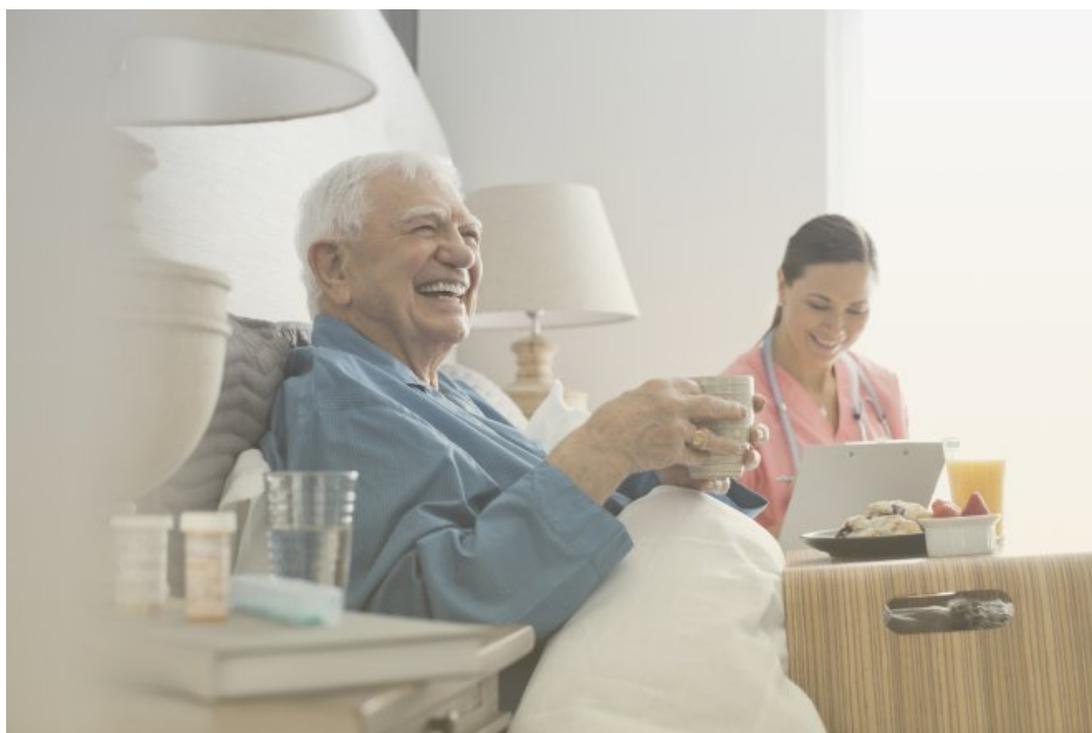


# The Device Will See You Now: Trends in Smart Patient Care Technology



By **BECKY LAWLOR** - Contributor

Perhaps at a distant time in the future, the phrase, "the doctor will see you now," will become, "the device will see you now." But for now, human physicians still play a critical role in their patients' care. In fact, despite the worry that AI and machine learning will replace humans with robots, with the help of smart patient care technology, the human aspect of the doctor-patient relationship is increasing, not decreasing.



Smart patient care technology is revolutionizing health care, allowing patients to receive quality care anytime, anyplace.

It's true that smart devices are automating many tasks, such as monitoring patients' heart rate, skin temperature, and oxygen levels. But smart devices are also making patient care more human and more accurate by providing doctors with the ability to collect real-time patient data. This can then be connected to global health data sources to quickly analyze and find the best treatment plan while reducing costs and improving patient care. With the help of smart patient care technology, the human aspect of the doctor-patient relationship is increasing, not decreasing.

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## More Preventative Care, Less Sick Care

Currently, the U.S. health system specializes primarily in reactive care, meaning that when a patient feels sick, they seek care. However, preventative care, which includes adherence to long-term treatment plans and living a healthy lifestyle, can help patients avoid relapsing or becoming sick in the first place.

Mobile devices and the use of mobile apps and text messaging are making preventative care more accessible for doctors and improving doctor-patient communication. Through the use of mobile devices and SMS alerts, doctors can send patients reminders to take their medication, exercise, or eat healthy foods. They can also use text messages to provide support for difficult behavioral changes, such as when a patient is trying to quit smoking. Research by the National Institute of Health has shown that the use of mobile devices and text messages can improve appointment attendance, preventive care, and smoking cessation.

Additionally, with doctors able to remotely collect real-time data on blood sugar levels, blood pressure, heart rate, and other health metrics, they can spot health concerns earlier and address those concerns with preventative care recommendations. For example, a digital blood-glucose meter can connect wirelessly to a device that alerts patients and clinicians before a patient reaches a threshold blood-glucose level, enabling appropriate therapy adjustments.

For example, see how MedXM was able to offer high-quality, value-based preventative care in this video below.

## Connected Devices Create Closer Collaboration

Another benefit of smart devices in healthcare is the ability to manage communications more efficiently throughout the patient journey. By using mobile communication that can integrate with other clinical systems, healthcare practices can provide a seamless, connected view of the patient. This can be particularly helpful when managing patient intake or discharge, medications, or collaborating with other specialists on patient care.

A connected system ensures that all communications are recorded in the electronic health record (EHR) so that all patient information is accessible to those allowed access to it. This not only ensures that all caregivers along the patient's health journey have the full picture to make the best clinical and treatment recommendations, it also allows for even greater insights through data sharing. For example, there is now the ability to analyze all patient data entered into any EHR and analyze it against a library of best-practice content to develop real-time recommendations for how to best care for a patient.

The use of video chat can also increase collaboration by making it simple to share documents and other medical records necessary to consult on a patient's care. This, in turn, can enable a better diagnosis and treatment plan for the patient.

*With the ability to stay in close communication with patients and receive real-time health data, doctors and caregivers can do more to ensure that their patients getting the best care possible.*

## Benefits of Patient Care Technology: The Doctor Comes to You

With wearable devices and other home health-monitoring devices, physicians can now have vital health data transmitted directly from the patient to their EHR. This not only provides the physician with real-time information about the patient's health, but it also saves that patient a trip to the doctor's office. For the elderly or mobility-impaired, or those who live long distances from their doctor, being able to connect with their caregivers from the comfort of their own home can have a significant impact on the quality of their health.

Telehealth solutions that use video chat let the physician extend the doctor-patient relationship even further by providing a personalized venue for communications between the doctor and patient. Because you only need a mobile device and a broadband internet connection, telehealth is an accessible and affordable option for most patients.

Physicians and nurses can even order lab tests with the push of a button. Phlebotomists can then be dispatched to perform fixed or on-demand draws anywhere and at any time. Not only does this improve patient compliance, every sample is connected digitally and monitored and tracked throughout the process.

The use of smart patient care technology doesn't mean that the human aspect of the doctor-patient relationship must be sacrificed. Rather, smart patient care technology offers the opportunity to enhance the human aspect of the relationship. With the ability to stay in

close communication with patients and receive real-time health data, doctors and caregivers can do more to ensure that their patients getting the best care possible.