

## Mobile App Technology and Improving Patient Engagement: The Route to Successful Outcomes

When it comes to improving patient outcomes, experiences, or your independent pharmacy's bottom line, success relies on your ability to provide service in a timely and efficient manner.

Disruptive innovations are everywhere. The challenges these disruptions pose act like jackknifed trucks on the highway: they cause bottlenecks and backups, slowing you down and delaying your organization's ability to efficiently provide the services and products necessary to creating a positive patient experience.

To get around traffic, you might map out an alternate route or explore a back road. In the case of independent pharmacies, the expansion of mobile apps into patient diagnosis, treatment, engagement, and adherence might offer the perfect alternate route to avoiding "information" bottlenecks and allow you to better position your pharmacy to meet the needs of your patients and boost profits.



### Using Mobile Apps

Large chain pharmacies are constantly looking for ways to draw customers into their stores. In order to stay competitive, local independent pharmacies will need to focus on increasing patient engagement while also finding ways to make their organization's services more convenient.

Mobile app technology is poised to deliver solutions in nearly every aspect of the pharmacy/patient relationship.

There are currently over [165,000 smartphone apps](#)<sup>1</sup> with health monitoring or data storage functions available on Apple iOS and Google Android systems. As these applications become more intuitive, complex and, most importantly, accurate, the more sought after they will be in day-to-day business operations.

Mobile technologies can aid in:

**Patient Diagnosis** – The seamless connectivity and portability of mobile devices easily and efficiently expands the reach of quality healthcare, bridging the gap between healthcare professionals and patients who reside in rural and developing regions.

Virtual pharma visits that allow for discussion of drug interactions, reactions, and side-effects, are convenient for both the provider and patient, help cut down on healthcare spending, and engage today's connected patient.

**Treatment** – The quick and simple act of snapping a picture of a rash, bite, or other non-life-threatening malady, or speaking to your doctor via video-chat, can help keep offices clear of

congestion and allow for a timelier treatment of in-person patients. Treatments that don't require in-person visits can be discussed with little to no inconvenience for patients or pharmacists.



**Engagement** – Ensuring patients take medications according to prescribers' orders is the first step to keeping patients engaged and involved in their own healthcare.

teams on a regular basis are less likely to become non-adherent with their medications.

**Adherence** – Customers who engage with their healthcare

Mobile applications are often passed over in favor of more traditional healthcare models, but that is beginning to change. Pharmacies stand to reap the most benefits from introducing these technologies into their business models.

Mobile technology benefits include:

- More convenience
- Makes quality healthcare more accessible
- Is often less expensive than face-to-face appointments
- Extends a patient's access to consultation with specialists, and
- Increases patient engagement

With [95 percent](#)<sup>2</sup> of Americans owning a mobile phone, 77 percent of which are smartphones, the opportunities for boosting healthcare efficiencies are nearly limitless.

## Closing Thoughts

In an industry that once heavily relied on house calls, mobile application technology offers a 21<sup>st</sup> century path into a patients' well-being and habits, making it a valuable instrument of accountability and preventative care.

Accountable, engaged patients with an increased adherence prospect = improved patient outcomes and an improved bottom line.

The future of healthcare will rely on mobile technology. If you're ready to discuss how your pharmacy can utilize mobile technology, we're here to help. Keystone is ready to provide insights and resources that will help your pharmacy become a more valuable partner to the community it serves and fellow health care providers. We're dedicated to helping you maintain the health of your patients and communities, keep your stakeholders satisfied, and improve your pharmacy's bottom line.

If you're not a Keystone member yet, join us. If you are a member, make sure you're leveraging your benefits and maximizing your pharmacy's success. You can contact Keystone via email [info@kpparx.com](mailto:info@kpparx.com) or by phone 215-464-9892.

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5912086/>
2. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/>