

Healthcare from the **patient** **perspective**

The role of the Art of Medicine in
a digital world



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Healthcare is evolving, and with it, the practice of care. Everyone, from patients and physicians to C-suite administrators and health IT developers, want to improve health outcomes— but that doesn't necessarily mean that valued, tried and true practices should be replaced by the latest emerging technology.

“The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade; a calling, not a business; a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head. The practice of medicine is an art, based on science.”

Sir William Osler, 1889

We expect our physicians to care for us with both their hearts and minds. We look to them to provide us with their clinical knowledge in a compassionate way, and we seek their counsel as we try to understand our conditions and treatment options during some of the happiest and scariest moments of our lives. Last year, we examined physician perspectives on the unintended consequences health IT is having on their ability to provide care, and this year, we focused on the patient experience.

This survey was commissioned to gain insight into what patients need and want from their doctors, and what we, in the health IT industry, can do to protect the Art of Medicine as it transforms in the digital healthcare world. It is time the health IT industry commits to protecting the patient-physician relationship, which is a foundational element of quality care, and both physician and patient satisfaction.

This eBook helps physicians and healthcare administrators ensure they are meeting the needs of their patient populations by being more aware of the changing preferences, behaviors, and choices of people as they seek care and manage their health.

What do patients value most when it comes to their healthcare experience?
Read this summary to find out.

Trace Devanny
President
Healthcare Division, Nuance



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“ I have been with my primary care physician for close to 20 years. His personality, warmth, thoroughness, and willingness to listen and provide treatment is invaluable. He believes there is more than one way to treat a patient— that includes referrals for emotional as well as physical sources.”

Male, age 55-64, New York, U.S.

Survey methodology

In February 2015, Nuance gathered data from some of the largest healthcare markets in the world: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany. To ensure a broad sampling, more than 3,000 responses were collected from consumers, with an equal representation of respondents by country, gender, and participants who self-identified as having chronic conditions or as being generally well.

The survey was categorized into three sections designed to gain insight into:

1. The overall patient-physician experience
2. Patient engagement and behavior
3. Patient awareness and preferences for technology

Answer formats included multiple choice, ranking scales, and, in some cases, optional open text. The data was analyzed both in aggregate and by individual country to identify themes, and comments were reviewed and mapped to them respectively. Several questions were multi-selection, allowing patients to choose all responses that applied to them. This resulted in response summaries greater than 100 percent in some cases.

The voice of the patient

More than half of respondents chose to submit comments on their experiences, likes and dislikes, and hopes and concerns as patients. The impressive response rate highlights the important role personal relationships with physicians play in the overall healthcare experience, and underscores patients' fierce loyalty when that bond exists.

Additionally, these comments give much insight into the growing frustration with healthcare systems, particularly when factors threaten the patient-physician bond, for instance the inconsistent availability of physicians due to rotating scheduling or the lack of time to provide personalized care.

Chapter one

The overall patient-physician experience



The pain scale: evaluating patient-physician relationships

The constant flux in healthcare regulations and policy have left physicians feeling frustrated and disconnected from the Art of Medicine. Pulled in disparate directions and forced to change how they spend their time, the technology they use, and the way they document patient notes, has made them feel that the most rewarding part of their responsibilities—patient care—has been subsumed to less important administrative duties.

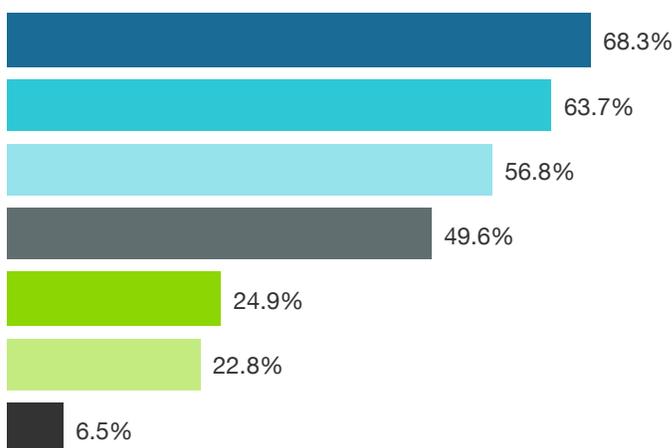
Today, this pivotal point impacts physician productivity, quality of care, and provider economics. The time physicians used to dedicate to interacting directly with patients now accounts for less than 13 percent of their day, with the vast majority spent providing mandated regulatory documentation of the visit. So when it comes to an office visit, every second spent with their patient counts.

