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Engaging patients through your website

There are increasing numbers of consumers using the Internet to search for health information and evaluate hospital services by reading patient comments regarding their experience with a hospital. As United States legislation mandates effectively using technology to directly engage people in their healthcare decisions and maintenance, websites are becoming an important conduit to not only provide details on what services are offered, but to also engage and communicate with customers in their or their family member's health. Hospitals need to design user-friendly websites that will empower patients and family members to be involved in their health care. A model will be presented that can be used to identify how well hospital websites are designed for engagement and other informational features. Hospitals can analyze features in their website that encourage patient interaction with their healthcare according to the levels of the model. Of the four levels identified in the model, website designs can range from "informing" to "collaborative". In addition an assessment tool based on the model will be presented that objectively measures the level of hospital website patient engagement. Along with this assessment tool, a process will be proposed to incorporate quality and community participation; these steps are used to continuously improve websites. Best practices and "do's and don'ts of website design" will conclude the presentation.

Biography

Kimberlee D Snyder is a Professor of Operations Management at Winona State University, Minnesota. Her research and publications center on areas of process and performance improvement and technology usage in Healthcare.

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