

**Title:**

Nursing Implications and Findings From a Portal Activation Study of a Large Healthcare System

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**Session Title:**

Healthcare System Technology

**Slot:**

F 21: Monday, 30 October 2017: 9:30 AM-10:15 AM

**Scheduled Time:**

9:50 AM

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**Keywords:**

Activation, Demographics and Portal

**References:**

Murphy-Abdouch, K. (2015). Patient access to personal health information: Regulation vs. reality. *Perspectives in Health Information Management*, 12(Winter) 1-10.

Otte-Trojel, T., Rundall, T. G., de Bont, A., van de Klundert, J., & Reed, M. E. (2015). The organizational dynamics enabling patient portal impacts upon organizational performance and patient health: A qualitative study of Kaiser Permanente. *BMC Health Services Research*, 15(1), 559. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1186/s12913-015-1208-2>

Riippa, I., Linna, M., & Rönkkö, I. (2015). A Patient Portal with electronic messaging: Controlled before-and-after study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 17(11). doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.2196/jmir.4487>

**Abstract Summary:**

Collaborative research of patient portal activation was conducted in a large network of hospitals including outpatient and inpatient facilities. The study examined the demographics of those that activated the portal. The results of the study, nursing implication, and areas of future research will be discussed.

**Learning Activity:**

<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</b>
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Describe the results of a study focusing on portal utilization by patients in a hospital system.	The results of the study will be outlined in tables and PowerPoint presentation.
Discuss possible adjustments that can be made to existing patient portals to better engage patients as active partners.	A review of the current research on patient portals and the results of this study and adjustments that can be made to the portals will be discussed. In the present study the portals were adapted to include Spanish so that culturally diverse populations can participate. This was added after it was determined that there was a low activation rate among Spanish speaking patients.
Assess nursing implications of portal usage.	There are many areas where nurses can participate in facilitating of patient activation and utilization of patient portals. In 2009 the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was passed, giving healthcare providers a financial incentive to implement electronic health records and patient portals. Stage 2 of the Act, active clinical processes, requires sharing of information between providers and patients and access to patients' healthcare records.

**Abstract Text:**

Patients' engagement in their health care has the potential to improve health outcomes and decrease costs. With the advent of patient portals, it is easier to access health care records, pay bills, schedule appointments, and communicate with healthcare providers. Patients have a greater role in follow up care and can act as a check and balance. Nurses can play an important role in the facilitation of activation and use of the patient portal.

A collaborative research effort was conducted of portal utilization by academics, statisticians, informatics experts, and clinicians. The study took place in a Mid-Atlantic multi hospital system in Northern Virginia and the Washington DC area. The healthcare system, is a comprehensive network of hospitals, outpatient services and facilities, primary and specialty practices, and health and wellness initiatives.

The study assessed activation of MyChart Patient portal, an application within the Epic Electronic Health Record. A total of 387,198 patients met the study inclusion criteria. Of those meeting the inclusion criteria 80,435 activated the portal. A multiple logistic regression model was calculated to determine independent predictors of patient portal activation. All tests were two-sided and statistical significance was assessed at the level of  $\alpha=0.05$ . The results indicated Independent predictors of portal activation were age, sex, language, race, ethnicity, poverty level by zip code, employment status, named primary care provider, and number of encounters during the study period.

The population studied was racially and ethnically diverse. This study was unique in that it focused on patient activation whereas other researchers focused on utilization. Given the demographics of the area studied, one of the wealthiest counties in the nation, the overall activation for portal use was still less than desired with an activation of 21% There was a higher activation rate among English speaking patients

and older adults from 60-69 years old. Analysis of the data led the researchers to modify the current application of MyChart to include Spanish. The study provided insights into the importance of examining the demographics of the user population and incorporate more education from the providers to help with activation. The study results highlighted the need to engage more patients to activate and utilize portals. Healthcare providers have an imperative to encourage patients to connect and explain advantages for them to have virtual access to their health information. More research is needed to help engage patients identify barriers to portal activation and address them in a proactive manner in order to improve timely access to health care information and coach and encourage patient to be involved in their health care as active partners. This study has implications for global health if a very industrialized and high tech region has low rates of portal utilization strategies must address, access, opportunity to enhance user friendliness of this technology.