What do patients need from physicians during a visit?

Expectations are high, and with physician scorecards, public reporting of HCAHPS results, and patient satisfaction playing a bigger role in provider success and reimbursement, no one in healthcare can ignore what matters most to patients.

Findings show **68 percent** of U.S. and UK respondents expect everything from eye contact and a handshake to verbal communication when they visit their physician, and feel these contribute the most to an overall positive experience. While in Germany, people felt privacy in the room was of the utmost importance, followed by verbal communication, and eye contact.

U.S. and UK

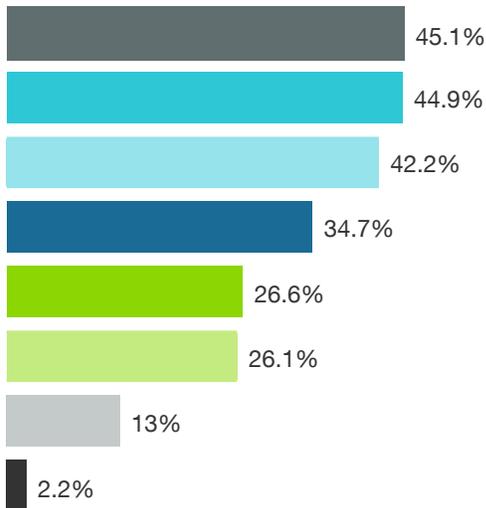


Respondents were able to select multiple responses

What do you consider most important for a positive experience with physician?

- Privacy (no extra people in room)
- Verbal communication of specific recommendations
- Eye contact
- Handshake, physical contact
- Body positioning near patient
- All of the above
- None of the above

Germany



Respondents were able to select multiple responses

What do you consider most important for a positive experience with physician?

- Privacy (no extra people in room)
- Verbal communication of specific recommendations
- Eye contact
- Handshake, physical contact
- Body positioning near patient
- Subscription of medication
- All of the above
- None of the above

Three's a crowd

In an attempt to alleviate mounting time pressures and challenges associated with entering data in electronic health records (EHRs), some providers are using medical scribes to listen to the conversation between patient and physician, and record care plans and clinical documentation in the medical chart. But that extra set of ears comes at a cost.

This survey shows the importance of privacy for patients in an exam room. The presence of a third person in the room shifts the dynamic from a private conversation to one where the patient may worry over confidentiality and judgment. This can detract from the experience and erode trust, which is fundamental to an honest account of a patient's behaviors, symptoms and health. As healthcare providers look for ways to save time and improve productivity, they should consider that the Art of Medicine is built on the strong bond between patient and physician, and this relationship should be protected at all costs by eliminating things that threaten to disrupt it.

“ Whilst I understand that modern technological advances, specifically in medicine, can help with my treatment, I sometimes worry that the relationship between the doctor and the patient can then become impersonal.”

Female, age 35-44, South East region, UK

“ I am lucky, my General Practitioners (GP) have been, bar none, extraordinary... I have a marvelous doctor, who has phoned me to check on my mental health, after an incident. A real doctor with a vocation.”

Male, age 45-54, East Midland, UK

“ Positive attitude, calmness, detailed explanations, and friendliness are attributes of how a doctor should be.”

Male, age 45-54, Hessen region, Germany

The doctor has no time to see you now

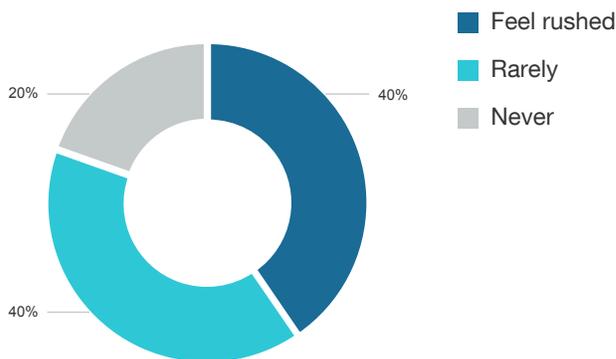
Patients take the time to navigate the complexities and challenges of today’s healthcare system in order to discuss their concerns and conditions with their doctors. While they say the time they spend waiting to see their physician before an appointment has not increased, **40 percent of patients feel rushed during their actual visit.** For more than 30 percent, this appointment lasts less than 10 minutes—the time it takes to hard-boil an egg; while approximately 45 percent of patients spend between 10 and 20 minutes with their doctor.

