

Exploration of Portal Activation by Patients in a Healthcare System.

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Abstract

A study of patient portal use was conducted at a not-for-profit healthcare system in Northern Virginia. The healthcare system serves more than 2 million people each year. Between July 2014 and June 2015, 461,700 different patients used the portal at least once. Univariate analysis and multivariable logistic regression indicated associations between patient portal activation and predictive factors. Multiple findings emerged: patient portal activation was greater for English speaking patients; differences in portal activation were observed by patient age, and patients who had an identified primary care provider had greater portal activation. The implications were that patients who have limited English skills and have economic challenges may be less engaged. This review demonstrates the importance of understanding the population using a patient portal and provides insight to the future development of how to engage patients to interact with their providers through the portals.