patientIQ

UNCOVERING THE BLIND SPOT IN

VALUE-BASED CARE STRATEGIES

A Comprehensive Guide For Innovative Hospitals & Health Systems

As hospitals and health systems build robust strategies to realize true value-based care, they often overlook one essential piece of the puzzle.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 01

Providing & Proving High-Quality Care 02

Understanding the Role of PROs in Value-Based Care 04

Delivering on the Need for Patient-Reported Outcomes Data 06

Conclusion 18

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INTRODUCTION

By now, it's clear that value-based care has established a firm foothold in healthcare—one that shows clear signs of continuing to grow rather than leveling off. Risk-based insurer contracts, government incentives, and consumer preferences all show the value various players have placed on payment models that tie reimbursement rates to the quality of care provided.

While healthcare providers have responded to these drivers by increasingly adopting value-based care, many have run into challenges with efficient and meaningful implementation.

To make a true impact, health systems not only need to understand the quality of the care they deliver, they must also demonstrate it. By securing and proving value as they lower overall care delivery costs, health systems can ensure ongoing success.

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PROVIDING & PROVING

HIGH-QUALITY CARE

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PROVIDING & PROVING HIGH-QUALITY CARE

In this new environment, healthcare systems must objectively prove the quality of their care—not only to consumers making choices based on publicly accessible reports but also to the payers and regulators overseeing revised payment models. In particular, payers seek proof that they're getting what they're paying for.
Take the perspective of CMS, for example. In its view, data from patients should "capture the full spectrum of care to incentivize collaboration and shared decision responsibility for improving patient health."

This demand for metrics highlights the critical need for a particular set of information: patient-reported outcomes (PROs). This data is both quantitative and qualitative, serving as an objective source, as it comes directly from patients receiving care, without interpretation by providers.

PROs can capture patient satisfaction, but they also go beyond these measures. When properly collected, analyzed, and understood, PROs measure the quality of care in terms that are important to all stakeholders.

Patient-Reported Outcomes: What Gets Measured?

Hospitals need patient-reported data to prove the success and value of the care they deliver. PROs can capture a patient's:

- Functionality
- Ongoing symptoms, including pain levels
- Overall quality of life, including mental health
- Satisfaction with the care they received

These data points go to the very heart of clinical excellence and the patient experience - top priorities for every value-based healthcare system.

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UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PROs In

VALUE-BASED CARE

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WHY DO PROs MATTER?

Patient-reported outcomes matter to value-based care organizations for three key reasons:

1. Patients Expect Them

With the rise of consumerism in healthcare, the need for transparency around patient outcomes is growing. Collecting and sharing PROs are key to driving patient engagement, loyalty, and retention for health systems.

2. Payers Demand Them

Quality of care, as measured by PROs, serves as the foundation of value-based care contracts, both with CMS and private payers. Patient-reported outcomes play a role in both prior authorization requirements and incentive programs such as the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System, which determines Medicare payment adjustments.

3. Regulators are Mandating Them

Even outside of contracts, regulators are increasingly introducing metrics for better care at lower cost. Governing bodies are mandating PRO collection as part of efforts to improve healthcare quality and efficiency, reduce disparities, and lower costs. Hospitals that don't collect and share patient-reported outcomes data to CMS will pay for it—in the form of reduced reimbursements starting in the 2028 fiscal year.

Mandated PRO collection is picking up across medical specialties. For instance, starting in 2025, orthopedic providers will be required to report PRO data on certain hip and knee procedures to CMS, including information about patients' pain levels, functional improvements, and mobility after surgery.

> "**The systematic measurement of health outcomes** that matter to patients, as well as of the costs required to deliver those outcomes across the full cycle of care, provides the critical data that industry participants need to **fulfill the mission of continuously improving patient value."**
>
> —Stefan Larsson, Jennifer Clawson, and Robert Howard, New England Journal of Medicine

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DELIVERING ON THE NEED FOR

PATIENT-REPORTED OUTCOMES DATA

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DELIVERING ON THE NEED FOR PROs

To meet these value-based expectations, health systems need a robust patient-reported outcomes program. This tracking and reporting program should go beyond occasional data collection or sporadic quality initiatives. It should harness the full potential of patient-reported data on an ongoing basis across the organization.

PROs are a vital component to assessing and improving your health system's standard of care—and the clinical value associated with that care. Ultimately, collecting, analyzing, and learning from PROs helps your team make more informed clinical and operational decisions.

