventing them.

Like(1) Reply 3 days ago

Robin Farmanfarmaian

**Nicola Ashley M.****Business Integrator**

In the world of the quantitative self, I can see patients making moves to track every aspect of their healthcare. This will drive the need for caregivers to provide innovative, comprehensive solutions that patients will come to expect. Already the consumer market is rich with medical health solutions, anything from [WebMD](#) to crowd sourcing medical diagnosis. Patients are definitely becoming more empowered, and potentially overwhelmed with information and choice. Today, certainly for my generation, anything that I can do myself or source myself - I will. If I can get other people to help me source it through crowd sourcing or 3rd party vendors like eBay or GumTree will help me find what I am after or get the best price for something - then I will do that. If I can fix my phone myself by watching a YouTube video - I will.. Because yes, I am pretty impatient. The world is always moving at a faster pace. When it comes to your health and well-being, you are the one with the most at stake, therefore why shouldn't you be in charge!

Like(1) Reply 4 days ago

Robin Farmanfarmaian

**Jean-Pierre M.****Founder and President at Elpis Africa Care Inc.**

Very nice dream and vision Robin; I agree with what Yannick said below and I think this new healthcare approach will succeed if both Health Care Professionals and Patients collaborate and trust each other. We all know that a good information should come from at least two or three independent sources. Internet is good but should not be the only source of information; there are few unbiased sources of information publishers that patients can look for. It is matter of educate them.

Like(1) Reply 4 days ago

Robin Farmanfarmaian



**Miroslav K.**

[www.couple2hire.com](http://www.couple2hire.com)

Today, I think..., the patient wants to dominate the doctor and naturally, the doctor wants to dominate the patient. But both have the same goal: dont get healthy ! Stay sick ! We both need us ! Sad situation.

Like Reply 6 days ago



**Steven M.**

...

Dream on. Pateints will never be able to understand their health status like their doctor does. The "Doctor Google" has generated more inappropriate office visits and bred more inappropriate questions than anything in the past It won't be long before we hear of suicide or other inappropriate actions taken by patients due to their direct access to lab values. And Doctors don't consult with patients. Patients consult with doctors. Your arrogance is overwhelming. Just take care of yourself; you don't seem to need a doctor at all.

Like Reply 4 days ago



**Roufa T.**

**Web Content Strategist at Roufa Communications**

One new phenomenon helps to empower patients to collaborate with medical providers: MOOCs which offer university level education in human physiology and other health topics. Instead of relying on simplified information offered through lay media articles, patients can now access sophisticated information without going through the normal hoops associated with academic education.

Like Reply 3 days ago



**Eileen C.**

**Retired LPN from Black River Memorial Hospital**

Will the CEOs and CFOs in healthcare be willing to forego the monies and patient visits ? I presume they will find a way to charge for electronic communications.

Like Reply(1) 4 days ago

1 Reply



**Robin Farmanfarmaian** AUTHOR 2nd

**VP of Strategic Relations, Singularity University; Founding Executive Producer, Exponential Medicine (FutureMed)**

Exactly right! - we need to find new monetization models for these emerging healthcare trends.

Like 2 days ago



**Grace L.**

**Business, Health and IT**

My comments: <http://mindsinthemedia.blogspot.com.au/2014/03/joint-effort-for-patient-centric.html>

Like Reply 2 days ago



**Mike K.**

**CEO at MKG Media Group**

Love this topic!

One thing to include: everybody gets excited about health gadgets and technology, but unless you can pull in your own health information (medical records) to combine with wearable health technology the data is only so valuable.

Honestly, everybody should have access to their health information 24/7. Use a personal health record like [Zweena, LLC](http://Zweena, LLC). to do so!

Link: [zweenahealth.com](http://zweenahealth.com)

Like Reply 2 days ago



**Fran London** 1st

**Health Education Specialist at Phoenix Childrens Hospital**

There's a difference between patient education and providing information. For example, a person may know a healthy food choice from a poor food choice, but that alone doesn't change behavior. Patient education is an individualized, interactive process that improves health outcomes by helping the learner not just know what to do and how to do it, but also by supporting sustained behavior changes. Assessment to identify the most appropriate interventions and continual evaluation within the provider-patient relationship can facilitate effective use of the tools, gadgets, and programs available.

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