

Health care consumer engagement No “one-size-fits-all” approach

Trends in consumers’ use of online resources and health technologies from the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions 2015 Survey of US Health Care Consumers

Executive summary

The health care industry continues to invest in the development of online information resources, mobile applications, and personal health devices. These tools are designed to increase “consumer engagement” — to help individuals take action to improve their health, make informed decisions, and engage effectively and efficiently with the health care system.

New findings from the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions 2015 Survey of US Health Care Consumers provide evidence that consumer engagement is trending upward in three important areas — partnering with providers, tapping online resources, and relying on technology. Although the overall pace of change is gradual, some consumers are making the transition from “passive patients and purchasers” to “active health care consumers” more quickly. Gaps between what individuals are interested in doing and what they have experienced suggest many people want to become empowered consumers, but have not yet made the move.

Consumer engagement can take many forms as a person navigates through episodes of health and sickness. Consider “Tom” and “Anita”:



Tom currently doesn’t have a health issue, but he wants to be prepared for when that time comes. He researches his health insurance options and enrolls in a health plan that offers good coverage at a price he can afford. Using resources he finds on his plan’s website, Tom takes a health risk assessment, selects a primary care provider, and enrolls in a program that gives him a discount at a local gym. Prior to his next wellness visit, Tom uploads data from a fitness device he’s been wearing to share with his doctor. A quick check on a mobile app shows that he’s making good progress toward reaching his health goals.



Anita develops an emerging health concern and searches online to learn more about possible diagnoses, treatments, and area doctors. She selects a provider after comparing several on measures of quality and price; schedules an appointment online; and comes prepared to talk with the doctor about treatment options. Later, she avoids a trip back to the doctor’s office by accessing her medical records online from home, sending a question to her doctor via email, and ordering a prescription refill online. Sticking to the care plan for her newly diagnosed chronic condition is easy with support from a self-monitoring device that gives her personalized alerts and reminders.

Imagine a future in which more consumers engage with the health care system like Tom and Anita do — a future that holds the promise of more effective, efficient, and satisfying care experiences and better health outcomes for those individuals and the accountable care populations to which they belong.

Gaps between what individuals are interested in doing and what they have experienced suggest many people want to become empowered consumers, but have not yet made the move.

Findings from Deloitte's 2015 Survey of US Health Care Consumers suggest we are moving closer to that future. Consumer engagement is increasing in three important areas:

- 1. Partnering with providers.** More consumers today prefer to partner with doctors instead of relying passively on them to make treatment decisions. Thirty-four percent of survey respondents strongly believe that doctors should encourage patients to research and ask questions about their treatment, and 58 percent feel that doctors should explain treatment costs to them before decisions are made.
- 2. Tapping online resources.** Consumers' trust in the reliability of information sources is rising. Fifty-two percent report searching online for health- or care-related information; additionally, use of social media, patient portals, and performance scorecards is growing. One-quarter of consumers say they have looked at a scorecard or report card to compare the performance of doctors, hospitals, or health plans compared to 19 percent two years ago. Among Millennials¹ who have needed medical care, scorecard use has grown from 31 percent to 49 percent.
- 3. Relying on technology.** From 2013 to 2015, consumers' use of technology to measure fitness and health improvement goals has grown from 17 percent to 28 percent. Use is highest among Millennials, at 45 percent of that group. Among consumers with major chronic conditions, tech-based monitoring has jumped from 22 percent to 39 percent in the last two years. More than 60 percent of technology users say that utilizing health technologies has had a significant impact on their behavior.

Some groups are transforming into engaged consumers faster than others:

- **Poor health status.** Consumers with major health issues generally show the highest levels of engagement and the biggest increases in the three areas mentioned above, a promising trend indicating that those who may have the greatest need to be more engaged are, in fact, moving in that direction.
- **Younger.** Younger consumers are on a fast upward trajectory, starting at a higher level of engagement and showing greater gains on several measures than the other generations.
- **Higher income.** Although engagement appears to be rising across all income levels, higher-income groups are more engaged than lower-income groups. This may reflect differences in access, awareness, and education.

Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers

Since 2008, the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions has annually polled a nationally representative sample of US adults about their views of the health care system and their experiences and attitudes related to their health, health insurance, and health care. The general aims of the online survey are to track changes in consumer engagement over time and investigate key questions of interest to the health plan, provider, life sciences, and government sectors. Each sample includes 3,000 to 4,000 adults (18 years and older) and is representative of the US Census with respect to age, gender, race/ethnicity, income, geography, insurance status, and insurance source. This year's survey was conducted between January 16, 2015 and February 8, 2015. Not all survey questions were repeated each year. Wherever comparable data are available, year-to-year trends are shown.

¹ In this report, Millennials include respondents who were born between 1982-1997 (18-33 years old); Gen X includes respondents who were born between 1965-1981 (34-50 years old); Boomers include respondents who were born between 1946-1964 (51-69 years old); and Seniors include respondents who were born in 1945 or earlier (70 years or older).

Looking beyond demographic characteristics at consumers' behaviors and attitudes, Deloitte identified six distinct consumer segments that differ systematically in their approach to health and health care. Some of these segments are more engaged than others:

- Four segments, comprising 44 percent of the market, include consumers who are actively engaged in different ways (Online and Onboard, Sick and Savvy, Out and About, and Shop and Save).
- Two segments, making up a larger share of the market (56 percent), are more passive and less engaged either because they have a less pressing need to be (Casual and Cautious) or they are comfortable with the choices they have made (Content and Compliant).

Not all surveyed consumers engage with the system in the same way and a large segment remains disengaged, suggesting that health care organizations should not use a "one-size-fits-all" approach in their digital and consumer engagement strategies. Sophisticated users will likely want applications and tools that meet usability standards similar to those in retail industries; other users may have lower expectations, awareness levels, and technology skills.

Although an increase in consumer engagement is evident, the change is taking place slowly. The pace could pick up if health plans, providers, life sciences companies, and other stakeholders take advantage of opportunities to increase engagement by accelerating development of online resources that provide the trusted, accurate, and easy-to-understand information consumers want and the types of health technologies consumers find most useful. "Layering and tailoring" information and assistance to consumers' varying levels of interest, need, and technical proficiency may be key to sustainable engagement initiatives.



Introduction

What is “consumer engagement” in health care? It is defined generally as the actions individuals take to become better informed and more directly and proactively involved in decisions and behaviors that affect their health, insurance coverage, and health care. These actions may include:

- Taking deliberate steps to monitor and improve their health
- Looking for information to learn more about health concerns and compare treatment options
- Taking cost and quality into consideration when choosing treatments, providers, and plans
- Partnering with doctors to make treatment decisions as well as communicating and sharing information with doctors
- Adhering to recommended treatment plans.

