Reaping the Benefits of a Patient Portal

Dan Nelson, Desert Ridge Family Physicians, Phoenix, AZ

Excerpt from “Good call: Patient Portal Improves Efficiency, Morale and Patient Care”

Making that flows directly from the heart of our funda-

Decisions, Decisions

Continued from page 1

No one really knows if we wine (land and) and risk a “try-at-

no place like work. But we do make decisions and we face the conse-
cuences of decision-making. While no decision is really

Riding and raising funds for the American Diabetes Association’s Tour de Cure is just one of Todd Eicher’s (Finance) extracurricular activities. He’s also a triath-

THE Inside

Summer 2016

Some of us hike, camp, or paddle. Others quilt, sew, or weave. Some run, bike, and swim – for miles! Still others grow grapes, build boats, or tame bees. We do live outside of work. And while work is important, balancing it with other interests is key to good health – mental and otherwise.

Here’s a small sampling of what some of us do when we’re not here. What’s your outlet?

Some have a proven track record, who should be able to hit the

We make decisions every day, big and small. Some are clearly yes or no – we’ll get up in the morning, will we have breakfast, will we come to work? Will we open

our doors to patients, will we turn on our computers, will we greet our co-workers with a smile? Other decisions are more complex – like how best to atten

our objectives, build our own and others’ morale, and how

Whether to grow, however, is no longer the subject of discussion. Rather, it is how best to manage our continued growth. What guides us to decide as we do?

We make our choices within a system of values, be they personal, corporate, or both. As an employee, our value system is what drives strategic, operational and financial decisions. Staffing is a key elementary. How do we decide to fill a position, or create one? Do we absolutely need another set of hands to get the job done and handle growth? If so, do we have the expertise in-house, or is a new opportunity for one of our own, can we really fill the hole that’s left behind? Do we have experienced workers who can train and mentor those who have the building blocks, but need more training to become our next experts, managers, or leaders? Or must we look outside for a particular set of skills and experience to fill our needs?

Whatever the outcome, do we make it, build it, learn it our-

seves, or do we buy the expertise? We have these kinds of rea-

tions? Some, yes. And others, no. Do we see growth or contract?

Do we spend hours on YouTube, and absorb the cost of renting

there are also costs to DIY (do it yourself) efforts. Do we

have a proven track record, who should be able to hit the

ground running at a time when our growth demands it?

There is so little control or expertise, of course.

Some of us teach, some of us write, some of us provide

and absorb the cost of renting and buying equipment and supplies? Are we selling

Continued on page 5
Ok, so calling our Patient Portal “magical” might be a bit of a stretch. But from a patient’s perspective, it’s an amazing opportunity to get educated about her own health and medical history, get unpressured answers to questions, and feel more like part of the team. Our patients are trying it, and liking it. 

I’ve seen the value firsthand: getting labs results and lab summaries, being able to send an email message and avoid drawn-out telephone tag, paying bills or co-pays online, rescheduling a quick appointment, getting referrals, and tracking on scheduled appointment times. This is what our Patient Portal is about. It’s opening the door to our patients registered on the Portal (a shout out to the one of us). As the float Medical Assistant in my center, I’m often the one to “sell” the portal to new and established patients. The opportunity to get educated about her own health and medical history, get unpressured answers to questions, and feel more like part of the team. Our patients are trying it, and liking it. 

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Opening the Door to Our Magic Portal

CDoc M. Cielak, MD
Prabhakar Ramachandran, MD
The Bashaw Foundation for Preventive Medicine in Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania, is a not-for-profit educational organization under the direction of a group of physicians and health care professionals. The Bashaw Foundation is committed to improving the health of all Americans through education, research and community outreach. The Bashaw Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization and is exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Bashaw Foundation is dedicated to improving the health of all Americans through education, research and community outreach. The Bashaw Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization and is exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

What are you most proud of in your work with Hudson Headwaters?
I look forward to being able to offer more services to the patient population in the future. This will be most satisfying in facilitating and assisting patients with their health care needs.

What section of newspaper first?
What you see when you walk in the door.

Hobbies?
The Eagles.

Knowledge is power. Our Portal is a key. Unlike the door
Let them in.

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Keith Latchis

I am most proud of bringing our Patient Portal to Hudson Headwaters. It's been a stretch. But from a patient's perspective, it's an amazing door to improved and engaged patient care. It's part of our journey through our health centers. Let them in.

What are you most proud of in your work with Hudson Headwaters?

Robert Cross, PA (GFH)

I am most proud of being a part of the Hudson Headwaters team. I have worked in various capacities in the Northeast. I am a native Californian who prefers living in Cape Cod, MA, in 2013. I am a native Californian who prefers living in Cape Cod, MA, in 2013. I am a native Californian who prefers living in Cape Cod, MA, in 2013.

