

By [Geoff Harrison](#)

Improving the patient/provider experience

As patient care changes, healthcare companies have to adapt. More people are developing chronic illnesses than ever before, people are losing their access to healthcare, and the elderly population is growing. This transformation in healthcare is happening quickly, providing new opportunities for digital innovations every day.

There's plenty of room to improve digital health for everyone involved, especially with the help of emerging technologies and the digitization of healthcare. Some countries are even passing legislation to help fund these efforts, like Germany with its [Digital Care Act](#). Healthcare systems have much to gain by improving their digital experience and addressing the growing needs of their patients, providers, and administrators.

Here are five key [user experience](#) opportunities for digital transformation that healthcare systems are looking at to improve the patient and provider experience.

1. Electronic medical record

Keeping meaningful records and making use of this data is crucial for creating better patient and provider experiences. The concept is simple, but there are several factors in healthcare and its business model that make data collection, mining, and analysis difficult, including:

- Privacy and compliance laws around how information can be collected and who it can be shared with.

- Health records tend to be in various stages of completeness depending on how often someone sees the doctor, what conditions they have, and how a provider records the information.
- Many people's medical records exist in different places on systems that don't talk to each other.

But while there are obstacles, there are also great opportunities for patient care that utilize the information that does exist. Access to the data in electronic health records (EHRs) can be critical in improving patient outcomes. In the healthcare studies that we've done, there is a genuine eagerness from patients to ask providers to personalize their experience even more. This can solve problems almost everyone is familiar with. Imagine not having to fill out a health questionnaire every time you visit your provider or seeing possible treatment options for you based on patterns of other patients with your profile or within your family.

A personalized approach like this aligns with [precision medicine practices](#), which aim to account for variations between individuals, like genetics, lifestyle, and environments. Digital solutions can support precision medicine in successfully meeting the needs of various patient populations. Artificial intelligence (AI) could even play a role in bringing these tools to light through powerful analytics programs.

UX opportunities with electronic medical records

EHRs provide an innovative, streamlined way for clinicians to access patient information and connect with their patients in a more meaningful way. Some potential UX improvements EHRs can provide include:

- Track and mine a patient's health history to inform treatment.
- Analyze data across patients to create more successful treatment plans, possibly with the help of AI.
- Use family history and genomics for more personalized care.
- Enable collaboration between providers with a shared record.
- Integrate with wearable medical devices.
- Reduce time spent on documentation, enabling providers to spend more time interacting with their patients.

2. Patient acquisition

The healthcare industry is a business, and providers need to recruit customers to keep the business running. Digital solutions can help. Referral systems within healthcare networks are still of primary importance, but consumers are starting to have more freedom to choose from different providers within the healthcare market and even specialty services by themselves. This creates a big opportunity for providers to have better systems for capturing leads directly and keeping patients in their healthcare ecosystem.

One way you can increase patient acquisition is by improving your organization's website. When users have difficulty finding what they need on your site, they're likely to leave after looking at only a single page. Poor site design is one of the top contributors to a high bounce rate, which can negatively impact your patient acquisition numbers.

Improving your site's user interface (UI) to make your website more intuitive and easy to navigate can help patients get what they need quicker, which builds a user's trust in your organization and encourages them to use your clinic the next time they need medical care.

Online tools for patients to see provider availability, view costs for common procedures, and schedule appointments are more and more common. Offering patients access to data and

services is an excellent way to make their experience easier.

Plus, improved data access can reduce costs by limiting the time employees spend on administrative tasks, from scheduling and accessing patient information to submitting claims to health insurance companies and taking credit card payments. Adding mobile health access, such as through an app, makes this approach even more appealing to prospective patients.

UX opportunities in patient acquisition

Some ways you can improve patient acquisition rates through good UX include:

- Make appointment availability and scheduling easier by using HIPAA-compliant, self-service portals, and mobile applications.
- Enable comparing competing solutions based on availability and cost.
- Connect patient medical records to an appointment for context.
- Create digital resources that are easy for aging populations, who may not be tech-savvy, to use.
- Offer patients communication methods that go straight to their inboxes.
- Implement AI chatbots to make patients feel more at ease while using your site or application.



3. Telehealth and remote access

There is pressure within health systems to change healthcare delivery and make seeing the doctor easier for patients, as well as increase the number of patients a provider can see. Telehealth services are aimed at doing both of these things by enabling a virtual doctor's visit through some form of video conferencing. Physician practices have to change slightly for this digital technology, but telehealth offers easier access for many patients and can [even reduce administrative costs](#).

