

A Clinical Mobile Strategy Is No Longer a Perk But a Necessity

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The mobile technology that we rely on in our day-to-day lives has made its way to healthcare and not a moment too soon. Mobile devices have become an asset to clinicians and are revolutionizing patient care. With the use of smartphones and tablets, clinicians can access patient records, monitor patient vitals, and communicate with team members and patients from any place, at any time. However, there is a catch: Without the right mobile strategy, the technology is useless—or even harmful.

Mobile devices have become critical to increasing productivity and improving patient satisfaction, but conventional security methods to protect these devices and applications often bring clinical workflows to a halt. Ensuring quick mobile access, without the threat of additional security risks, is essential. However, many hospital employees today still feel as though they have to choose between the 2 necessities, as though security and productivity are incompatible. They are not.

We Can't Turn Our Backs on Mobile Innovation

The use of smartphones and tablets in the workplace has already become an indispensable asset. They not only aid in multitasking but also facilitate better connections between providers and patients. At the same time, these devices provide necessary access to tools and patient information, such as reviewing a patient's records, ordering a test, or writing a prescription. With mobile devices, patient-centered care is more likely to happen everywhere...including of course, actually with the patient. When this happens, everyone benefits. Quality of care, safety, and satisfaction all improve.

Research has shown that bedside tablets and apps are giving healthcare professionals more control over patient care. In “Bedside Reporting: Dynamic Dialogue,” a study published in the medical journal *Nursing Management*, Sandra K. Rush concluded that better bedside presence and communication strategy decreased patients' feelings

of abandonment. Not only that, but it is a huge improvement for staff satisfaction. The same study found that benefits of bedside reporting include patients' increased knowledge of their condition and treatment, improved patient and family satisfaction, and increased team building between staff.

Healthcare providers should not have to jump between different workstations in the building, log in and out of several apps, and rush back to the patient to answer a question. The likelihood of interruption is too great. Yet, it is a common occurrence: imagine that a doctor diagnoses an infection at the bedside and wants to order antibiotics, but without a mobile device, she needs to go out to the nurses' station to do so. On the way, she gets pulled into a resuscitation and various other interruptions and tasks. A consult here and a phone call there, and before you know it, the prescription is 3 hours late. Sending over a prescription could, or at least should, have been done quickly and painlessly on the spot, next to the patient.

It has become clear that mobile platforms allow for immediacy, control, consistency, and patient and staff satisfaction. There is just one large, looming problem: It does not always allow for security.

Without the Right Mobile Strategy, Data Security Is Lost

Mobile devices come with the same conundrum that its health tech predecessors had before it: walking the line between workflow efficiency and data security. The risks are real—and really expensive. The volume and frequency of healthcare data breaches have nearly doubled in the last 3 years, and poor standards for using mobile technology only contribute to that. Beyond security vulnerability, there are significant financial costs from lost devices. According to hospital and healthcare management, between 10% and 20% of a typical hospital's mobile devices are lost or stolen during their useful life, costing the hospital roughly \$3,000 per item. Not only that, but there can be a cost to bad workflows causing inefficient operations. A poor mobile technology strategy often derails hospital workflows rather than streamlining them.

The solution is mobile access management technology that supports personalized device experiences with badge-tap access and single sign-on to mobile applications. This workflow can save hours per day, while also increasing security and auditability in shared-use environments.

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The use of mobile devices is not going anywhere, but it is time to change the way in which many healthcare organizations use them. With the right technology, organizations

can improve clinician satisfaction and productivity. Simply put, a clinical mobile strategy is an important necessary investment and no longer “just nice to have.”