Leveraging PROs allows your organization to:

- Benchmark outcomes to identify areas of high and low value
- Compare your health system's results with national averages
- Determine why certain interventions were more effective than others
- Empower clinicians with data at the point of care to inform treatment decisions and fuel research
- Enable the delivery of personalized medicine
- Identify and address areas needing clinical quality improvement

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A PRO-enabled value-based care strategy creates a high-functioning health system that is operationally empowered to deliver quality care and continuously improve clinical practices. These unique capabilities truly enable value-based care delivery.

Strengthening your health system's value-based care strategy is growing more urgent in the current regulatory environment. Hospitals that effectively capture and leverage patient outcomes data are at a clear advantage. With that in mind, the time is ripe to deploy mechanisms and tools that maximize the efficient collection and analysis of PRO data.

Value-Based Care and the Competitive Healthcare Landscape

To stay viable in an increasingly competitive space, healthcare systems need to be more intentional about demonstrating that they deliver high-quality care. A wide variety of competitors can influence patient leakage and loss of revenue, including:

- Retailers such as CVS, Walgreens, and Amazon
- Other health systems that are expanding and offering more services
- Physician-run management services organizations (MSOs)
- Private equity investment groups that support independent practices

Collecting and leveraging patient-reported outcomes gives health systems an edge to improve patient retention and loyalty.

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PATIENT OUTCOME PLATFORMS: THE ANSWER TO DATA-COLLECTION CHALLENGES

Healthcare leaders broadly agree on the importance of collecting PROs to enable value-based care. Realistically, though, infrastructure gaps can limit meaningful progress at the implementation stage. Understandably, outcomes programs can fail due to inefficient design and lack of resources to support the ongoing collection, structuring, and analysis of patient-reported data.

In response, a new category of partner has emerged to help health systems establish or amplify their PRO programs. Patient outcomes platforms, such as PatientIQ, partner with health systems to drive continuous quality improvement while reducing the administrative burden on internal staff. This type of partnership allows health systems to focus on the core components of care delivery, while also reaping the benefits of data to enhance that care.

Patient outcomes platforms help health systems to:

1. Quantify and Improve Clinical Value

Proving value begins with understanding the quality of care an organization provides. A patient outcomes platform enables your health system to collect and analyze PRO data, for a comprehensive understanding. Your organization can then compare its outcomes to competitors and national averages.

Additionally, an effective platform empowers health leaders to identify low-value care by systematically tracking outcomes on all providers, locations, treatments, surgeries, and devices to inform quality improvement initiatives and reduce costs.

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2. Reduce Unneeded Medical Spend

Unnecessary healthcare services cost an estimated $210 billion annually, according to the Institute of Medicine. Health systems can, and should, direct those funds to other areas that provide more value.

For instance, tracking patient-reported surgical results can help providers analyze which specific populations benefit from surgery—and when a procedure may not be necessary at all.

3. Manage Risk

True quality care goes beyond the point of intervention, capturing patient progress in real time. This comprehensive picture is far easier to achieve with digital tools such as email or text questionnaires, rather than relying solely on in-person follow-up visits.

Enhanced tracking allows healthcare providers to monitor patients more closely, detect problems earlier, and identify those at risk of complications or readmission.

4. Encourage Patient Involvement

Research shows that PROs can improve communication between patients and physicians and encourage patient involvement by empowering them to speak up. Patients may find it easier, or more comfortable, to disclose concerning symptoms in a questionnaire rather than face-to-face with their doctor.

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5. Optimize the Patient Experience

The effort to prove value includes measuring whether patients are satisfied with the care they received. Patient satisfaction has a domino effect: It influences quantifiable outcomes, such as length of hospital stay and readmission rates… which drive the overall cost of care delivery… which impact reimbursements in a value-based care system.

A survey of spine surgery patients pinpointed the top two factors influencing patient satisfaction: pain levels and whether the patient felt their provider had "spent enough time with them." These measures offer important insights into how patients feel about their care, which health systems can then use to improve that care.

A patient outcomes platform engages patients throughout the care journey—not only collecting data, but also providing educational videos and content, and showing concern for patients and their well-being. Some platforms can also survey patients, so health leaders can holistically assess patient satisfaction, or even collect online reviews to support patient acquisition and retention strategies.

