

PATIENT EXPERIENCE CONSIDERATIONS FOR DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY



In December 2021, the American Optometric Association convened key leaders in optometry, technology and eye care to discuss elevating the patient experienced in eye health and vision care. The AOA is grateful for the insights and perspectives offered from leaders from Digital Diagnostics, Digital Optometrics, Dr. Contact Lens, EssilorLuxottica, Heru, iCare, Johnson and Johnson Vision Care, Visionix, Optify, Simplifye, Sunbit, Topcon and Vision Science Labs. These companies provided briefings to the AOA Telehealth Council regarding their products and their vision for the future of the patient experience.



The AOA is committed to sharing information and resources with doctors of optometry regarding new technologies that can help doctors continue to offer the best care possible to patients.

PROVIDING PERSONALIZED EYECARE

Research suggests that patients would choose a physician based on how well the physician understands them so that their patient experience is personalized. Notably, **61% would visit their healthcare provider more often if the communication experience felt more personalized.**¹ There are many tools and resources available for doctors of optometry to give patients the personalized patient experience that they desire.

CONVENIENCE AND CONNECTIVITY

The desire for convenience and connectivity is evident in nearly every aspect of the typical patient's life. **71% of patients wish their healthcare experiences "were as easy as their experiences in other areas of life, like online shopping."**²

These evolving expectations make offering an online contact lens ordering platform an imperative for doctors of optometry. Dr. Contact Lens is one available platform for doctors. The online optical shop, Optify, can also be an effective tool to allow for patients to browse a doctors' eyeglasses selection before or after their appointment. A survey conducted by the Contact Lens Institute found that 31% of respondents would like to be offered free contact lens ordering and shipping services. 33% want temporary lenses while their order is being fulfilled, and the same percentage want contact lens solution and rewetting drop samples.³

MODERNIZED PAYMENT OPTIONS

Research also indicates that patients are also looking for options in payment approaches. Most patients prefer using digital bill pay with their physicians.⁴ Offering services such as Sunbit which allow patients to pay in installments can be a significant value for patients. These options can increase the patients satisfaction with their overall health experience as CLI reports that **many individuals believe payment plans increase the value of their contact lens experience.**⁵

COMMUNICATION APPROACHES

The overwhelming majority of patients cite convenient communications like secure text and patient messaging as being most important when it comes to having a good patient experience.⁶ Many services can help doctors to maintain the desired communication channels that patients increasingly expect. Simplifye offers live chat and appointment scheduling services which can help doctors meet the needs of patients. These types of online tools are critical as an increasing number of patients prefer online appointment scheduling and patient reminders, and the ability to update or provide their patient information to a provider through online forms accessible via mobile phone, email, or a patient portal.⁷

THE CONNECTED CARE TEAM

In addition to direct communication with their physicians, patients also want their doctors to be communicating with one another. For years, data has indicated that patients expect doctors to have access to their full medical history. One survey indicated 97 percent believe it is important for any health institution, regardless of type or location, to have access to their full medical history in order to deliver high-quality care.⁸ In the eye care space, iCare has developed a secure, cloud-based Oculo platform aimed at strengthening interoperability by facilitating communication channels between health care providers.

Recognizing how patient expectations are evolving and being aware of new tools available to help meet those demands is critical for keeping up with the needs of the 21st century patient.

¹<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200218005006/en/75-of-U.S.-Consumers-Wish-Their-Healthcare-Experiences-Were-More-Personalized-Redpoint-Global-Survey-Reveals>
²<https://www.symplr.com/blog/pandemic-changed-patient-experience>
³https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60d0ee0cb7971c56bbd57141/t/6345739aae10fa7c8cbea66f/1665495964247/SeeTomorrowReport_2022_FINAL.pdf
⁴<https://klasresearch.com/report/patient-perspectives-on-patient-engagement-technology-2022-identifying-opportunities-to-align-patient-organization-and-vendor-priorities/1829>
⁵https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60d0ee0cb7971c56bbd57141/t/6345739aae10fa7c8cbea66f/1665495964247/SeeTomorrowReport_2022_FINAL.pdf
⁶<https://patientengagementthit.com/news/convenience-technology-use-can-boost-patient-satisfaction>
⁷<https://klasresearch.com/report/patient-perspectives-on-patient-engagement-technology-2022-identifying-opportunities-to-align-patient-organization-and-vendor-priorities/1829>
⁸<https://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/patient-expectations-health-data-sharing-exceed-reality-study-says>

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