



Healthcare Consumerism – 2023 Health IT Predictions

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As we head into 2023, we wanted to kick off the new year with a series of 2023 Health IT predictions. We asked the Healthcare IT Today community to submit their predictions and we received a wide ranging set of responses that we grouped into a number of themes. Check out our communities predictions below and be sure to add your own thoughts and/or places you disagree with these predictions in the comments and on social media.

All of this year's 2023 health IT predictions:

And now, check out our community's healthcare consumerism predictions.

Nate Maslak, CEO and Cofounder at Ribbon Health

Price Transparency: In 2022, we saw CMS's Transparency in Coverage rule go into effect, requiring health plans and providers to publish their rates for care to the public. With the Transparency in Coverage rule now in effect, in 2023 we will see price transparency data become more accessible as healthcare enterprises begin to invest more in the technology and infrastructure needed to manage this data. This investment will give people more insight into their cost of care, allowing them to make the most informed care decisions.

Enhanced Access to Finding Care: Patient demand for digital care options has skyrocketed since 2020, yet provider directories and the way patients find care have not evolved to meet these rising preferences. In the last few years, new and innovative organizations have launched digital care delivery programs that will change the way people find and receive care. With patients shifting toward a digital-first approach for care navigation, health plans will need to embrace a broader set of care delivery mechanisms and make the full spectrum of specialist options easier to find.

Book Care with One Click: As technology advances across industries, people are seeking the same convenient booking processes in healthcare that they are accustomed to with other services. In 2023, healthcare organizations will prioritize empowering their users with accurate and actionable information about a provider, along with the ability to book that provider immediately with one click. 4) Data Personalization: In 2023, we'll see a greater shift toward prioritizing consumer needs and preferences when providing care options and provider information. Research shows that 38% of consumers want more personalized and inclusive healthcare options, and organizations are beginning to invest in technology and infrastructure that will enhance the patient experience and empower them to make educated care decisions.

Ted Shannon, CFO at Strive Health

In 2023, I predict that we will see more big companies, like Apple and Amazon, getting more involved in healthcare. Healthcare is 20% of the economy so it's another part of the consumer wallet they can tap. They want to bring more consumers into healthcare decisions and get them more engaged. They also want to engage more physicians and hospitals.

Steve Kearney, Global Medical Director at SAS

2023 – The year of the “non” patient. The landscape of patient care has changed, and 2023 will demand even more change to better serve and treat not just patients, but all health care consumers, equitably. Beyond treating illness reactively, health care consumers are demanding better routes of proactive preventive medicine and whole person care options.

Online health consultations and health providers embedded in retail locations have driven quality and improved patient access and experience, but also provided swaths of data highlighting health disparities and inequalities. Using this data will be a game changer to improve patient health (not just health care), address health equity, and support a universal approach to care for the benefit of all.

Health consumers demand better care experiences. 2023 will bring rising consumer expectations for all parts of the healthcare system to improve the patient journey. Consumers have more options now than ever before and payers, hospital systems and providers risk losing their customer base if the patient experience isn't prioritized. The healthcare industry will need to respond with enhanced technologies –led by data and analytics – to increase the speed of technology adoption for health care providers. Swarms of data pollinate personalized medicine.

The pandemic accelerated digital transformation not just in health care, but across all sectors, resulting in dramatic increases in data volume. There is huge potential to use this data to impact health care, life sciences, discovery, treatment, and every point along the continuum to transform patients' lives.

Better access to and analysis of health data will speed up the shift to personalized medicine and value-based care, with the potential to inform clinical and operational decisions, accelerate research efforts, and ultimately improve lives.

Data analytics accelerate the hospital – and healthcare workforce – of the future. Health leaders need to invest in intelligent systems that remove barriers to make workforce more efficient and more satisfied with their job. Increased automation and data workflows will provide more time for care providers to meet patient needs. Healthcare leaders must champion the change in culture by increasing staff competence in using analytics and understanding the emerging insights, tapping into advanced analytics to help support and build a stronger workforce, and advocating for improved technology and systems to gather and analyze data.

Dave Bennett, CEO at pCare

When I think about the digital hospital of the future, I'm referring to digital transformation. It's more than just using technology. It's about new ways of delivering value. This will continue to change how we leverage technology to streamline and improve care for all stakeholders. It's not about removing the human component but using technology at every step to optimize the experience for all parties. Cost and experience/expectations are the primary drivers of digital transformation, which will not slow down.

Digital Transformation holds the promise to re-engineer processes to automate jobs that are increasingly difficult to staff. These tasks are often done cheaper and better, i.e., with fewer errors. Within the healthcare environment, one of the top priorities of the c-suite is addressing rising healthcare consumerism. The demand is for the experience integrated with the latest/most remarkable technologies.

Pete Strimaitis, CEO at Uprise Health

Digitalization and personalization are now focal points in healthcare, with the demand for increased accessibility at a new high. Care models will continue to stray from historically accepted methods of treatment as technology advances to support mental health and chronic condition management and improve care coordination. In 2023, digital doorways will help improve access to care, providing patients with the right care at the right time.