Actions such as these potentially can lead to healthier behaviors; more effective, efficient, and satisfying care experiences; better health outcomes; and lower overall spending. Research has linked higher levels of consumer engagement to:

- Greater use of preventive care¹
- Less smoking and obesity¹
- Less delay in seeking care²
- More positive ratings of relationships with providers^{3,4}
- Greater awareness of treatment guidelines⁵
- Better clinical indicators (e.g., cholesterol levels, triglycerides, depression)^{1,6}
- Lower use of hospital and emergency care¹ and lower hospital readmission rates⁷
- Lower overall predicted health care costs.^{1,8}

Health plans, providers, and life sciences companies may be able to accelerate consumer engagement by focusing on developing online information resources, mobile applications, and personal health devices that can help individuals in their patient populations and customer bases become more engaged. Designing these tools in ways that account for variations in consumers’ preconceptions and preferences is no easy task but the payoff could be considerable. The format of a provider scorecard, for instance, can influence the choices consumers make; placing quality data next to cost data in certain ways can increase the likelihood that consumers will choose high-value providers.⁹

Solely offering technology tools may not be enough to move the needle. Marketing, customer service, and technical support will likely be critical for raising consumers’ levels of awareness, comfort, and trust. For example, consumers may express interest in using new tools but they could require assurance about information security and privacy, and assistance to gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to use these resources effectively.¹⁰

Organizations that understand how consumers would like to use online resources and health technologies may be well-positioned to develop effective consumer engagement strategies and, in turn, improve effectiveness, efficiency, and value in health care service and product delivery; excel on quality measures that reflect the consumer experience; and outperform their competition by attracting and retaining actively engaged customers.

So, what is the state of consumer engagement today? Findings from the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers from 2008-2015 suggest that measures related to partnering with doctors, tapping online resources, and relying on technologies for various health-related purposes are gradually on the rise for some consumers more than others. Understanding these trends may help providers, health plans, and life sciences companies develop and optimize their consumer engagement strategies.

Partnering with providers

More consumers today prefer to partner with doctors rather than have their doctors make decisions for them. Nearly half (48 percent) of consumers prefer to partner with their doctor, up from 40 percent in 2008 (Figure 1). Fewer people want to make the decision by themselves.

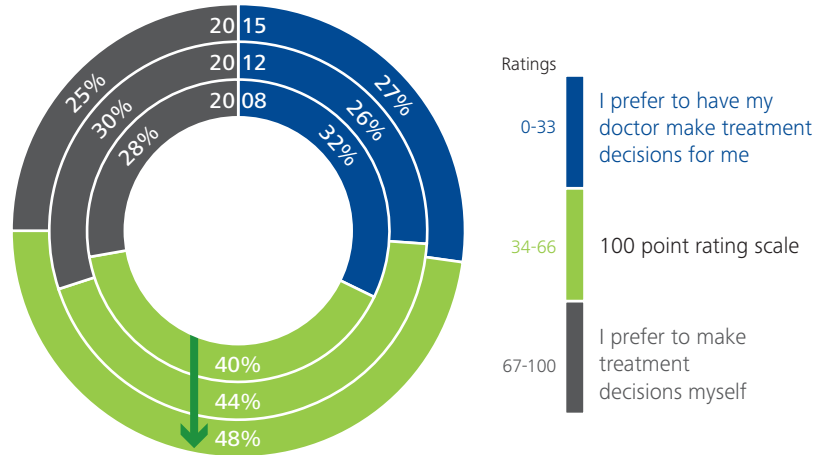
Currently, one in three consumers strongly believes that doctors should encourage patients to research and ask questions about their treatment (Figure 2). Another 47 percent show some degree of support for this, with fewer than one in five feeling that doctors should not encourage patients to question their recommendations. Younger consumers show greater support than older consumers.

Despite general support for the idea of patients questioning doctors about treatment options, the share of people who report actually doing this is low:

- Only 16 percent of consumers who received care for an injury, illness, or health condition report asking their doctor to consider treatment options other than the one he or she initially recommended.
- Questioning was highest among individuals with a hospital stay (23 percent) or major chronic condition (22 percent) and similar to the average among prescription medication users (16 percent).
- In each of the past three years, around 12 percent of prescription medication users have asked their doctor to prescribe a particular drug by name or brand and 17 percent have asked a pharmacist for his or her opinion about a medication prescribed by a doctor.

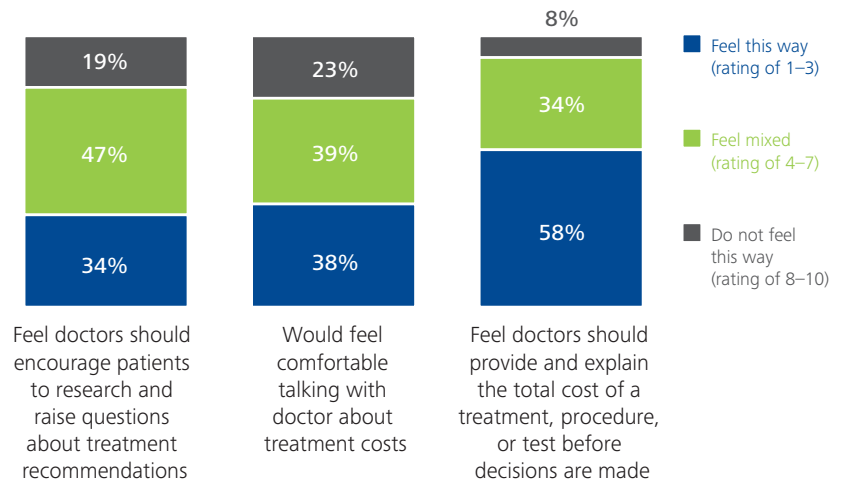
When it comes to cost, 58 percent of consumers feel that doctors should provide cost information and 38 percent say they would be comfortable directly addressing questions of cost with providers (Figure 2). However, only 19 percent of individuals who received care for an injury, illness, or health condition say they asked about pricing before agreeing to treatment. This rate has remained steady in recent years within the total sample, but increased among individuals with major chronic conditions from 18 percent in 2012 to 24 percent in 2015. The middle generations (Gen X and Boomers) express more comfort talking with their doctor about treatment costs than either the youngest (Millennials) or oldest generations (Seniors).

Figure 1. More consumers report wanting to partner with doctors



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2008, 2012, 2015

Figure 2. Consumers show strong support for doctors explaining the costs of treatment; many also support talking about treatment costs and asking questions about treatment



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Tapping online resources

Consumers' trust in the reliability of information sources is rising. Consistent with other studies, Deloitte's surveys find that consumers' greatest trust is in information provided by physicians (Figure 3).¹¹ Even though trust in information from health plans and life sciences companies is among the lowest for the sources presented, consumer trust in these sources has doubled since hitting a low in 2010.

Although trust is rising, consumers' use of online resources to learn more about health concerns and treatment options has remained fairly steady in recent years. Over half of all consumers surveyed, and between 60 and 70 percent of those who experienced a health issue, say they have looked online for information about treatment options or more generally to learn about health concerns or care providers (Figure 4). Online research is lowest among those without a primary care provider, seniors, and the uninsured.