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NOT ALL PATIENT OUTCOMES PLATFORMS ARE CREATED EQUAL

Patient outcomes platforms represent a growing category with several options. Not every platform offers the same functionality, so it's important to assess how these tools meet your organization's specific needs. You need certain features to create measurable change with your data.

Before choosing a platform, consider whether it has these basic capabilities:

1. Seamless EHR Integration

Your patient outcomes platform should integrate with your provider workflow to incorporate PRO measures into the point of care. Connecting a patient outcomes platform with your healthcare system's existing Electronic Health Record allows you to systematically measure outcomes across the organization. In turn, clinicians can access valuable insights that inform treatment decisions and enhance evidence-based care.

2. Effective Patient Engagement

Your health system can't comply with federally mandated patient-reported outcome requirements if your patients don't fill out the questionnaires. An effective patient outcomes platform can achieve more than 70% compliance rates on outcome collection. Automating follow-up also helps improve patient completion.

For example, a PRO tool can send automatic, periodic messages to the patient to request a status update. Rather than needing to schedule in-person visits over weeks or months, the patient outcomes platform delivers concrete updates on the patient's condition more frequently and in real time.

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3. Data Aggregation and Actionable Insights

Health systems can use a patient outcomes platform to aggregate patient results across the hospital and measure their outcomes against competitors and national averages. The right platform allows you to customize the data by subspecialty, provider, or procedure for more targeted insights.

4. Enterprise-Level Support

A powerful patient outcomes platform strengthens your enterprise IT strategy. It allows your organization to effortlessly scale data collection and reporting across subspecialties, access one source of truth, lower maintenance costs, and unlock IT bandwidth.

The right patient outcomes platform can become the backbone of your health system's value-based care strategy. These platforms are designed to enable value-based care initiatives and push medicine forward.

Evaluating Patient-Reported Outcome Platforms

While the value of a PRO platform is clear, evaluating the differing market offerings to determine which is best suited to meet your clinical and operational objectives can be a challenge.

Download the eBook, **"Evaluating Patient-Reported Outcome Platforms: A Comprehensive Guide to Selecting the Right Vendor Partner,"** to better understand the differences in functionality and vendor expertise. The eBook also includes a comprehensive checklist to help you during the evaluation process.

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CONCLUSION

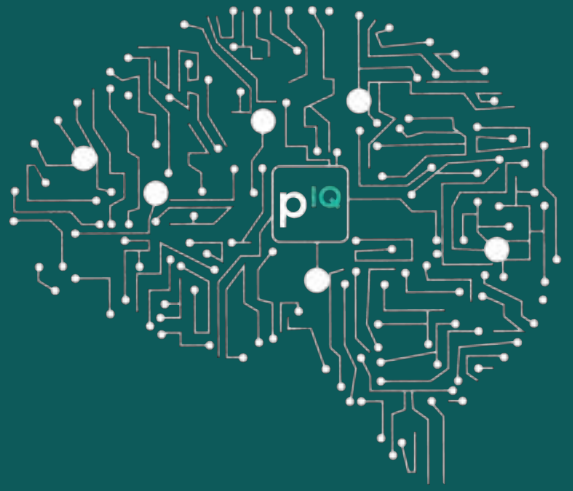
Health systems can't enhance the quality of their care delivery if they aren't aware of areas for opportunity. Similarly, they can't build upon successful strategies if they lack the relevant data to explain why those strategies were successful.

Patient-reported outcomes data—and the platforms that make it possible to utilize that data— healthcare organizations, providers, and clinical teams to practice data-driven medicine. By systematically measuring the outcomes of every patient who walks through your doors, you can fundamentally improve patient care and unlock value throughout the enterprise.

To learn more about key considerations for launching an integrated patient-reported outcomes platform, read the eBook: **"Build vs. Buy: Launching an Integrated Patient-Reported Outcomes Program."**

About PatientIQ

PatientIQ is the healthcare technology partner for practicing data-driven medicine. Its proprietary, cloud-based platform has demonstrated years of experience and an unparalleled ability to help healthcare organizations leverage patient outcomes data to improve clinical and operational performance. The cloud-based, EHR-integrated platform enables healthcare organizations to systemically collect and analyze patient-reported outcomes data while improving the patient experience. The platform facilitates collaboration, from research to registries, and pushes medicine forward.



For more, visit **www.patientiq.io** or request a demo at **www.patientiq.io/request-a-demo**.

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