Experienced physicians often say: it’s not the amount of time, it’s the perception of time spent that matters most to patients. If a doctor enters the room and remains near the door,

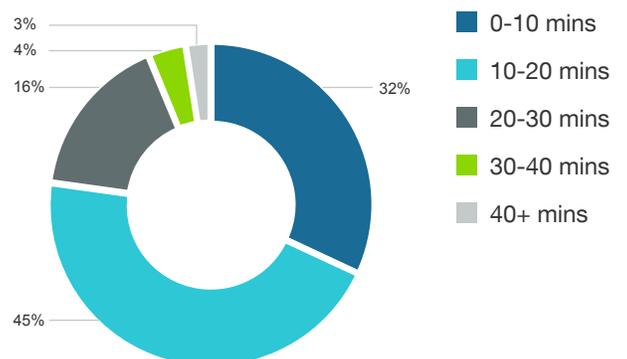
psychologically, the patient will feel rushed as he tries to remember any concerns and issues. However, when a physician enters the room, sits near her patient, makes eye contact, and asks questions, the visit feels longer. With no end in sight to time pressures in the exam room, each minute counts.

The sense of being rushed can not only negatively impact satisfaction and convey the sense that the patient is not a priority, it can also influence whether or not she recommends her doctor to others. In fact, in Germany, 68 percent of people rely on a family or friend’s recommendation when selecting their physician, followed by 52 percent in the U.S., and 24 percent in the UK.

Do you ever feel rushed?



How long do you spend with your physician during an average visit?



Physicians get an “A”

The average office visit lasts 12 minutes, and during this time physicians are expected to listen, understand and sympathize, examine, diagnose, treat, and document the patient’s story in the EHR. Given this time constraint, they need to focus on those elements of a visit that deliver the most value to better medical care in the eyes of their patients.

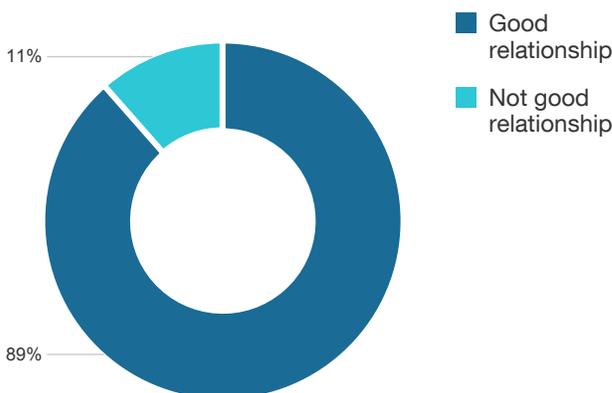
Despite these time constraints, overall physicians are meeting their patients’ expectations. 89 percent of people say they have a good relationship with their doctor, and 95 percent say they are honest with their physician during visits. And patients aren’t the only ones who feel open communication with clinicians is an essential component of a good clinical

experience. A 2013 study found that 80 percent of physicians feel patient relationships are the most satisfying part of practicing medicine.

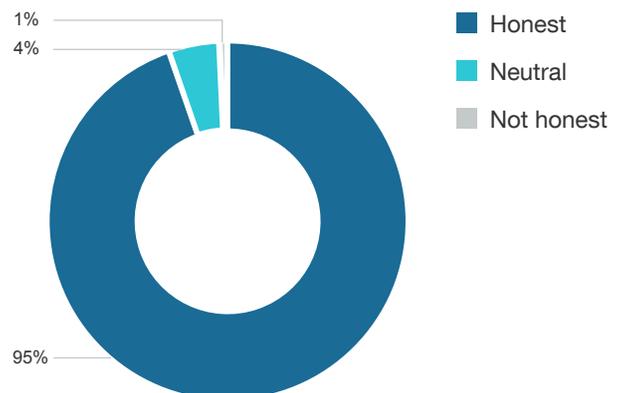
89%

have a good relationship with their primary care physicians

Do you feel like you have a good relationship with your primary care physician?



How honest are you with your physician?





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“ I like the relationship I have with my doctor. I feel comfortable talking with her about my concerns with any health or mental issues.”

Female, age 45-54, Pennsylvania, U.S.

“ Clear communication, responsiveness and follow-up are important. Most physicians need to spend more time in discussion with patients and not rush the visit or discussions during a visit.”

Female, age 25-34, Maryland, U.S.

“ There’s not enough time to say what’s wrong and discuss it in 10 minutes, especially if you have additional concerns or extra questions.”

