

# Healthcare communication

Business



Communication among patients/consumers and healthcare providers shapes the backbone of the relationship between patient and provider. Important as this communication is in the field of healthcare provision, it is in most cases stressed because of space and time limitations faced by both consumers and healthcare providers.

As a result of this, many healthcare organizations have been determined to develop a mode of communication to enable consumers communicate with their healthcare providers smoothly and conveniently. One of such modes is the e-mail which is gaining popularity across the world due to enhanced accessibility to the internet. E-mail is an acronym for electronic mail, and is the transmission of digital messages across networks of communications (Sitting et al, 2000). The use of e-mail has many advantages to both parties, that is, patients and providers, in the field of healthcare provision. The most significant benefit a patient will draw from using this form of communication is the increased accessibility to healthcare.

This is achieved because currently, almost all healthcare organizations, including small clinics have email addresses (Mandl et al, 1998). As opposed to the past where the use of the service was almost restricted to the use of a computer, many people can send and receive their emails through the phones. Hence a patient can contact a healthcare provider of their choice or those they believe can effectively handle their issue by a touch of a button. Searching through the internet exposes the patients to many providers with contacts and therefore they can easily be reached. Just like voice mail, e-mail can be looked as an asynchronous form of communication that basically offers a constant access to the healthcare system. The gap between patients

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and providers has been bridged by e-mails and consumers have fewer worries because healthcare services have been brought at their door steps.

The confidentiality of the patients' medical information and the e-mails' privacy are paramount. Physicians who make use of emails while at workplace for medical operations and patients are however are not guaranteed of this fact, confidentiality and may end involuntarily exposing sensitive elements of the social situation or illness to an employer or any other individual who is not supposed to access it (Sitting et al, 2000).

Additionally, patients using family e-mail accounts in their homes might be short of privacy from children, parents or spouses. Addresses for medical accounts could be different from other professional or personal ones. Medical email addresses together with all messages generated through them have to be constantly documented in and connected to the medical records of the patient. Such connection can be achieved through various ways like employing an embedded hypertext link to medical record that is web-based or adding a patient identifier.

According Mandl et al (1998), even though electronic communications e-mails in particular, have to be guarded against illicit interlopers and most importantly it has to be noted that most infringements to confidentiality of electronic information are committed by authenticated individuals. To prevent such violations within an organization, more emphasis has to be laid upon initiating a framework that will develop effective legislation, education programs and institutional confidentiality policies. As already looked at above, e-mail is an effective mode of communication because it is an asynchronous form of communication that basically offers a constant access <https://assignbuster.com/healthcare-communication-essay-samples/>

to the healthcare system by linking the patients and the providers at any time. Unlike other forms of communication like face-to-face, and telephone communications that need both parties to be present concurrently for a message to be conveyed, an e-mail can be send and received at any time and anywhere. With the use of e-mails, communication can take place under almost all circumstance, on a trip, at work, and any other place, a fact that has been enhanced by use of internet enabled cell phones. E-mail is different from other forms of communications in many different ways but the most important aspect that makes it very distinct is the ability to communicate any time even in absentia of one party.

Looking a telephone conversation, no information will be passed on if there is no recipient at the other end, this is however has been solved by voice mails. This makes the convenience of e-mail to be relatively high as compared to these other forms like face-to-face communication. Due to a lot responsibilities physicians are charged with, reaching them proves to be difficult sometimes, this barrier has been broken by e-mails because they are unique in the sense that patients and physicians can get in touch even communication takes place when one is not available (Mandl et al, 1998). Media and social networking has in the recent past taken the aspect of communication in all fields, not only in healthcare by a storm. Social networking has turned around traditional forms of communication into the use internet to pass across important information (Rodriguez, 2010). Currently, social media has greatly changed the manner through which pharmaceuticals companies and healthcare provides communicate with the public.

This has enabled healthcare consumers to follow healthcare conferences instantaneously, search for and access important information, come up with healthcare stories or search share links right away. Rodriguez (2010) observes that a number of social media including Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube among other tools of social media are playing more and more outstanding roles as one way of developing health care communications plan.

They offer opportunities to reach a very wide base of customers at a very low cost as compared to traditional media efforts. Additionally, social networking has a very big impact as far as marketing is concerned hence making the industry gain more clients. These reasons coupled with transparency, direct form of communication and enhanced access to information makes this form of communication appropriate to healthcare providers. Researches indicate that more than 34 % of healthcare consumers utilize social media to look for healthcare information. Some of the various ways in which media and social media has been used in healthcare include: training medical personnel, communicate during crisis, getting to mainstream media, offering accurate information to patients among others. E-mail being one of the major modes of communication used across the globe has opened more opportunities for marketing healthcare products and services.

This is because people many people are doing their jobs via computers today and it is very convenient and quicker to write someone an email as an alternative to calling them. This advantage has been made use by healthcare marketing services to incorporate e-mail marketing. Because most people

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check through their emails daily, they can easily information from healthcare providers in their inbox (Harmen, 2010). Today many organizations are specialized in e-mail marketing by the fact that they access tens of thousands of addresses of medical personnel, physicians and regular citizens with healthcare concerns. E-mail marketing has proved to be an effective method of sending wellness and health bulletins to patients, and also send vital health alerts and advisories to healthcare providers.

Additionally, the use of e-mails enables medical facility or hospitals promote new services and products other than helping them send reminders of appointments and duties (Harmen, 2010). With the use of this service, there is no need of a healthcare provider sending making a phone call to every patient who has an upcoming appointment because engaging an e-mail marketing service has an ability of automatically sending appointment reminders to individuals on the list. Lastly another way in which e-mail marketing can be used is driving web traffic to the websites of healthcare providers hence strengthening their practice and business model. To sum up this discussion, e-mail is one of the most effective modes of communication that can be used to link both patients and healthcare providers. E-mails are very affordable and convenient because communication can take place even if one of the parties is not available. Finally, e-mail marketing has emerged as one important tool for marketing healthcare products and services.