

FAMILY PHYSICIANS PROVIDE INSIGHTS ON CONSUMER HEALTH TECHNOLOGY

Cite Need for Medical Rigor, Patient-Focus and Interoperability

LAS VEGAS, NV, January 6, 2015—Speaking today at CES 2015, a panel of family physicians shared insights and recommendations for the next generation of consumer health technology. They urged increased collaboration between technology companies, physicians and patients and laid out key recommendations for improving the efficacy and adoption of these technologies.

“We are here today as part of a broader effort to improve our health care system and the health of all Americans,” said **Glen Stream**, MD, MBI, FAFAP, and Chair, Family Medicine for America’s Health, a new collaboration of the eight leading family medicine organizations in the U.S. “We believe consumer health technologies—apps, wearables, self-diagnosis tools—have the potential to strengthen the patient-physician connection and improve health outcomes. We are here to talk about where we see opportunity and need, and how we, working together with technology companies, can overcome the barriers that are keeping us from fully leveraging the power of consumer technology in primary care.”

The panel shared recent research from the American Academy of Family Physicians¹ outlining physicians’ use of consumer health apps with patients:

- Four in ten (42%) family physician respondents use apps at the point of care.
- Seven in ten (70%) of the respondents who use apps recommend preventative/healthy lifestyle apps (52% of all survey respondents).
- One third (34%) of the respondents who use apps recommend education/post-diagnosis apps (26% of all survey respondents).
- Physicians also use consumer apps to help with patient compliance (11%) and self-diagnosis (10%).
- Four in ten respondents have reservations about using/recommending apps because of questions about their medical rigor (41%) and/or proven effectiveness (37%).
- Other barriers to use cited included security and privacy of health information (20%), transparency and awareness of how data entered into app is used (16%), cost associated with app for patient (16%), and lack of access to data to help with clinical decisions and outcomes (13%).

The panel urged developers to get physicians and patients involved early in the development

¹ A recent survey of American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) membership to get insight into on-the-ground experience. This is not scientifically based data, but rather a snapshot of members’ experience and perceptions. 94 physicians responded.

process to ensure that future technologies are:

- Evidence-based—Informed by science and in line with practice guidelines so patients are getting solid advice and information;
- Patient-friendly—not just easy to use but with built-in community and incentives that we know have the potential to support healthy behaviors; and,
- Interoperable—able to connect with office technology so that physicians can access data stay connected to patients.

“We hope today is just the start,” said Stream. “We would like to usher in a new era of collaboration between technology companies and physicians to ensure that we are developing technology that meets the needs of our patients and delivers on the promise of better care, better health, and lower costs.”

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About Health is Primary

Health is Primary is a communications campaign to advocate for the values of family medicine, demonstrate the benefits of primary care, and drive patient activation. The campaign will travel to cities around the country to engage local stakeholders and showcase community level interventions that are working to enhance and expand primary care and improve health. The campaign will partner with employers, disease groups and health advocates to activate patients around major health issues like chronic disease management and smoking cessation and advance the use of technology tools for patient engagement and communication.

About Family Medicine for America’s Health

Family Medicine for America’s Health, the organization behind Health is Primary, is a new collaboration between the nation’s eight leading family medicine organizations to drive continued improvement of the U.S. health care system and demonstrate the value of true primary care. We represent:

- American Academy of Family Physicians;
- American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation;
- American Board of Family Medicine;
- American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians;
- Association of Departments of Family Medicine;
- Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors
- North American Primary Care Research Group; and
- Society of Teachers of Family Medicine.

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