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Jennifer Barron (Physician Office-GFH)

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Christie McAvey, RN (Lead-WMHS2)

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Melissa Bolster, LPN (NCFH)

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Vicky Beaury (FrOff-MFH)

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Brittany Sexton (ResourceAdvoc-333 Glen)

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Jennifer Tucci (DOC/FHH)

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them through that magic portal door: it helps engage adoption rate. There’s a very good reason for walking barely 30%. Why is that? Best practices call for a 70%

of our patients registered on the Portal (a shout out to the top five: Drs. Borgos, Parker, Adams, Bergin, and Lynn

unpressured manner (at home), increases understanding

OK, so calling our Patient Portal “magic” might be a bit of a stretch. But from a patient’s perspective, it’s an amazing

environment to the reality phase of value-based care and

a movement that begs patients to get educated, partici-

pate in and take responsibility for their health – and gives

one of us can help reinforce the idea and benefits of signing

Let them in.

20 of our some 150 providers account for more than 40%

problems… The accuracy of information in a patient

No idea???

Sketches

Kibbeh with Saareyyah.

Crafts, sitting in the sun, learning something

new– anything new, vacations with family.

Hobbies?

I have worked in construction, as a cashier, bookkeeper, night

Construction, as a cashier, bookkeeper, night

Erin Carey (ApptSchedCoord-CR); Felicia Heber, NP (FEKHC/ DevMgr-340BPharm-333Glen); Jackie Harrington (ReserDev-8RPharm-333Glen);搬到西班牙

Paradise, Saginaw, MI, and has been with Hudson Headwaters for 20 years.

TC-Saginaw; Amy Zuccaro (Intern-333 Glen)

Sara Walkup, RN (TeleHealth-NCOG)

Amy Tucker (Phleb-NCFH)

New Staff, New Roles, New Titles

Kimberly Barron (Bus - (ComplianceMgr-CR); Felicia Heber, NP (FEKHC/ DevMgr-340BPharm-333Glen); Jackie Harrington (ReserDev-8RPharm-333Glen)

Valerie Ramsey Cummins, NP (WMHS2)

Caitlin Palmer (CHCANYSIntern-333Glen)

Jane Morrissey (ClerkshipCoord-CR)

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Suzanne Rayeski, DO (GFH)

Robert Cross, PA (GFH)

Christina Kay, NP (WHC)

Joan Phelps (FrOff-FEKHC)

Amanda Lane (FrOff-NCOG)

Joanne Cooper, PA (GFH)

Lives in Plattsburgh, is a family practice physician,

Lives in Glens Falls, is a board-certified with Hudson

Jennifer Bardin (PatSuppServ-CR)

Traci Ash (FrOff-NCOG)

Elizabeth Maher, MD (LgyCare-WMH)

Anna McIlvain, MD (HH-DWHS)

Suzanne Harwell, MD (WMHC)

Carrie Finegan, MD (GWU/UPMC/Schwab)

Sara Walkup, RN (TeleHealth-NCOG)

Amy Tucker (Phleb-NCFH)

New Staff, New Roles, New Titles

They’re all smart people. Everyone seems happy to be

So far, being able to work with some really great,

women’s health care – to the practice at NCFH.

ed transparency to the reality phase of value-based care

and compensation. The goals are clear: improve quality,

ensure access, and also come with particular emphasis

on preventive care and enhanced management of chronic

conditions. This is the magic behind the magic tools for measuring, the patient portal can be the tool for
delivering today’s improved working relationships between

Parents who have joined us since April (or rejoined).

Jennifer Tucci (DO/DCFhos-Tulchak);

Melissa Barone (OneUpPhys-Tulchak)

Sarah Humston (StaffFmng-1255Glen)

Sara Walkup, RN (TeleHealth-NCOG)

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Despite some initial concerns, we’ve found that using the portal service is generally appealing to both patients and staff. Each review on average requires no more than a few minutes, and is able to respond quickly, while saving each conversation to the patient’s chart. Our patients report greater satisfaction from writing messages directly to their physicians, and are able to respond quickly, while saving each conversation to the patient’s chart. Our physicians have found that the portal allows them to be more engaged with their patients, so it is easy to check up on them, receive updates on any new changes, and conduct proactive outreach. Our physicians have found that the portal allows them to be more engaged with their patients, so it is easy to check up on them, receive updates on any new changes, and conduct proactive outreach.

The portal service has experienced other benefits in addition to decreased call volume and increased patient satisfaction. These include:

- Increased recognition of the value of our services by healthcare professionals and patients.
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Continued from page 1

The demands in practice to provide better care coordination and chronic disease management have never been greater. Our experience shows how a simple, web-based patient portal can eliminate hours of non-productive time per week—ultimately helping us improve communication and provide better patient care.

Decisions, Decisions

Continued on page 5