Dr. George Gellert, Medical Advisor, Impact/Value Demonstration at Infermedica

Demonstrating ROI: Despite healthcare IT being central to and a vehicle for not only clinical care delivery, but all operational and financial aspects of health system performance, truly robust evidence-based evaluation of impact, value and ROI remains a “nice to have” rather than an imperative.

Most health IT companies are held to a low standard of evidence of value and proof of ROI through marketing white papers and quantification that is not robust or systematically evaluated, rather than being required to demonstrate value through scientific peer review and journal publication. This has not served the interests of health systems and care delivery organizations, clinicians or patients well.

Health IT solutions, which profoundly influence and impact care delivery and organizational performance, should have to scientifically demonstrate value – much as drug therapies, medical devices, and other diagnostic and therapeutic technologies do. Only when scientific research on health IT impact and value demonstration is regarded as being as important to healthcare delivery as clinical trials, will spending on health IT become rational and systematic.

Innovation areas to watch: The continuing advancement and integration of wearable technology, and its convergence with other trends across healthcare, from tertiary care to wellness and health promotion, will shape healthcare and health consumerism over the next several years. The expanding sophistication and resultant use/integration of wearables across major healthcare opportunities, from improved chronic disease management and surveillance/prevention of clinical exacerbations to sleep medicine and nutritional and mental health, to expedited virtual triage and care referral and delivery, will continue to grow in depth and breadth of impact. Wearables will transform healthcare as we know it.

Tom Stubbs, Cofounder and CEO at Hurdle

The next wave of democratized healthcare in 2023 will see an increased investment in Diagnostics-as-a-Service (DaaS) platforms to make at-home testing more accessible. This year, the healthcare industry – across providers, plans, and pharmacies – increased their offerings for at-home testing options because they recognized the value it brings for improving patient health and alleviating unnecessary work for clinicians. For example, a patient can proactively take an at-home heart health panel and seek out treatment before serious problems arise. The demand for at-home testing will surge next year as healthcare continues to shift to consumerized care.

Diana Zuskov, Associate Vice President of Healthcare Strategy at LexisNexis Risk Solutions

In 2023, new approaches to personalized consumer engagement, whole person care, and precision medicine will be catalyzed using deidentified, patient-level real-world data. For the past decade, we've seen two macros, yet largely parallel, healthcare trends:

- 1) understanding impacts of social drivers of health and
- 2) adoption of digital health and telemedicine, especially due to COVID-19.

Those two trends have existed in a false dichotomy where healthcare organizations are either looking at population-level metrics (e.g., food deserts, access to care), while clinical interventions and risk scores are created at the patient-level. Healthcare innovations seek complete picture of clinical and social drivers but have been limited by challenges linking disparate data sets while maintaining patient privacy.

I predict 2023 will be a turning point where healthcare innovators demand more effective linking of data to stitch together a complete picture of clinical and social drivers, including novel types of data. Doing so creates exciting opportunities for personalized engagement, whole person care, precision medicine, and improved health outcomes.

Craig Worland, Chief Development Officer at Southeast Primary Care Partners

Looking into 2023, patients will continue to seek more seamless and accessible care than what was delivered prior to the pandemic. This will continue the arms race among non-traditional healthcare providers.

Walgreens has stated that its U.S. healthcare business will grow from \$2b to \$12b by 2025. CVS will look to continue its expansion into healthcare outside of its store doors. The Walmart Optum/United Partnership will incentivize Walmart to pivot its focus from in-store clinics to Medicare patients specifically. This will be slow to grow in 2023 but will accelerate rapidly in 2024 and beyond. Medicare Advantage Plans will expand offerings for special needs patients and will seek provider partners who can deliver services that decrease costs for these patients.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, there was an 11% increase in the number of special needs plans offered nationwide from 2021 to 2022, a trend I expect to continue into 2023. These partnerships will help deliver zero-dollar copays for prescription drugs, free access to behavioral health services, and allowances for over-the-counter items that assist with quality-of-life enhancement. Additional services, including transportation, in-home caregiving services, and food benefits will assist both special needs patients and their families.

Dr. Adrienne Boissy, Chief Medical Officer at Qualtrics & Staff Neurologist at Cleveland Clinic

Financial experience will become as important as the patient experience. Financial experiences will be one of the most important components of the patient experience in 2023.

In 2022, 31% of people reported they chose to defer care due to cost concerns – which is both a clinical risk and a risk to healthcare entities providing a positive patient experience. Three reflections for the year ahead:

- 1) Most patients adore their doctors and nurses, and the relationships between patients and their care teams will be key to influencing the patient experience.
- 2) Our brains remember the beginning (access) and the end (billing). Broken processes on either end erode trust, and healthcare entities need to combine experience and operational data to design transformation.
- 3) Patients often don't pay bills because they are prioritizing their spend, confused by the bill, skeptical that it is accurate, and hoping insurance will pay.

We have to listen more strategically to patients to move with speed to resolve their cost concerns and challenges.

