Patient access to their electronic health records: do patients and GPs think it’s a good idea?

Dr Sue Wells
FRNZCGP FNZCPHM
A/Prof Health Innovation & Quality Improvement
School of Population Health
University of Auckland
Outline

• Portals and National Health IT Policy
• Current status in NZ general practices
• Early results of Open Sesame Study
• Moving from innovation to adoption
A patient portal is a secure online site for consumers to access their personal health information & interact with their health providers
### Most common functions available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical Data types</th>
<th>Communications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical diagnoses</td>
<td>Messaging to doctor or practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medications</td>
<td>Request prescription refill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies and alerts</td>
<td>Request (or book) appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunizations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathology and Radiology results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical summary record</td>
<td><strong>Patient education material</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient care reminders</td>
<td>Condition specific information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record of visit time/dates</td>
<td>Links to patient–friendly credible websites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
National HIT KPIs for portals

Target by end 2014

10% of the PHO eligible population have accessed a self-care portal
90% of the PHO eligible population have a self-care portal available

NHIT policy.... roadmap but little hands-on
• Feb 2014 seven e-health ambassadors
• Sep 2014 PHO funding $3 million
• Mar 2015 Consumer campaign
A patient portal is an easy, safe and convenient way for you to manage more of your own health care.

Use your online portal to book appointments with your GP, request a repeat prescription, check lab results, see your health information and communicate more easily with your practice.

With a secure password, you can log in to your patient portal and manage it in your own time — 24 hours a day, seven days a week — from wherever you happen to be.

Ask your GP about patient portals or go to patientportal.co.nz for more information.
Guidance for health professionals

UK RCGP 2010

RNZCGP Dec 2014

RNZCGP/NHIT Apr 2015
Current status patient portals in NZ

- Technology available - most common GP practice management systems
- **2014** 35,000 patients/80 practices
- **2015** 75,000 patients/181 practices
- portal is now “available” to 30% enrolled population over 18yrs
In terms of diffusion of innovation....

Successful innovation = changing behaviour and culture

WE ARE HERE
Open Sesame Study  Sep 2013-Nov 2014
Patient access to primary care electronic medical records:
Patient and GP attitudes and expectations

Sue Wells, Karen Day, Ying Huang, Arohaina Nimmo, Faith Mahony
Part 1: Stakeholder views on NZ readiness for portals

• Qualitative study: 30 Semi-structured interviews  (Sep 2013- June 2014)
• primary care clinical and organisational leaders
• patient advocacy groups and consumer representatives for health IT policy or implementation
• developing or evaluating NZ Health IT policy
• implementing clinical data sharing projects in health care
Part 2: Patients and GPs: attitudes & expectations to electronic medical record access

- **Aim** - to survey a diverse range of patients being seen in primary care waiting rooms around Auckland region
- anonymous web-based or paper-based survey
  - adapted international questionnaires
- Invited: Auckland regional PHOs to participate
- Invited: UoA Student Health, WhiteCross A &M clinics
- Participants
  - 421 Adult patients (>18 years) in general practice waiting rooms
  - 83 GPs in practice or on-line
## Patient Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Patients N=421</th>
<th>N(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>(32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>(28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>(31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 and over</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>(66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ European/Other</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>(58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>(15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>(19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed/self employed</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>(49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>(9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed/on benefit</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>(18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>(7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
83 GPs

- Graduated between 1965-2009
- 53% women
- 80% NZ Euro, 17% Asian, 1% Maori, 1% Pacific
- 6/83 (7%) reported portal implemented in their practice
% Agreed/somewhat agreed with statements

- asked to see medical record: 81% (doctor) vs. 29% (patient)
- right to see medical record: 92% (doctor) vs. 77% (patient)

Legend: patient (green), doctor (blue)
% Agreed/somewhat agreed with statements

- **Good idea for patients to securely send/receive messages**: 53%
- **Like to securely send/receive messages my doc/practice**: 66%
- **Interested to see medical record**: 90%
- **Good idea to routinely see medical record**: 82%
- **Asked to see medical record**: 81%
- **Right to see medical record**: 92%

- **Patient**
- **Doctor**
Which parts would you want to see?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Patients said Yes</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Medical problems</td>
<td>247 (91%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medications</td>
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<td>Allergies</td>
<td>228 (84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunisations</td>
<td>244 (90%)</td>
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<td>Blood test results</td>
<td>262 (96%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xray/other test reports</td>
<td>252 (93%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports from hospital or other doctors</td>
<td>244 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation notes</td>
<td>226 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everything-all the record</td>
<td>209 (77%)</td>
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</table>
Which parts of EHR would you be comfortable for your patients to see?

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Patients said Yes</th>
<th>All GPs</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>16 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>209 (77%)</td>
<td>21 (27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Patients: Why would you like to see?

Sharing with other health professional, specialists. Hospital emergency treatment, emergency care during overseas travel.

I always forget the antibiotics I am allergic to.

To be able to remember issues that I need to keep an eye on as part of my own personal responsibility for my health.

I have epilepsy and they lost all records of it and they don't remember what to give me.

I might be able to help i.e see goal weight.

Just have the freedom to search for information about myself.
Why would you not like to look at your medical notes using the internet?