Female, age 45-54, South East region, UK

Chapter two

Patient engagement and behavior



Three things physicians can't ignore

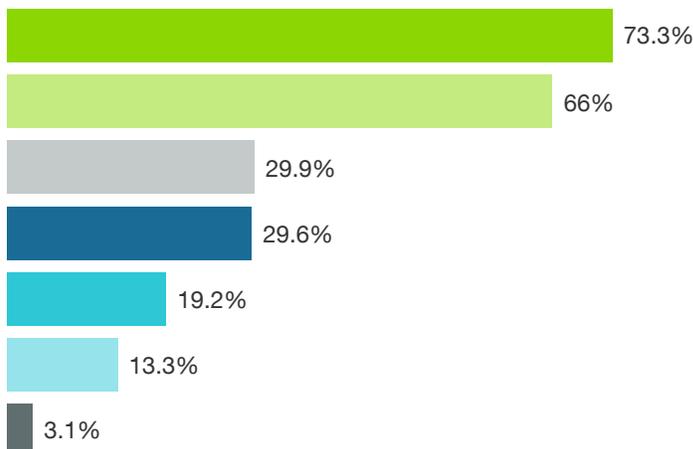
Patients come to their physicians during some of the most intense and confusing moments of their lives, and trust them with the weighty responsibility of translating clinical data and test results into explanations and treatment options that make sense. Regardless of outcomes, the process of understanding is an imperative piece of the decision-making process, which is why patients agree on the top things physicians cannot ignore when it comes to providing quality care:

- 73 percent of people say “time for discussion”
- 66 percent say “verbal communication of specific recommendations”

The invaluable art of communication

Regardless of age, wellness, or country, the importance of meaningful conversation between patients and physicians is clear. The third-most important factor varies by region. Patients in Germany choose privacy in the exam room, while patients in the U.S. and UK value eye contact with their doctors. While more subtle, these actions reaffirm that patients expect confidentiality during their visit and reassurance that their physician is listening, even if he or she is multitasking.

U.S., UK and Germany



Respondents were able to select multiple responses

Which, if any, of these factors during a visit contribute to better medical care?

- Time for discussion
- Verbal communication of specific recommendations
- Privacy (no extra people in the room)
- Eye contact
- Body positioning near patient
- Handshake, personal contact
- None of the above

Patients are entering the exam room **armed and ready**

The explosion of digital health information has prompted a movement of online research, which is also changing the patient-physician dynamic. With clinician face-time at a premium, patients are finding ways to maximize their office visits. Much like agendas are created to outline what topics will be covered during a meeting, people are doing their homework and coming to their doctors with specific information and questions they'd like to discuss:

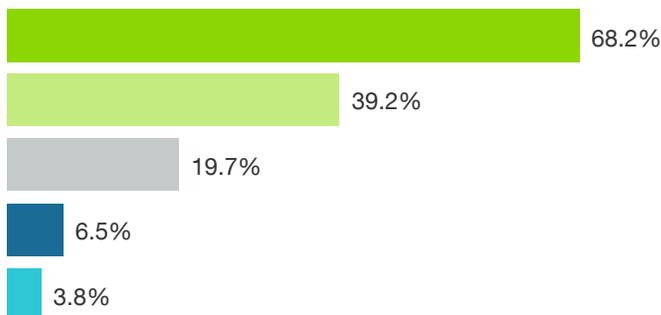
- 68 percent of patients bring a list of questions to their appointment
- 39 percent have checked WebMD or an online source in advance of their visit
- 20 percent are bringing data from outside monitoring devices to share with their physicians

These proactive steps signal increasing engagement as patients seek to extend the value of the office visit into their daily routines.

How engaged do you feel in managing your own health?
80% felt they were engaged.

Patients are looking for ways to learn about their health, and as more medical data becomes available, they will seek to bridge this information with the knowledge and insight they gain from speaking with their doctors.

U.S., UK and Germany



Respondents were able to select multiple responses

Which of the following have you done tied to a physician's visit?

- Bring a list of questions
- Check WebMD or online sources in advance
- Bring health data from outside personal health monitoring devices
- Check your phone/tablet for health information in the room with you
- Download x-rays or images on mobile device to share



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“ I prefer/require my doctors to be open and happy to discuss my condition(s) with me, including any uncertainties or problems in my care management and treatment. If a physician is not willing to be open with me, I change physicians.”

Male, age 55-64, London, UK

“ Communication is the most important aspect of any relationship. Patients also need to be proactive in seeking information about themselves by researching online, reading magazines, watching videos, etc. You know your body (or should) better than anyone else.”