Figure 3. Consumers trust providers the most for reliable information about effectiveness and safety of treatment options; trust in health plans and life sciences companies is growing

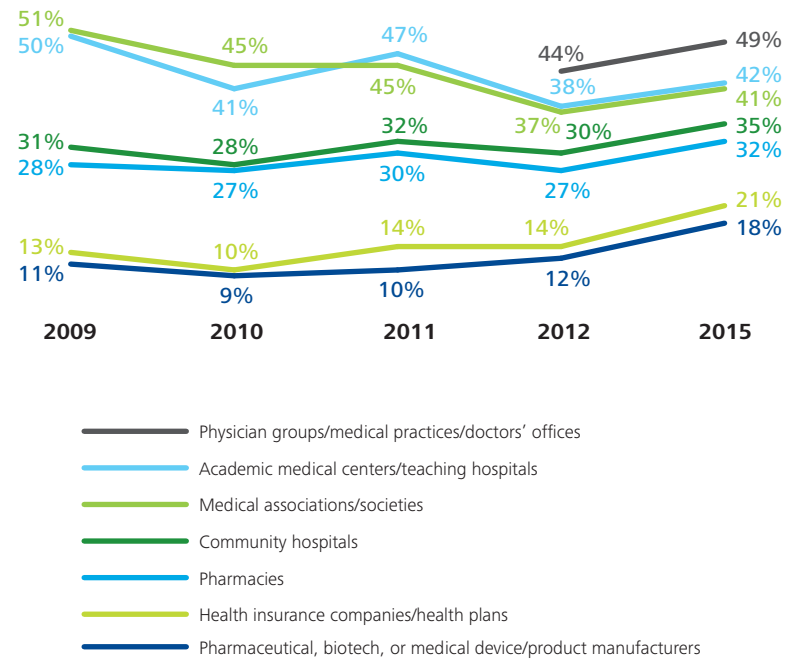


Chart shows percentage who gave a rating of 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale, where 1 is "no trust" and 10 is "complete trust".
Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2009 — 2015

Figure 4. Use of online information resources is highest for people who have had acute illness

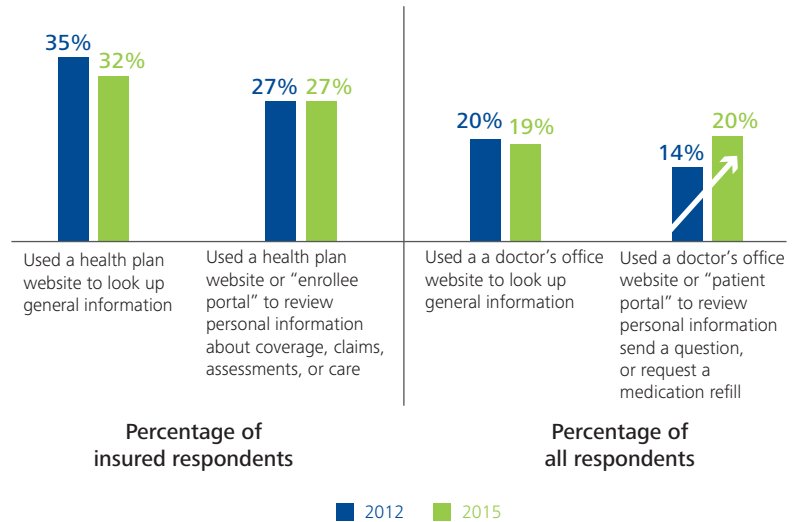


Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Consumers rely on health plan websites more than doctors' office websites, but their overall use of patient portals is growing (Figure 5). One in five reports using a doctor's website or portal to review personal health or payment information, send information or questions to a doctor or nurse, or request a prescription refill, up from 14 percent in 2013.

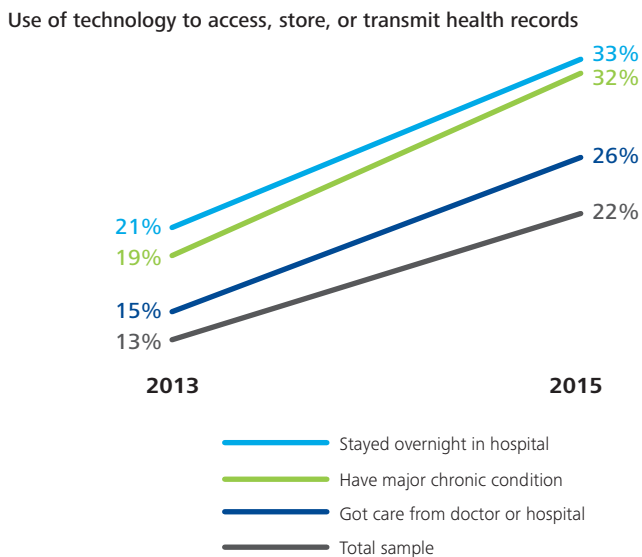
Twenty-two percent of consumers overall, and 33 percent of people who have experienced serious health issues, report using technology to access, store, or transmit personal health data or medical records (Figure 6). Use is rising within all age groups, especially among younger patients, where the rate has doubled from 17 percent in 2013 to 36 percent in 2015. Each income group shows an increase between 2013 and 2015, but the rates vary from 24 percent of the low-income group to 35 percent of the high-income group in 2015. Seven in 10 consumers express some interest in accessing electronic medical records in the future (20 percent have already done so; 49 percent have not).

Figure 5. Use of doctors' office websites and portals has grown but health plan portals are in greater use



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2012 and 2015

Figure 6. More consumers are using technologies that enable access to health data

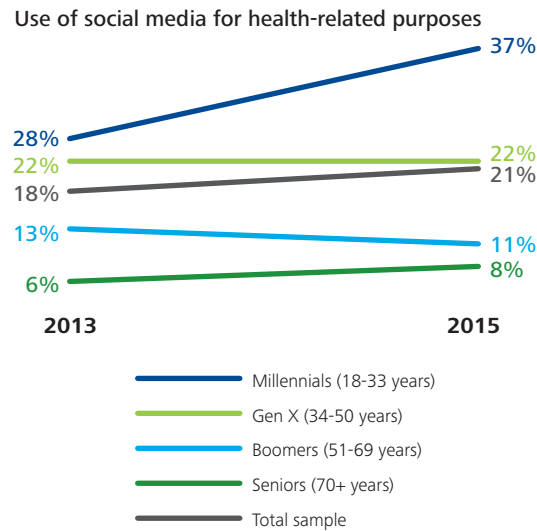


Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2013 and 2015

Consumers rely on health plan websites more than doctors' office websites, but their overall use of patient portals is growing.

Consumers' use of social media for health purposes has risen from 18 percent to 21 percent in the past two years. Not surprisingly, use among Millennials is highest and has increased the most among all of the generational cohorts (Figure 7). Social media use has remained relatively flat within the other generations. When sharing fitness data with friends is added to the mix, the rates increase to 23 percent of all surveyed consumers and 40 percent of Millennials.

Figure 7. Use of social media for health purposes varies by age cohort; use is highest among Millennials*



Consumers' use of social media for health purposes has risen from 18 percent to 21 percent in the past two years.

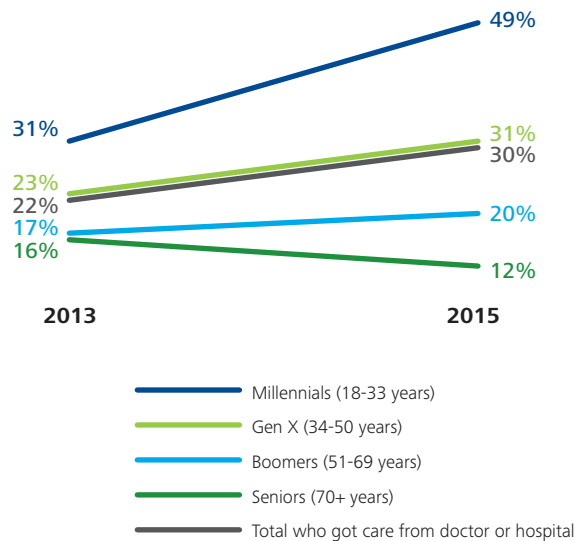
* Purposes include learning more about and/or sharing personal experience with a specific illness, injury, or health problem; specific prescription medications or medical devices; specific doctors or hospitals; the health care system in general; health technologies that can help you diagnose, treat, monitor, or improve your health; or other health- or care-related purposes.

Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2013 and 2015

Use of performance scorecards is trending upward, as well. One-quarter of all surveyed consumers say they have looked at a scorecard or report card to compare the performance of doctors, hospitals, and/or health plans compared to 19 percent two years ago. Between 2013 and 2015, consumers' use of provider scorecards has risen more quickly (12 to 18 percent for doctors and nine to 12 percent for hospitals) than their use of health plan scorecards (eight to 10 percent). Among people who received care from a doctor or hospital, the increase in scorecard use is most prominent among younger consumers (Figure 8). Income groups show a similar increase over the two years, but the rates range from 27 percent of low-income patients to 36 percent of high-income patients in 2015. Overall, nearly half (46 percent) of consumers say they are very likely to use websites that offer quality comparison tools in the future (16 percent have already used them; 30 percent have not) (Figure 9).

Figure 8. Engagement with performance scorecards is rising, especially in the youngest cohort

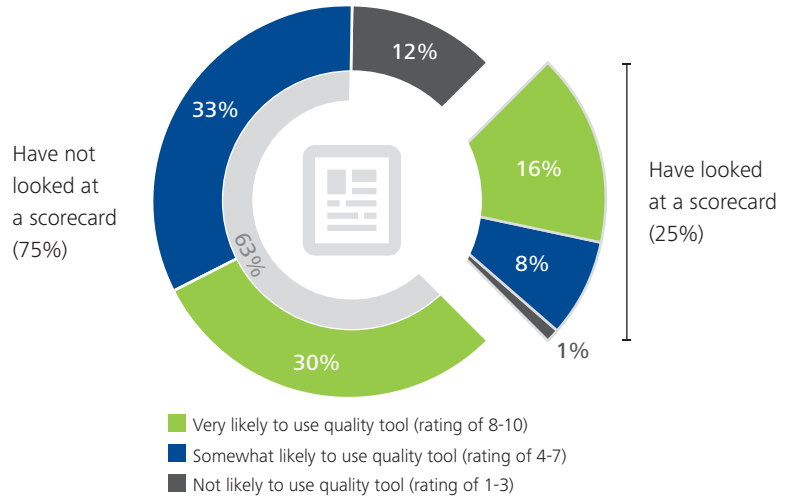
Use of performance scorecards among respondents who received care



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2013 and 2015

Figure 9. Overall, one in four consumers has used a scorecard; 63 percent have not but say they are at least somewhat likely to use quality tools in the future

Interest in using performance scorecards



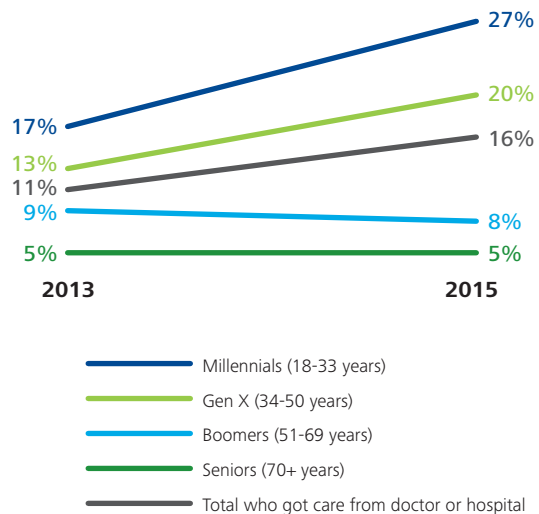
Note: The survey question was worded as follows: "Information comparing the performance of doctors, hospitals, and health plans is sometimes available in the form of a 'scorecard' or 'report card.' In the last 12 months, have you looked at a scorecard or report card for any of the following?"
 Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

One-quarter of all surveyed consumers say they have looked at a scorecard or report card to compare the performance of doctors, hospitals, and/or health plans.

Most surveyed consumers have not looked online for cost information, but are at least somewhat interested in using a pricing tool. Between 2013 and 2015, rates of searching for cost information have climbed from 11 percent to 16 percent of those who report receiving care from a doctor or hospital (from 10 to 14 percent overall). Use of cost information has risen fastest among young consumers needing care (from 17 to 27 percent). Income groups show a similar increase over the two years, and rates are higher among high-income patients (18 percent) than low-income patients (14 percent). As with quality information, use of cost information remains considerably lower than expressed interest (Figure 11). Two in five respondents (43 percent) say they are very likely to use websites that offer price comparison tools in the future (nine percent have already used them; 34 percent have not).

Figure 10. Searching for cost information is increasing, especially in the youngest cohort

Use of online cost information among respondents who received care

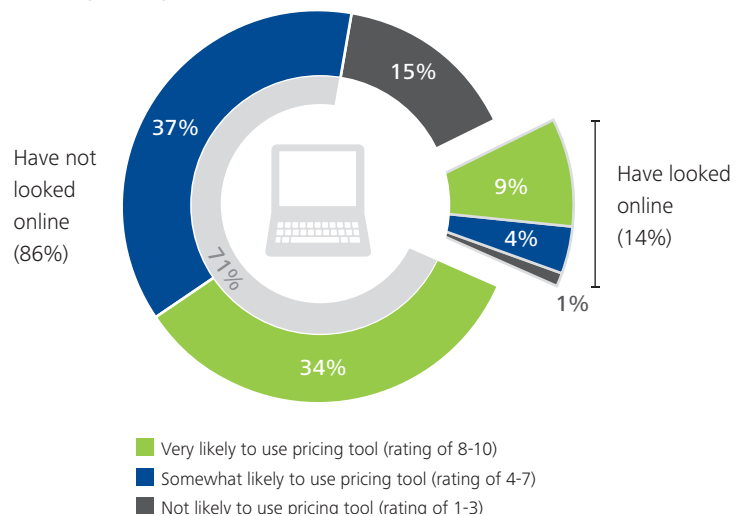


Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2013 and 2015

Use of cost information has risen fastest among young consumers needing care (from 17 to 27 percent).

Figure 11. Overall, 14 percent of consumers have searched for cost information; 71 percent have not but say they are at least somewhat likely to use pricing tools in the future

Interest in using pricing tools



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

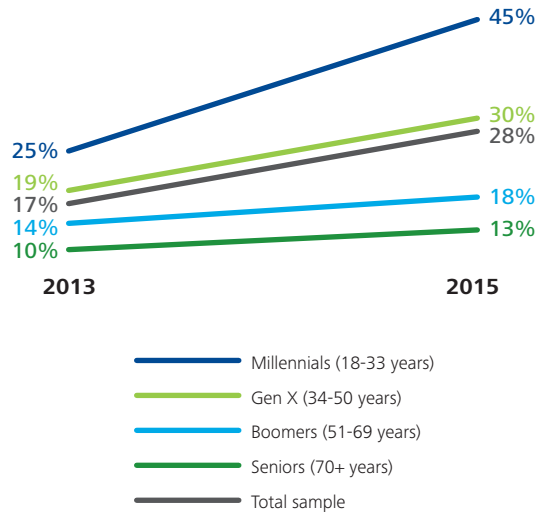
Relying on technology

Use of technologies to monitor health and manage treatment is on the rise, especially among younger consumers and individuals with major chronic conditions. Increasingly, consumers are using personal health devices, websites, and mobile apps to track changes in their health, receive alerts, transmit health data, and pay their medical bills. Consumers’ interest in health technologies still exceeds their use, but the gap is slowly closing.

From 2013 to 2015, use of technology to measure fitness and health improvement goals has grown from 17 percent to 28 percent (Figure 12). Use is highest among Millennials, reaching 45 percent of that group. Interest in using technology for wellness-related goals is high; seven in 10 consumers report some level of interest (26 percent have already used these technologies; 44 percent have not).

