

From Challenges to Solutions:

Breaking Barriers to Revolutionize Patient Services

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Patients today too often find themselves navigating a myriad of challenges that can make accessing quality healthcare a daunting task. Common obstacles range from financial barriers to long wait times to geographical and technological limitations and much more.

As someone who is deeply invested in improving patient health outcomes, I've had numerous conversations with patients, healthcare providers (HCPs) and pharmaceutical manufacturers who echo that these barriers can significantly impede patient access, affordability and adherence.

In light of these complexities, it's crucial to understand the specific hurdles patient services programs must overcome to provide effective care. Here are some of the top challenges facing patient services programs today.

Hurdles and Pitfalls: Critical Challenges Obstructing Patient Care

1. LACK OF INFORMATION

Over 60% of patients report wanting more information when deciding where to get care. They often feel lost navigating their treatment options and need clearer guidance on therapies available to them. This gap in reliable healthcare information can lead to poor decision-making and, often, non-adherence to prescribed therapies, which of course only worsens their health outcomes.

2. LONG WAIT TIMES

The average wait time for a new patient appointment in the U.S. is a staggering 26 days. Imagine being in pain or facing a health issue and having to wait nearly a month to see a provider. Long wait times are not just inconvenient; they can lead to delayed treatments and increase reliance on emergency services, which are already overburdened.

3. RISING COSTS OF THERAPIES

Between 2019 and 2022, hospital drug expenses per patient increased by 19.7%. This rise in the cost of therapies can place an incredible financial burden on patients, particularly those who have chronic conditions or require specialty medications. As a result, many patients are forced to make tough decisions about whether they can afford to continue treatment.

4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

Factors such as income, education and location have a significant impact on healthcare access. Patients living in rural areas or low-income households often face additional barriers to receiving care, contributing to growing health disparities.

5. FRAGMENTED CARE COORDINATION

When care is not well-coordinated, patients often find themselves bouncing between HCPs without clear communication or cohesive treatment plans. This fragmented care leads to miscommunication, duplicated tests and inconsistent treatments.

6. ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

In an increasingly digital world, access to and basic knowledge of technology is becoming more essential to access care, yet only 58.5% of adults used the internet to look for health or medical information in 2022. This digital divide means many patients are missing out on the benefits of telehealth, online appointment booking and digital health management tools, limiting their engagement and access to services.

Turning Obstacles Into Opportunities for Success

It's clear these significant obstacles can prevent patients from receiving timely, affordable care and contribute to a healthcare environment where many patients struggle to navigate their treatment journeys. These barriers not only hinder patient outcomes, but also increase the burden on HCPs and patient services programs.

Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach. We must focus on advancements such as enhancing patient education and access to reliable information and utilizing digital platforms that empower patients to make informed decisions. Reducing wait times can be achieved through process improvements and leveraging telehealth to expand access to care. By prioritizing these strategies and others, we can begin to create a healthcare system that better serves patients in need.



The Impact of Direct-to-Patient Models: Empowering Patients and Transforming Care

In recent years, there has been a notable shift in how manufacturers launch new therapies, acquire patients and provide ongoing support. The concept of “patients as consumers” is finally becoming a reality as manufacturers seek to meet the evolving expectations of today’s healthcare marketplace. With patients expecting more convenience, information and engagement, direct-to-patient (DTP) models have emerged as a game-changing approach to meet these demands.

Scott Snyder, my colleague and EVERSANA’s Chief Digital Officer, highlighted at a recent speaking engagement how DTP models and the “patients as consumers” approach go hand in hand:

“Direct-to-patient models take the friction or constraints out of the patient journey and treat patients like they are treated in other aspects of their lives, as consumers. They also give pharma the opportunity to organize in a different way to build relationships with patients to help them through their care journey.”

– Scott Snyder

DTP models offer a transformative approach to addressing challenges, providing numerous benefits for both patients and manufacturers. These models bypass traditional healthcare intermediaries, providing patients with direct access to therapies and services. Not only do DTP models streamline processes, but they also enhance the overall patient experience.

By leveraging DTP models, we can address many of the systemic issues that hinder patient care. DTP models help simplify the healthcare journey by ensuring patients receive timely and accurate information, personalized support and more affordable treatment options. Here are some of the key benefits that DTP models bring to the table:

IMPROVED ACCESS TO INFORMATION:

By utilizing DTP models, patients are empowered with accurate, timely information about their therapies. I’ve spoken with physicians who have witnessed this firsthand: when patients are given clear, direct communication about their treatments, they feel more in control of their healthcare decisions and are more likely to adhere to their prescribed regimens.

REDUCED WAIT TIMES:

By streamlining processes, DTP models can reduce the time it takes for patients to receive their medications or therapies, ensuring quicker access to care when it matters most.

ENHANCED SUPPORT:

DTP models allow for more personalized care. Patients appreciate having direct access to tailored support services, such as educational resources and adherence programs, which can improve their overall health outcomes and satisfaction with their care.

INCREASED ADHERENCE AND ENGAGEMENT:

DTP models foster direct communication with patients, encouraging them to stay engaged with their healthcare. Because patients are more informed and supported, they’re more likely to adhere to their prescribed treatments.

ADDRESSING MEDICAL DESERTS:

In many parts of the country, physician shortages and geographic isolation prevent patients from accessing the care they need. DTP models help eliminate these “medical deserts” by making therapies accessible, regardless of location. This is especially critical for patients with rare or complex conditions who may not have easy access to specialists.

DATA-DRIVEN PERSONALIZATION:

DTP models leverage data and analytics to provide a more personalized and seamless healthcare experience. By collecting real-time patient data, manufacturers can tailor support services, adjust treatment plans and deliver proactive care that meets individual patient needs.



Scott Snyder additionally highlighted how the rise of AI and DTP models complement each other:

“Two of the biggest trends in pharma right now are AI and how it will transform how we deliver value to patients, HCPs and the broader set of stakeholders, and the second trend is direct-to-patient models, which are transforming the delivery model as well.

When you combine these two, AI supercharges direct-to-patient, whether it’s finding undiagnosed or misdiagnosed patients, being able to engage them in a personalized way and give them the right educational content so they can be aware of their condition, or helping them understand how to get diagnosed and then take the best next action.”

– Scott Snyder

A key advantage of EVERSANA’s DTP model is its ability to significantly reduce wait times for treatment. Our modernized processes and efficient distribution channels enable faster access to care, minimizing delays and enhancing the overall patient experience. Our model also offers personalized care tailored to each patient’s unique needs, providing direct access to support services such as educational resources, adherence programs and personalized assistance.

Moreover, our DTP model helps bridge the gap in healthcare access by making therapies available regardless of location, which can be especially crucial for patients with rare or complex conditions.

Charting a Path Toward a Healthier Tomorrow

While the challenges facing patients and patient services programs are numerous and complex, there are successful pathways to improving health outcomes and creating a more equitable healthcare system. Through collaborative efforts and implementing innovative solutions such as DTP models, we can overcome obstacles and help ensure patients receive the quality care they deserve. As we continue to address these challenges head-on, I am optimistic we can pave the way for a healthier future.

Accelerating Treatment and Enhancing Experiences: EVERSANA’s DTP Model Leads the Way in Patient-Centric Care

By addressing the critical challenges outlined above, EVERSANA’s DTP model is at the forefront of revolutionizing patient care by offering a comprehensive approach that streamlines the healthcare journey and improves health outcomes. We leverage advanced digital platforms to ensure patients receive accurate and timely information about their therapies, empowering them to make more informed healthcare decisions and adhere to their prescribed regimens.