Female, age 35-44, Connecticut, U.S.

“ I have full trust in my GP. He always explains everything in a very detailed way to make it easy for me to understand.”

Female, age 55- 64, Sachsen region, Germany

Chapter three

Patient awareness and preferences for technology



Patient comfort with technology in the hands of physicians

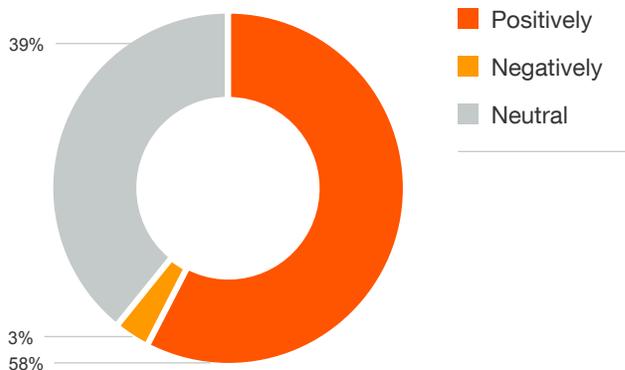
While physicians feel EHRs slow them down, interfere with face-to-face care, and intrude upon their patient relationships, patients don't see it that way. This survey found 69 percent of people have noticed a difference in the amount of technology being used by their doctor over the last five years, and 97 percent are comfortable with it, most notably desktop computers or laptops, followed by mobile devices such as a tablet or smartphone, telemedicine and image-sharing in Germany.

Additionally, 58 percent of people feel the use of technology in the exam room positively affects their healthcare experience. As technology adoption trends continue to rise,

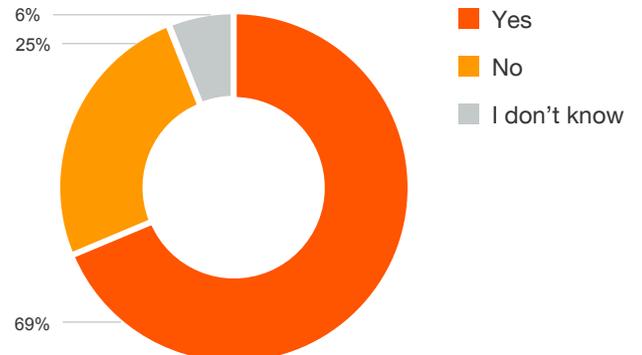
patients will be exposed to more types of tools, which may impact their comfort levels. For instance, EHR deployments have made laptops and desktop computers a standard piece of equipment in the modern-day exam room, and patient comfort levels reflect this acclamation.

According to patients, the use of health technology as a collaborative tool in the exam room adds value to their experience, however nearly three-quarters of people do not use a patient portal to access their personal health information.

How do you feel your physician's use of technology impacts your overall experience?



In the last five years, have you noticed a difference in the amount of technology used by your doctor?

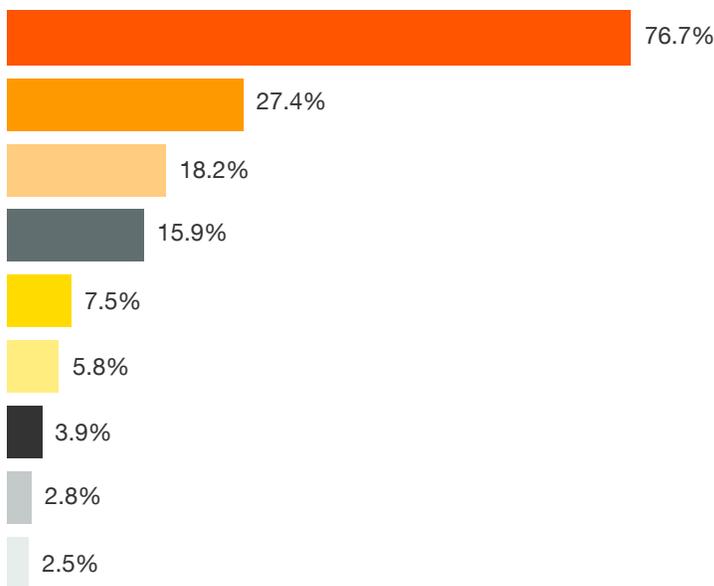


Shining a spotlight on technology

Physicians are using different health IT tools to find efficiencies in their day and better support their patients. Whether it is looking for data on a smart phone or talking to their smart watch, they expect this technology to feel natural and create a positive experience for both them and their patients.