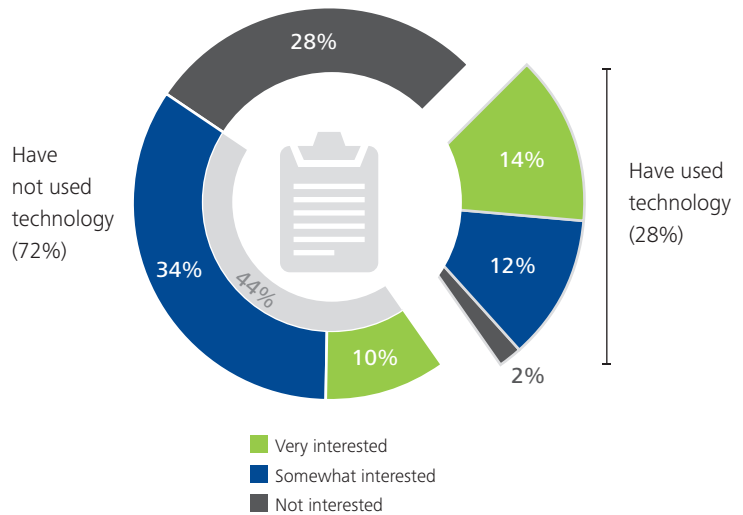
Figure 12. All age groups are stepping up their use of technologies to measure fitness

Use of technology to measure fitness and health improvement



From 2013 to 2015, use of technology to measure fitness and health improvement goals has grown from 17 percent to 28 percent.

Interest in using technology to measure fitness and health improvement

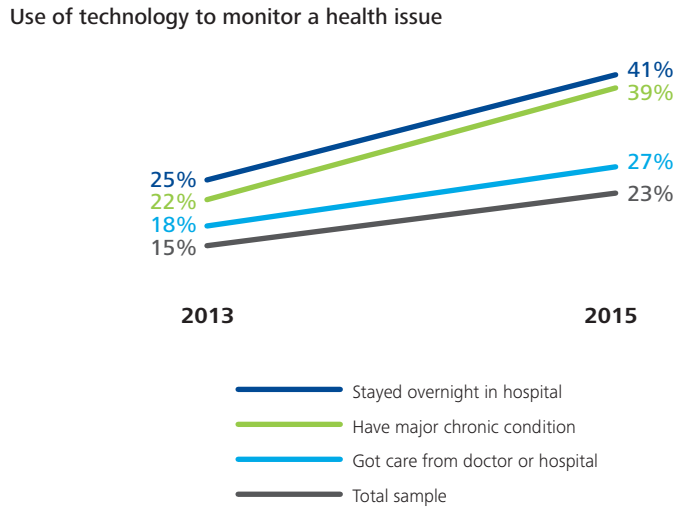


Charts show percentage of respondents who reported using technologies including websites, smartphone/tablet applications, personal medical devices, or fitness monitors for the stated purpose in the last 12 months and who have interest in doing so in the future.

Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2013 and 2015

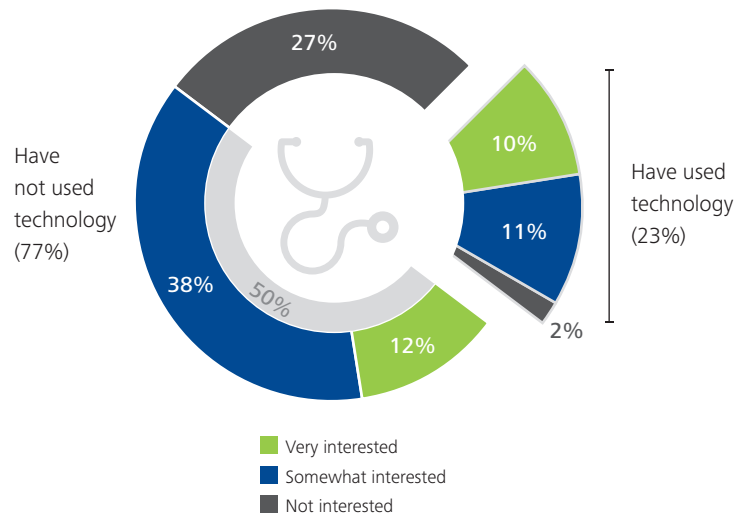
Use of technology to monitor health issues has also risen between 2013 and 2015, nearly doubling among individuals with chronic conditions that have a major impact on their daily life (Figure 13). Among consumers with major chronic conditions, use of monitoring technologies varies by age (51 percent of Millennials, 36 percent of Gen X, 33 percent of Boomers, and 42 percent of Seniors). Over 70 percent of consumers express interest in health monitoring. Half of all surveyed consumers are interested but have not yet used monitoring technologies, likely because they do not have health issues or may not have access to the kinds of technologies that could help them track their health.

Figure 13. Engagement with technologies to monitor health issues is rising, especially among those with more serious conditions



Use of technology to monitor health issues has also risen between 2013 and 2015, nearly doubling among individuals with chronic conditions that have a major impact on their daily life.

Interest in using technology to monitor a health issue



Charts show percentage of respondents who reported using technologies including websites, smartphone/tablet applications, personal medical devices, or fitness monitors for the stated purpose in the last 12 months and who have interest in doing so in the future.

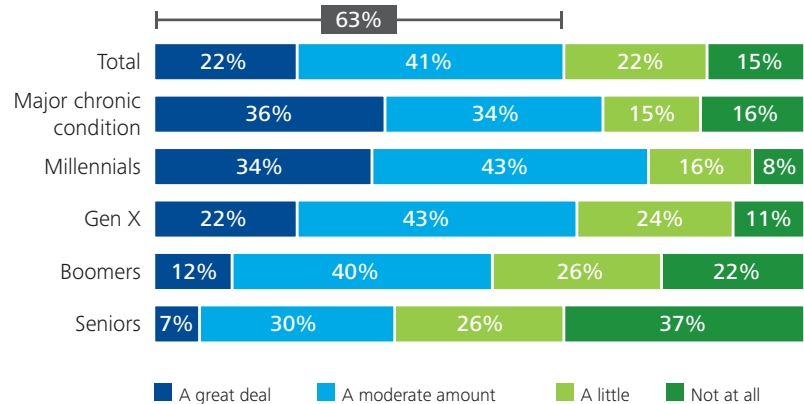
Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2013 and 2015

Six in 10 technology users (seven in 10 of those with major chronic conditions) say their use of fitness or monitoring technologies has led to a significant change in their behavior (Figure 14). Impact ranges widely by age, with 37 percent of Seniors and 77 percent of Millennials reporting their health behavior has changed “a great deal” or “a moderate amount” with their use of health technologies. Among consumers with major chronic conditions, impact varies even more widely by age, ranging from 36 percent of Seniors to 85 percent of Millennials. Especially among young consumers, there appears to be great potential to influence health habits through technological support.

Forty percent of technology users (62 percent of users with major chronic conditions) have shared their fitness or monitoring information with their doctor. Among those who haven’t, 26 percent think their doctor wouldn’t be interested, 17 percent would rather keep this information private, and 11 percent say the information is not easy to download, print, or transfer.

Figure 14. Most technology users report some improvement in health behavior due to fitness or monitoring technologies

To what extent has using this technology changed your behavior?



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Six in 10 technology users (seven in 10 of those with major chronic conditions) say their use of fitness or monitoring technologies has led to a significant change in their behavior.

