

Washington State EHR Incentive Payment Program (Promoting Interoperability)

WHITE PAPER #11: Patient Engagement

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Patient Engagement

A patient's greater engagement in healthcare contributes to improved health outcomes, and information technologies can support engagement. Patients want to be engaged in their healthcare decision-making process, and those who are engaged as decision-makers in their care tend to be healthier and have better outcomes.

Patient engagement is a broader concept that combines patient activation with interventions designed to increase activation and promote positive patient behavior, such as obtaining preventive care or exercising regularly.

The keys to getting patients interested in their healthcare are:

- Making patient portals a necessary part of care (appointment setup, lab results, prescription refills, etc.)
- Integration of the portal in the visit (screenshots of portal printed and hung in offices, using the portal and showing the patient, front desk staff helping patients sign up, etc.)
- Feedback and improvement (ask for patient feedback and keep accessibility issues in mind)

Patient engagement is easier and more effective with smaller clinics but we want it to become widely used and accepted in large organizations as well. Please take the time to subscribe to the Patient EngagementHIT newsletter below and review the resources as well.

Patient Engagement as a Meaningful Use Requirement

Patient engagement is also an MU requirement:

- One patient seen by an eligible provider during an EHR Incentive Program reporting period must view, download, or transmit their electronic health data
- One patient seen in an eligible hospital or critical access hospital during an EHR Incentive Program reporting period must view, download, or transmit their electronic health data
- EPs, EHs, and CAHS must be able to answer a yes/no question regarding whether or not EPs and EHs enable secure direct messaging between patient and provider

Meaningful Use requirements can directly affect patients. Whether they have received an electronic reminder about follow-up care, or accessed an electronic copy of their health information following an appointment, patients are experiencing positive changes in how they interact with the health care system because of health information technology. Providing patients with their own agency when it comes to their health care will improve the overall health care experience.



Resources:

[CMS: Engaging Patients in Their Health Care](#)

[Athena Insight Patient Engagement](#)

[Patient EngagementHIT listserv](#)

[Patient EngagementHIT Best Practices](#)

[Patient EngagementHIT How Non-Clinical Staff Enable Patient Engagement](#)

[Patient EngagementHIT 4 Keys to Patient Engagement](#)

[Patient EngagementHIT 8 Elements of Effective Patient Engagement](#)

[HIMSS What is Patient Engagement](#)