There are a number of positives when the service works well, but challenges still remain in scheduling, diagnosing without physical interaction, and follow-up procedures. Providers continue to enhance these systems and are experimenting with different interaction models, which means it's still early, but it also shows that this is a growth area for digital transformation in healthcare.

UX opportunities in telehealth

Many telehealth technologies are still fairly new to the scene, but numerous opportunities exist for improving both the patient and provider experiences:

- Create more efficient and accessible appointment opportunities through telehealth services.
- Improve provider/patient communication post-procedure.
- Offer provider-led, web-based wellness programs.
- Utilize at-home lab tests to diagnose certain conditions.
- Leverage the augmented reality (AR) capabilities of patients' smartphones to provide visual medication demonstrations and improve treatment efficacy.

Related: Blink conducted independent research on the benefits and barriers to getting aging populations to use telemedicine services. [Download the white paper](#) to learn more about our findings.

4. Patient monitoring

To keep healthcare costs down and give patients more freedom, treatment and care now occur after the patient leaves the clinic. When providers create a care plan, patients can interact with it through a health app rather than the traditional six-page instructional printout.

The Internet of Things (IoT) also enables providers to monitor patient conditions outside the clinic by collecting patient data and generating reports through connected software programs. For example, physicians can now see how someone is doing with their prescribed physical therapy plan or how their biometrics are changing over time between visits.

Wearable medical devices can also help collect this data automatically and make it easier for providers to conduct remote patient monitoring. These devices often connect to applications that patients can access from their mobile phones or other smart devices

Another emerging technology is carbon nanotubes (CNTs), which contain powerful biosensors that help providers monitor the patient or provide drug delivery after the initial procedure.

The challenges for healthcare providers are integrating devices and systems that weren't originally designed for these types of interactions. However, as the benefits to both patients and providers increase, we will continue to see more demand and infusion of technologies to enable outpatient remote monitoring.

UX opportunities in patient monitoring

Remote patient monitoring (RPM) is a developing healthcare methodology that enables clinicians to provide more effective care to patients outside of the office. Some opportunities for improving RPM UX design include:

- Integrate device and pharmaceutical usage with the health record.
- Monitor treatment progress at home.
- Track and report treatment progress without having to see a provider.
- Monitor patients with recurring and chronic conditions.
- Collect data from wearable tech.
- Empower patients to take control of their health by providing live analyses and visualizations of key health metrics.

5. Provider service delivery

The traditional model of scheduling an appointment and going to see a doctor at an office for all of our medical needs is changing. Today, providers have express care clinics that don't require appointments and encourage patients to see nurse practitioners for common ailments. And in some cases, an in-person visit isn't required at all.

When a patient does see a provider, the whole process can be simplified and made more seamless by integrating systems. Digital transformations allow providers to spend less time messing with logistics and more time focusing on the patient. Furthermore, providers can be more efficient and give more consistent care if they have personal histories combined with information on common procedures readily available.

Being able to easily access and edit health information can also enhance the patient experience. For example, providing information on various health conditions through an easy-to-navigate mobile app can help patients more accurately determine their symptoms, so they avoid the dangers of self-diagnosis. Plus, integrations with newer technologies like AI and machine

learning (ML) can pull information from physicians' notes and the patient's medical history to provide a more customized experience.

UX opportunities in provider service delivery

Creating a personalized experience is key to improving healthcare UI and UX on both the patient side and the clinician side. Some potential enhancements include:

- Create more access to care with non-traditional express care clinics.
- Make provider intake, discharge, and billing systems more efficient, possibly with artificial intelligence.
- Allow referral services such as lab work, specialty providers, and other services to be more seamless.
- Show the provider relevant notes from past visits.
- Show the provider relevant digital health education materials.
- Use algorithms and AI to show users information relevant to their use cases.

There are so many UX healthcare opportunities right now to design products and services that can improve the lives of patients, providers, and healthcare systems. It's exciting to see healthcare organizations embrace UX thinking as the best way to deliver positive health outcomes.

□

Take advantage of UX design opportunities in healthcare with Blink

Healthcare is an ever-changing field, and new tech companies have made it possible to improve patient care by making their experiences more efficient, safe, and accurate. Upgrading digital health solutions can benefit public health and boost patient care across practices.

[Contact us](#) today to learn how we can apply our evidence-driven approach to enhance your healthcare UX design.

Geoff is Head of UX Services at Blink. He gets excited by winter rains because it means more snow in the mountains to ski on with his wife and 3 boys.