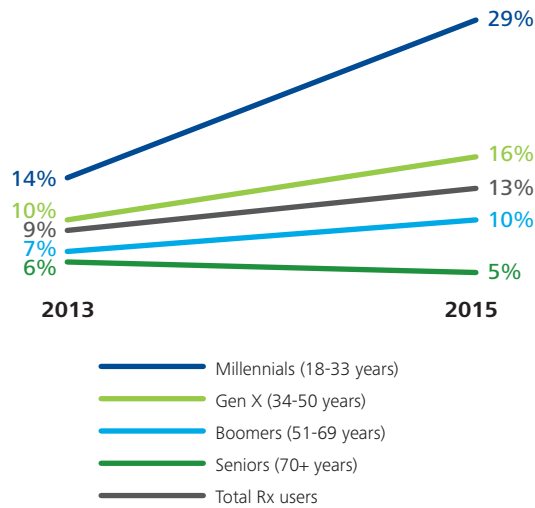
Use of digital tools designed to help consumers stick to their treatment plan is low but appears to be rising. Among consumers who take prescription medications, 13 percent report receiving electronic alerts or reminders; this ranges from five percent of Seniors up to 29 percent of Millennials (Figure 15). Over half of current medication users express interest in using technology to prompt them to take their medication; 42 percent haven't yet tried this kind of support.

Fifteen percent of prescription medication users report using technology to measure, record, or transmit treatment data; 51 percent express interest but have not yet used technology for this purpose.

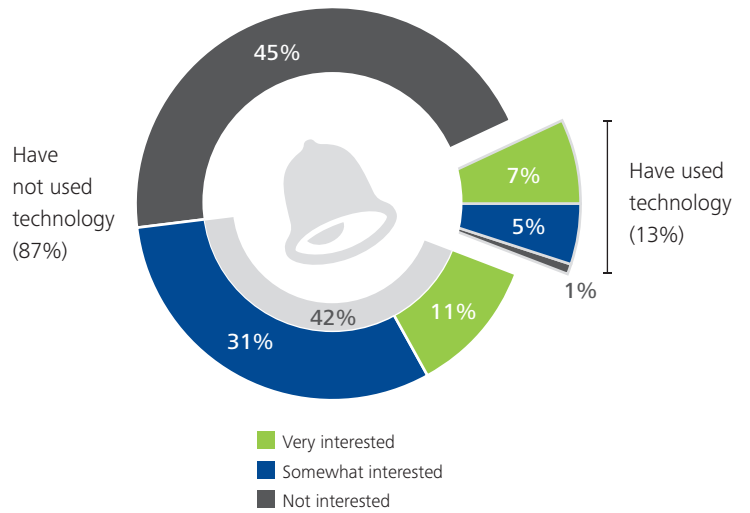
Over half of current medication users express interest in using technology to prompt them to take their medication.

Figure 15. More people taking prescription medications are using technology to support adherence

Use of technology to receive alerts or reminders among respondents who currently take prescription medications



Interest in using technology to receive alerts or reminders among respondents who currently take prescription medications



Charts show percentage of respondents who reported using technologies including websites, smartphone/tablet applications, personal medical devices, or fitness monitors for the stated purpose in the last 12 months and who have interest in doing so in the future.

Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2013 and 2015

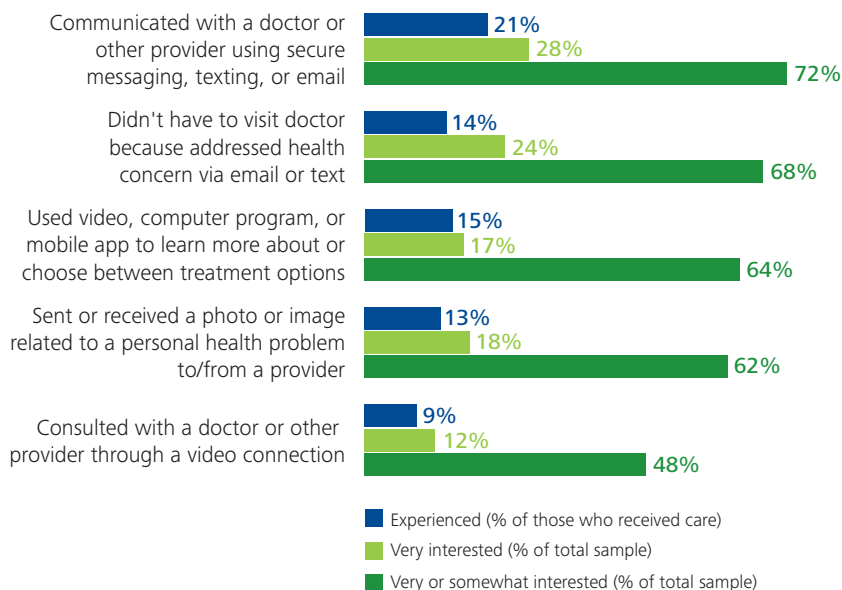
Consumers are interested in communicating electronically with providers, and one in five consumers using medical care has done so (Figure 16). Rates of conferring with doctors via email, texting, or video have doubled in the last two years, suggesting digital communication between consumers and providers may continue trending upward.

Email and texting might at times help consumers avoid a trip to the doctor. Interest in communicating with providers electronically is lowest among Seniors and the lowest-income group. Interest ranges from 55 percent of Seniors up to 71 percent of Millennials, and from 65 percent of lower-income consumers (less than \$50,000) up to 75 percent of higher-income consumers (\$100,000 or more).

One in three medical care users has paid a medical bill online, and more than twice that number of all surveyed consumers are interested to some degree in doing so in the future (Figure 17). Fewer have used digital tools to complete paperwork or schedule appointments, but interest in carrying out these types of transactions online is high, as well.

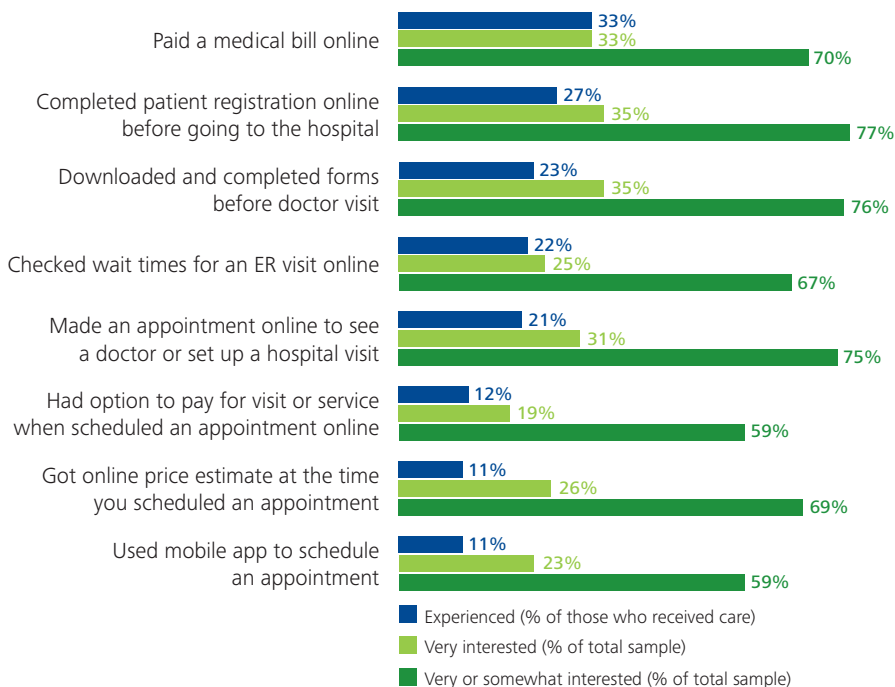
Rates of conferring with doctors via email, texting, or video have doubled in the last two years, suggesting digital communication between consumers and providers may continue trending upward.