Derek Streat, Co-Founder & CEO at DexCare

Consumerization of healthcare access is reshaping the industry as we've known it. To get and retain patients, health systems have to allow them to find and receive care at the same speed and convenience as they experience reserving a dinner reservation on OpenTable. Almost all industries are characterized by eCommerce traits – digital customization, a merchandising mindset and retail centrality – and these will define the next frontier of healthcare access and the organizations that survive.

Competition is tougher than ever for hospitals and health systems to survive in the consumer-centric healthcare landscape. In 2023, those that will succeed will mirror the eCommerce approach to customer service. Online scheduling isn't close to enough anymore. The health systems that get and keep patients will be the ones that build and deliver a powerful digital storefront for healthcare access. If your online portal doesn't mirror that of OpenTable or other consumer champions, then you won't survive.

Jay Deady, President, Claims Cost Solutions at Zelis

Healthcare is currently facing numerous challenges including shrinking margins, higher consumer expectations, and increasing competition. Effective payment integrity is the bridge to minimize administrative burden and manage rising costs, while streamlining payment efficiency between payer and provider to proactively engage and benefit their mutual client – healthcare consumers.

Ram Krishnan, CEO at Valant

Behavioral Health: The Demise of the Direct-to-Consumer Model – To fit the surging demand for mental health services, there has been an explosion in technology companies raising venture capital and building apps for mental health services with anything from coaches and other unlicensed professionals to build an “uber-like” quick service for consumers.

Over time these models have struggled to generate profit, keep up with staffing, and deliver a full range of services, particularly for those that were anything more than the worried well. This model though will leave us with some good advancements that can be brought to private practice—especially keeping connected with clients between sessions, through asynchronous care models, and providing nudges to ensure treatment plan compliance (gratitude, mindfulness, mood checks). These innovations are not lost, and can/will be brought to private practice and will ultimately become a standard of care.

Florian Otto, CEO and Co-Founder at Cedar

Healthcare Consumers Will Vote With Their Feet: We're seeing consumers find and stay with providers that give them the best end-to-end experience beyond just their clinical visit; the quality of a consumer's clinical visit is now table stakes, making the difference between a repeat customer or a one-time visit. Providers will need to think beyond their individual relationship with the consumer and instead work with all stakeholders to provide a united source of truth and communication. Those that do will see the greatest amount of return by way of patient foot traffic.

What Will Actually Move the Needle with Price Transparency: All we've seen from rules and regulations to date is hospitals doing the bare minimum when it comes to price disclosure. If we're going to see legitimate impact and true price transparency in a way that's helpful for the public, it'll come from consumer demand. We'll need consumers to be really vocal about what they demand from providers and payers when it comes to price transparency, and follow that narrative up by voting with their feet. That's where we'll see a tipping point.

Omri Shor, CEO and Founder at Medisafe

There is a lot of attention paid to wearable technology, but those devices simply deliver patients data on their own health without actionable insights. In 2023, I see a shift toward providing patients insights about their own health and ways they can use this information to take an active role in improving their health. Data without insights is just numbers, and are often why many people feel apprehensive toward using wearable tech for long-term use.

Frank McGillin, CEO at The Clinic by Cleveland Clinic

Consumerism increasingly drives decisions in the medical market. The rise of consumerism in healthcare remains a top c-suite priority: A recent MGMA survey showed that 76% of senior healthcare executives surveyed identified consumerism is the primary driving effect on operational decisions related to patient management and scheduling. Larger providers today are increasingly hiring operations and customer service managers from the likes of Amazon, Delta, Netflix, and Disney; they're aware that healthcare ranks among the worst industries for customer satisfaction and are intent on changing that. In a related development, home-enabled healthcare technology is taking off and is expected to more than double by 2031. We will continue to see in 2023 even more innovative wearables—rings, bands, watches, patches, straps, earrings and clothing—that can monitor all sorts of health indicators for everyone from critical care patients to Olympic athletes.

Brad Kittredge, Co-Founder & CEO at Brightside Health

Consumer adoption of telemental health and digital health is rising rapidly, and the digital mental health space is growing up, integrating more and more closely with the traditional healthcare system. We'll continue to see a growing proportion of care delivered virtually, with disproportionate growth among seniors.

Traditional providers will start to partner more closely with digital providers. Rather than seeing digital providers as competitors, forward-thinking health systems will start to partner with digital providers to support specific needs, such as post-acute mental health care and long outpatient wait times.



John Lynn

John Lynn is the Founder of HealthcareScene.com, a network of leading Healthcare IT resources. The flagship blog, [Healthcare IT Today](http://HealthcareITToday.com), contains over 13,000 articles with over half of the articles written by John. These EMR and Healthcare IT related articles have been viewed over 20 million times.

John manages [Healthcare IT Central](http://HealthcareITCentral.com), the leading career Health IT job board. He also organizes the first of its kind conference and community focused on healthcare marketing, [Healthcare and IT Marketing Conference](http://HealthcareandITMarketingConference.com), and a healthcare IT conference, EXPO.health, focused on practical healthcare IT innovation. John is an advisor to multiple healthcare IT companies. John is highly involved in social media, and in addition to his blogs can be found on Twitter: [@techguy](https://twitter.com/techguy).