

# 7 ways better patient communication improves your bottom line



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## Communication is key

An exceptional patient experience starts with exceptional communication. From setting the first appointment, all the way through intake and recall.

Patients are becoming more active players in their care than ever before. Patients are looking for more convenience and more value from their providers. Providers need to find a way to differentiate their practice, while keeping their patients happy and costs under control – and the simplest way to do that is by improving patient communication.

That can translate into reducing hold times, responding to patients faster, or reducing the volume of calls your practice gets. By making simple fixes to the way you communicate with patients, you can increase your revenue and improve your patient experience while saving time and reducing costs. Below, we dive into the how and why.

## #1 Better communication = better online reviews

Better patient communication is directly linked to a better patient experience. Research has shown that 96% of patient complaints are [about poor communication](#) and service, with only 4% of complaints actually related to quality of care.

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That means that patient communication is the top driver behind patient satisfaction. And your online reputation is directly linked to the patient experience – when patients have a hard time getting in touch with your practice, that means that they're more likely to have a negative experience and more likely to leave a negative online review.

Patients are acting more like consumers than ever before. In fact, 94% of patients will check online reviews before booking their first appointment. And consumers need to read an average of 10 reviews before they can trust a business – meaning that you need to have a steady flow of new and positive online reviews in order to attract new patients.

Giving your patients an easier way to communicate with your practice can eliminate almost all potential complaints, paving the way for better online reviews and more patients visiting your practice in the future, helping to grow your business and boost your revenue.

## #2 Streamlining communication keeps patients coming back

The importance of patient communication when it comes to patient retention cannot be overstated. [Studies](#) show that it costs 5 to 8 times more to attract new patients than it does to retain an existing one.

[One study](#) even demonstrated that practices lose up to  $\frac{2}{3}$  of first time patients due to poor communication. And [another study](#) found that 60% of patients kept on hold for more than a minute will hang up – and only a third of those will actually call back.

By making it easy for your patients to get in touch with your practice through easy text messaging or a chat messenger on your website, you can eliminate the risk of patient attrition. [Increasing](#) patient retention by just 5% can lead to a notable increase in the lifetime value of your patients – anywhere from 25% to 100%.

Implementing a secure messaging platform or allowing your patients to text with your practice gives patients the satisfaction of knowing that their voice has been heard. You can mitigate patient frustration by giving them the ability to get in touch with your practice at their convenience.

## #3 Happy patients refer friends and family to your practice

83% of Americans have made word-of-mouth recommendations about a provider they trust. But in order to build trust with patients, you need to give them a positive experience first. You have to give patients the ability to easily communicate with your practice in order to keep them satisfied – and in turn, satisfied patients are more likely to recommend your practice to others.

A good patient experience is about so much more than just quality of care, so by implementing an effective patient communication solution, you can maximize your chance to get more patient recommendations.

5-8<sup>x</sup>

higher cost for attracting  
a new patient than for  
keeping an existing one

$\frac{2}{3}$

first time patients lost due  
to poor communication

## #4

# Make it easy for new patients to contact your practice from your website

Patients actively research providers before choosing a practice, and more often than not, that's going to take them to your website. But once they find your site, it's also important that they have some way to get in touch with your practice. Unfortunately, many practices will have a 'Contact Us' section on their site, which simply directs patients to call in. When patients have to take that extra step of going from your site to calling in, a huge drop-off occurs.

Instead of relying on pushing patients to call-in, your practice should focus on offering a simple way to contact you directly from your site with a live chat or web messenger.

[Studies](#) have shown that 46% of online consumers prefer using a live chat or web messenger over other means of contact. Another study found that people who use live chat or web messengers show a 10% increase in their value versus their peers. The same study found that live chat leads to a 48% increase in revenue per chat hour and a 40% increase in conversion rate.

Adding a web messenger or live chat feature to your site can help you capture new patients, make it easier for them to get in touch with you, and actually help increase your revenue.



Patients actively research providers before choosing a practice

## #5 Eliminate unnecessary technologies and services to save money and reduce complexity

Communication can be one of the most complicated parts of any practice's technical stack. Between emails, voicemails, answering services, patient portals, phone calls, and online appointment setting, there are more ways for patients to reach out to your practice now than ever before. If all of these channels are managed through different solutions, that means managing upward of half a dozen different platforms, just to make sure that you're properly addressing all of your patient communications.

Implementing a holistic communication platform can help eliminate some of these subscriptions from your stack entirely. Unsecure emails create security and compliance issues, and patient portals are simply not effective because of low patient-adoption rates. With effective secure messaging, you can direct patients to simply reach out via text, and reach out to them via text as well. And some secure messaging platforms will even integrate with your voicemails, so all of your patient communications can be centralized in one place.

Secure messaging platforms make it easy to triage messages and keep on top of patient communications, so you can streamline your technologies and ensure that patients receive timely and personalized responses when they need them. You can reduce annual software and service subscription costs, all while reducing complexity in your practice, making your staff more efficient, and streamlining the patient experience.



Eliminating unnecessary  
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## #6 Better communication saves time for your staff

In many practices, administrative staff is mainly responsible for the front lines of patient communication. Whether that's in-office interactions or phone calls, admin staff is the primary contact that patients have with your practice.

If administrative staff cannot keep up with the volume of calls that your practice is receiving, that can directly impact your patient experience. Longer wait times on the phone and unanswered voicemails can be detrimental to your online reputation — and in turn, your bottom line.

Implementing effective communication solutions makes your staff more efficient

By implementing an effective communication solution, you can both enhance your patient experience and make your staff more efficient. Secure communication platforms minimize the number of calls your practice receives each day.

Rather than spending minutes listening to voicemails and playing phone tag, a secure texting solution allows your staff to read and respond to patient texts in seconds. Triaging patient communications becomes much more efficient when staff isn't limited by phone and voicemail alone and can save up to 3 hours per staff member per day.

Making your communications more efficient is an essential step to reducing overhead costs. And with a better communication workflow, you can reduce the number of FTEs dedicated to simply answering phones all day.

Up to **3 h**

saved per day per  
staff using Klara

## #7

# Differentiate your practice from competitors

Your practice should always strive to offer top quality care, but when it comes to attracting new patients and retaining the old, you need to offer patients a notably improved experience over your competitors.

Doctors today are seeing more patients than ever before, which also means that they're spending less time, on average, with each patient. So providers can't rely on old methods of building relationships with patients. [One study](#) found that patients who reported poor-quality relationships with their physicians are 3 times more likely to voluntarily leave that physician's practice than patients with high-quality relationships.

But there are still ways to build relationships with patients without dedicating more time to face-to-face encounters. By implementing a smart two-way messaging solution, you can provide patients with a better way to get in touch with your practice — and even have questions answered directly by providers or clinical staff. That way, you can provide patients with ongoing, personalized care, even between appointments, to differentiate your practice and give patients a memorable experience.

### What's next?

Now that you know how improving patient communication can impact your bottom line, it's time to find out how to put it into action. Klara is a holistic messaging solution that's built to help your practice improve your bottom line by addressing each of these seven points (and so much more), all while saving your staff time and delighting your patients.

Schedule your complimentary consultation with one of our practice specialists today! We'll walk through communication at your practice and help tailor a solution that fits the specific needs of your patients.

Call 1-(414)-485-5272 or email us at [consultations@klara.com](mailto:consultations@klara.com) to find out more.