Figure 16. Interest in communicating electronically with doctors is high, but only one in five who received care has done so



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Figure 17. One-third of consumers who received care have paid a medical bill online; other online administrative activities are less common



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Differences in health care behaviors and attitudes

Not all surveyed consumers want to partner with doctors and use online resources and digital tools. Deloitte has identified six unique consumer segments that differ systematically in how they approach their health and health care (Figure 18). Four segments, comprising 44 percent of the market, include consumers who are actively engaged in different ways. “Shop and Save” and “Online and Onboard” consumers are the highest users of online information

sources and digital tools. “Out and About” and “Sick and Savvy” consumers also rely on these resources, but to a lesser extent. The larger, more passive share of the market (56 percent) includes two segments that are less engaged either because they have no pressing need to be (Casual and Cautious) or are satisfied with the choices they have made (Content and Compliant).

Figure 18. Deloitte’s behavioral-attitudinal segmentation reveals six distinct approaches to consumer engagement



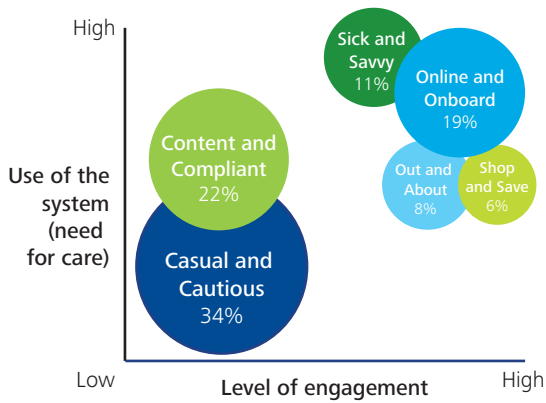
Note: The descriptions above highlight some of the behavioral and attitudinal differences among the segments. The segmentation model included 24 behaviors and attitudes in all (demographics were excluded).

Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Figure 19 contrasts the six segments with respect to their use of the health care system and their level of engagement. The “Casual and Cautious” segment appears at the low end of both scales. “Content and Compliant” individuals use the system somewhat more, but are also passive. The four more active segments are higher on the engagement scale, varying in how much they currently use health care services and prescription medications.

The six segments are based on differences in behaviors and attitudes, not demographic characteristics. Groups based on health status, age, income, or insurance source have unique segment distributions which means, for example, that not all young consumers are “Online and Onboard” and not all older consumers are “Content and Compliant” (Figure 20). The six segments appear to varying degrees within each demographic cohort.

Figure 19. Consumers’ use of the health care system and level of engagement by segment

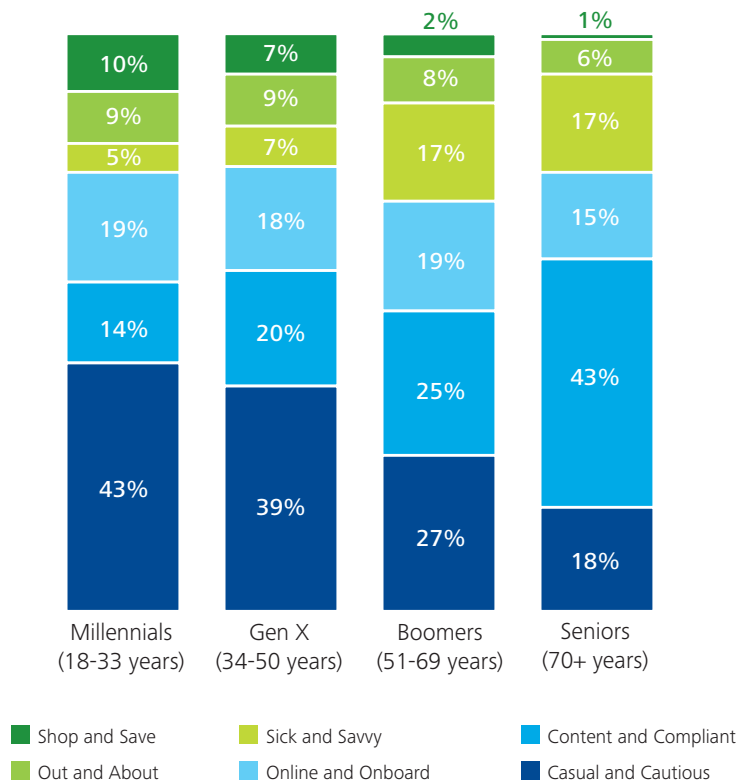


Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Deloitte’s health care consumer segmentation analysis

To offer a unique view of the health care consumer market, Deloitte’s segmentation model is based on behaviors and attitudes, not demographics. Standard latent class segmentation analysis was used to identify the segment solution that provides the optimal combination of homogeneity within segments and heterogeneity across segments. After testing various models, a 24-variable model emerged as the most informative with respect to 12 key dimensions of interest. Examples of key differences are shown in Figure 18.

Figure 20. Each age cohort has a unique segment profile



Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

How to accelerate consumer engagement?

While overall increases in specific behaviors and attitudes associated with consumer engagement are small, the good news is that transformation is happening faster among those who may benefit most — individuals with major chronic conditions and serious, acute health issues. The increased involvement of these consumers in decisions about care, communication with providers, self-monitoring, and treatment adherence holds great promise for improving health outcomes and getting better value from care.

Further development of online resources and health technologies may help to accelerate engagement, as should programs and incentives that encourage it. These resources are important to a substantial share of survey respondents:

- One in two consumers says the availability of online capabilities to access medical records, schedule appointments, and order prescription refills would be important for them to feel satisfied with their overall health care experience with a network of hospitals and doctors.
- Two in five say health management programs and online tools factor into their choice of a health plan.
- One in three wants health plans to prioritize the enhancement of programs, tools, and incentives that support health improvement.

When asked which types of resources would most help them change their habits and take steps to improve their health, respondents put financial incentives and information resources at the top of the list (Figure 21). Special programs involving education, self-monitoring tools, and reminders are rated highly by one-third of consumers (one-half of consumers who have major chronic conditions). Two in five consumers give high ratings to secure websites offering various kinds of digital supports; one in four rates mobile apps highly.