But how are patients reacting to these different types of technologies and are they becoming a natural extension of their care environment?

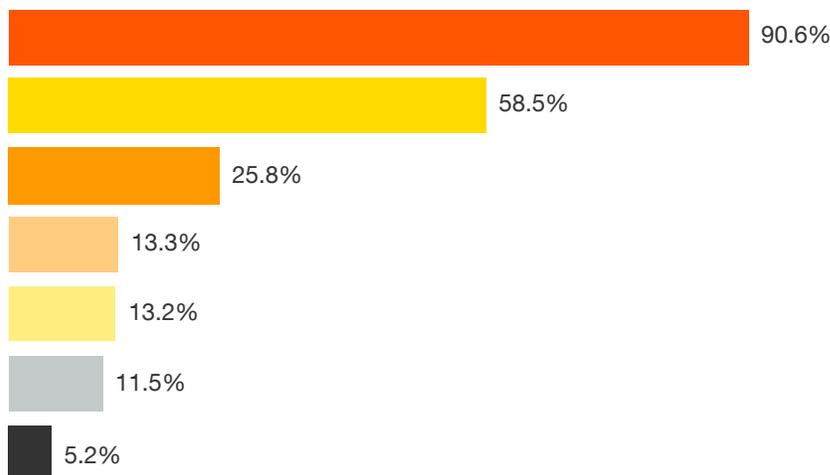
U.S. and UK



Which of the following technologies are you comfortable with your physician using during your consultation?

- Desktop computer/laptop
- Mobile devices
- Telemedicine tools
- Image sharing via cloud
- Speech recognition
- Virtual assistant (like Siri)
- Interactive wearables (such as Glass or Smart Watch)
- All of the above
- None of the above

Germany



Respondents were able to select multiple responses



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“ I’ve noticed more doctors providing written instructions or a summary of the visit along with recommendations — I love this!”

Female, age 18-24, Texas, U.S.

“ I can see my medical record on my GP’s computer screen including X-Rays. This allows him to explain things more clearly.”

Male, age 55-64, Wales, UK

“ I perceive technology [in the exam room], if done right, as a positive. It raises efficiency and improves data access and communication between physicians.”

Male, age 35-44, Baden-Württemberg region, Germany

“ While concentrating on filling out all the little spaces on the computer screen some valuable interactions and conversation gets lost.”

Female, age 55-64, Florida, U.S.

Protecting **the Art of Medicine** in the digital age

The overall health IT endgame is the right one: creating a continuous and integrated care cycle that helps drive the best patient care outcomes.

Physicians are being forced to make hard choices, and one of these sacrifices often comes at the expense of the patient story. They are making trade-offs through shorter patient notes or using copy-and-paste functions in their EHRs-- anything to save time so they can spend it attending to the people who need it and who appreciate their time, insight, and care.

When that story is lost, the patient becomes a collection of somewhat unconnected data points. This has a profound downstream impact as the next attending physician will have to go through the same rigorous exercise of asking questions and sleuthing around, which not only frustrates the patient, but can unnecessarily waste time.

While technology is a key component in the healthcare ecosystem, it should only play a supporting role. Patients need to be center stage.

For patients, the Art of Medicine hinges on good communication. They have come to see and listen to their physicians. In return, they expect to be seen and heard by their physicians. Given the current healthcare pressures, this relationship is in jeopardy.

T.A.P.E. is the bond holding the patient-physician relationship together

While patients are comfortable with the growing role health IT is playing in their care experience, they are less accepting of the technology if it distracts or interferes with their conversation time with their physicians. And they value certain elements of their visit more than others:

- Time for discussion
- Advice and recommendations
- Privacy
- Engagement

Physicians who focus on these factors will have greater success conveying their concern and interest in their patients' wellbeing. Healthcare organizations should look for ways to connect patients and their physicians in both old and new ways through personal focus, and innovations that deliver insights and answers quickly.



About the Art of Medicine

The relationship between physicians and patients is at the core of healing. This begins with hearing and understanding. Let's reimagine healthcare—where physicians can get back to the art of medicine. Learn more at nuance.com/artofmedicine

Nuance is the market leader in creating clinical understanding solutions that drive smart, efficient decisions across healthcare. More than 500,000 physicians and 10,000 healthcare facilities worldwide leverage Nuance's award-winning, voice-enabled clinical documentation and analytics solutions to support the physician in any clinical workflow and on any device. For more information on Nuance healthcare solutions, visit nuance.com/for-healthcare
