Proactive Care

“The primary goal should be to engage patients beyond their need for immediate healthcare services, on their terms, and in new ways with compelling content. Hit them with helpful, healthful messages in a low-stress situation, before they’re sick. The benefits of patient engagement include increased receptivity during treatment, better compliance, and increased retention.”

--Bill Frack, managing director and partner, Americas Healthcare Services Practice, L.E.K. Consulting
“Patient engagement is so important because steps toward improved patient engagement create an atmosphere of attention to detail, true care for the patient, and a standard of personalized service. Small- and medium-sized practices have to compete with larger physician groups, and that's why individualized attention can help practices of this size stand out. Quite frankly, it takes very little time to be nice, attentive, and make eye-to-eye contact with a patient.”

--Joncé Smith, vice president of revenue management at Stoltenberg Consulting
“Physicians need to greet patients — both established and new — with a handshake and a smile. Take time to listen to patient concerns and then address each one. Carefully explain the course of treatment and the expected turnaround time. Then address how to follow up if the condition doesn't resolve. All of this conveys an atmosphere of very personalized level of care and attention.”

-- Joncé Smith
Frequent Communication

“Ideally, patient engagement starts with an in-person discussion and continues through frequent communication, whether through phone calls, emails, texts, or additional in-person visits. The key is for the health professional to initiate the engagement, meet the patient where they are, and keep the conversation going during regular practice visits, through focused care management support, and/or through check-ins from practice staff.”

--Charisse Williams, RN, care management lead, Aledade
“Holding classes on Obamacare, healthy lifestyles for busy families, heart health, sports performance after 50, and advanced directives is a great way to engage patients. Make the content relevant to your practice's patient panel and current needs. It's a great idea to supplement [these classes] with a website, blog, and emailed content.”

-- Bill Frack
"If a patient is at risk of having their electricity shut off, they're not going to concern themselves with purchasing healthier foods or refilling their medications. We must try to view a patient's health needs from their vantage point. Change will never occur if the patient doesn't see the problem or if they aren't ready to address the problem. So, it's imperative that we give the patient the opportunity to set the stage."

--Charisse Williams, RN
Multi-Modal Approach

“Successful patient engagement requires a multi-modal approach for breadth and depth of panel coverage. For example, your office manager can call and ask patients, 'How are you?' or 'How was your visit?' The goal here is to enhance engagement and connectivity. The office manager can also be helpful in coordinating outreach to chronic patients who require high levels of engagement, lest they fall off their treatment plan.”

-- Bill Frack
Reminder Notices

“Provide reminder notices to patients who haven't yet made an appointment for normal annual procedures, such as mammography, Pap smear, PSA, colon screening, and more. These little reminders help keep patients on track and provide a sense that the healthcare organization truly cares about their care and wellbeing. Plus, with better patient retention in annual procedures, the practice earns a revenue booster.”

--Charisse Williams, RN
Personal Calls

“Make personal calls for appointment reminders, not an automated system. Remember that not all patients are tech-savvy, especially the more elderly patient population who generally require more follow-up appointments. Personal calls add the individualized, human touch to the patient scheduling experience.”

--Charisse Williams, RN