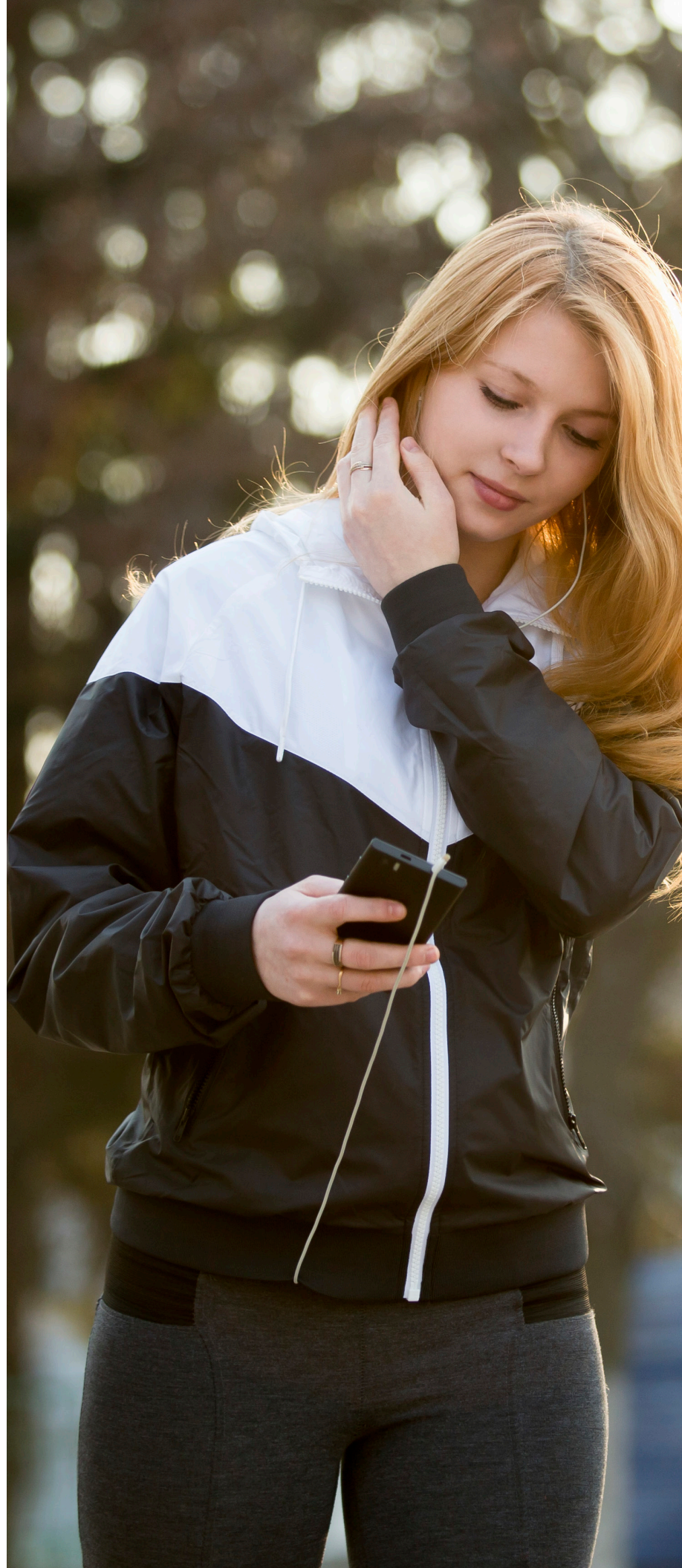


Figure 21. Percentage of consumers who say incentives, programs, and tools would help them change their habits and behaviors and improve their health varies widely by segment

	Total sample	Major chronic condition	Online and Onboard	Sick and Savvy	Shop and Save	Out and About	Content and Compliant	Casual and Cautious
Premium discount for participating in health improvement/wellness/fitness programs	46%	47%	62%	62%	54%	53%	49%	27%
Incentives (financial, rewards points, discounts) for participating in wellness or disease management programs	42%	44%	59%	52%	48%	47%	44%	25%
Discounts on costs of getting care/attending programs (e.g., transport, parking, child care)	38%	47%	52%	46%	48%	45%	39%	23%
Information about quality when choosing doctors and hospitals	42%	50%	58%	56%	45%	49%	46%	23%
Information about costs when choosing providers or treatments	42%	48%	59%	55%	51%	55%	41%	25%
Care plans and programs to assist with chronic conditions by providing information, reminders, and self-monitoring tools	35%	50%	50%	46%	45%	41%	38%	19%
Prevention/wellness programs that provide information, reminders, and self-monitoring tools	34%	44%	49%	45%	46%	39%	36%	19%
Premium discount for wearing a health monitoring device that sends personal data to an individual's doctor or health plan	34%	40%	48%	46%	41%	39%	35%	21%
Rewards points for uploading personal health data from devices worn on the body	31%	32%	45%	36%	43%	35%	29%	19%
Secure websites to access records, schedule appointments, order Rx refills	40%	50%	61%	50%	47%	44%	41%	23%
Service (texting, mobile, online) giving customized health alerts or information	25%	36%	38%	27%	42%	26%	24%	14%
Mobile phone apps to access records, schedule appointments, order Rx refills	24%	32%	36%	23%	42%	27%	21%	15%

Chart shows percentage of respondents who gave each program or tool a rating of 8, 9, or 10 on a 10-point scale, where 1 is “no impact” and 10 is “high impact” in “helping you to change your habits or behaviors and improve your health.”

Source: Deloitte Center for Health Solutions Survey of US Health Care Consumers, 2015

Implications for the health care industry

Health plans, providers, and life sciences companies face a challenging opportunity. The large gaps that exist between what consumers report they have done and what they say they may do suggest there is an expanse of unfilled consumer demand. Organizations that figure out how to address their customers' needs for better informational and digital support may strengthen satisfaction and retention through increased engagement, while also enhancing the value of the services and products they deliver.

The trick, however, may be coming up with *a set of* strategies that will work across the consumer segments that are present in the market — one strategy will not fit all.

Some consumers are not yet aware of resources that already exist, while others are ready for tools that have not been developed yet. Some may be interested, but find the quality and usefulness of available resources lacking. Some may only trust resources and tools that are suggested by their doctor, while others may be comfortable with direct marketing and access. Some may be interested in all forms of support, while others find only certain technologies appealing. Also, consumers' level of engagement will likely wax and wane as their health circumstances change.

Going beyond traditional views of an organization's customer base to recognize the unique approaches and preferences of different consumer segments may be essential for accelerating consumer engagement. "Layering and tailoring" information and assistance to consumers' varying levels of interest and need may be a key component for sustainable engagement initiatives. To respond nimbly to evolving consumer expectations, health care organizations may need to equip their customer operations teams with specialized data analytics capabilities that can identify meaningful differences and patterns of change in consumers' behaviors and preferences.

The pace of consumer engagement could pick up if health plans, providers, life sciences companies, and other stakeholders accelerate the development of online resources that provide the trusted, accurate, and easy-to-understand information consumers want and the types of health technologies consumers find most useful. Adapting retail-oriented strategies from other industries and improving customer interfaces like websites and call centers may also be helpful.

As the industry shifts toward value-based care models, and relationships among providers and payers become more integrated and collaborative, new opportunities may arise to develop innovative consumer engagement strategies that support a more seamless, streamlined, and personalized customer experience. Delivering a superior customer experience cost-effectively may be key to remaining competitive in an industry that is sharpening its focus on value.

Survey methodology and sample

Since 2008, the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions has annually polled a nationally representative sample of US adults about their experiences and attitudes related to their health, health insurance, and health care, and their views about the health care system. The general aim of the survey is to track changes in consumer engagement over time and investigate key questions of interest to the health plan, provider, life sciences, and government sectors. The 2015 survey, conducted between January 16 and February 8, included 3,616 adults (18 years and older). As in prior years, the national sample is representative of the US Census with respect to age, gender, race/ethnicity, income, geography, insurance status, and insurance source.

Characteristics of the national sample	2015
Sample size	3,616
Midwest	22%
Northeast	19%
South	36%
West	23%
18 to 34 years	29%
35 to 54 years	36%
55 years or older	35%
Hispanic	13%
Non-Hispanic White	68%
Non-Hispanic Black	12%
Non-Hispanic Asian	5%
Non-Hispanic Other	2%
Less than \$25,000	24%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	26%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12%
\$100,000 or more	16%
Prefer not to say	3%
Uninsured	13%
Employer	45%
Medicare	19%
Medicaid	11%
Direct purchase	5%
Public health insurance exchange	4%
Other	3%



Endnotes

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