- **Don’t see a need**
  - I would seldom need to. If I did, I'm sure a nurse in my Dr's office would assist
  - I have no real reason to see them
  - Would prefer to go through my notes with my doctor (if necessary)
  - When there is a need I will see them otherwise I trust the doctor and specialist
  - I trust my doctor
Why would you not like to look at your medical notes using the internet?

**Security and Privacy**

- I am not confident in anyone's ability to keep info secure on the internet, doctors or anybody else.
- Cause anyone that knows you well could get into my record
- I feel insecure about having private information about me on any internet platform
- My major concerns are govt depts have been mishandling this information for years, where is the guarantee(sic) files online would be safe, in fact it gives more opportunity for information leaks
Patient and GP expectations –
Benefits and harms of patient e-access
for patients
Patient and doctors expectations benefits/harms for patients

- **Question for patients (421)**

### Part 2: How reading medical records might affect you

Imagine what it might be like to see your doctor’s medical records about you through a secure internet website as you answer these questions.

13. If I could read my doctor’s medical records about me, I would: (check all that apply)

- better understand my health and medical conditions
- remember the plan for my care
- better understand my doctor’s instructions
- be better at following my doctor’s recommendations
- take better care of myself
- be more likely to take my medications as prescribed
- feel more in control of my health care
- worry more
- be concerned about my privacy
Patient and doctors expectations benefits/harms for patients

• Question for doctors (83)

Part 2: How reading electronic medical records might affect your patients

11. If your general practice electronic medical records could be shared with adult patients via a secure Internet connection, I think the majority will: (tick all that you agree with)

☐ Better understand their health and medical conditions
☐ Better remember the plan for their care
☐ Be better at following my recommendations
☐ Worry more
☐ Disagree with what I write in their medical record and visit notes
☐ Request changes to the content of medical record and visit notes
☐ Take better care of themselves
☐ Be more likely to take medications as prescribed
☐ Find significant errors in the medical record of visit notes
☐ Feel more in control of their health care
### Harm
- Embarrassed by record: 22 Patient, 29 Doctor
- X-ray/test confusing: 15 Patient, 64 Doctor
- Record confusing: 15 Patient, 41 Doctor
- Privacy concerns: NA Patient, 40 Doctor
- Worry more: 17 Patient, 59 Doctor
- Request changes: NA Patient, 57 Doctor
- Contact doctor more: 23 Patient, 64 Doctor

### Other
- More satisfied: 23 Patient, 3 Patient
- Feel more reassured: 18 Patient, 35 Doctor
- Identify errors: 18 Patient, 35 Doctor
- Trust more: 18 Patient, 27 Doctor
- Better prepare visit: 39 Patient, 8 Doctor
- More in control: 42 Patient, 6 Doctor
- Take medication: 34 Patient, 41 Doctor
- Better self care: 22 Patient, 46 Doctor
- Better follow recommendation: 48 Patient, 49 Doctor
- Remember plan: 43 Patient, 64 Doctor
- Understand health condition: 52 Patient, 59 Doctor

### Benefit
- Patient
- Doctor

**Agree or somewhat agree (%)**

![Bar chart showing the percentage of agreement for various patient experiences related to healthcare records and appointments.](chart.png)
GP expectations – impact of patient e-access on GP work or their practice
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If my patients could access their medical records online...</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would document things differently</td>
<td>43 (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My workload would increase substantially</td>
<td>51 (69%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient appointments would take significantly longer</td>
<td>30 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will spend significantly more time addressing patient questions outside of appointments</td>
<td>54 (73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be less candid in my documentation</td>
<td>35 (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will order more tests and/or referrals</td>
<td>6 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will spend significantly more time writing/editing my notes</td>
<td>40 (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process measures (eg immunizations) will improve</td>
<td>12 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome measures (eg HbA1c) will improve</td>
<td>9 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical care will be delivered more efficiently</td>
<td>11 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient satisfaction will improve</td>
<td>22 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient care will be safer</td>
<td>20 (27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other predominant concerns

- Unknown quantity - unsure of benefits
- Status quo is already utterly unfriendly
- Workload
- Overload

- My notes - different purpose
- Confidential or sensitive information
- Expenses will increase, revenue decreases
- Portal licence expensive - ??business model
- Control over access to info

“At present I leave my rooms... at 7-7:30 at night - I see my last patient at 5 - I also do results during the day - Patients just don’t understand our work load”

“Sometimes patients interpret the medical notes in a different way than intended. I would be happy for them to read my notes if I could explain them as they read them”
Risk perception

“...while there may be some advantages for the majority, there would be a "significant minority" for whom this access will create all sorts of problems, both for the patient and the practice. In other words, the good will be outweighed by the bad. ....I am not in favour of it unless the access is very limited and able to be controlled by the practitioner.” GP survey respondent
“my recommendation.... is dip your toe in the water, register a couple of your favourites. Work out that the sky isn’t going to fall in, or the ground isn’t going to open up, feel comfortable and then start registering others.

....if you’ve got a handful of patients, you’ll probably get an email once every three months.

.....you register patient by patient...you’re in control of the pace.”  GP - 3yrs experience with portals in his practice
Summary

• NZ taking first steps towards e-access for patients
• Technology is here- some early adopters
• Central policy providing direction but “soft touch”
• Patients generally positive
  • 90% would like to view their own record
  • 66% like to view via portal
  • Might help them understand health conditions better
  • Not panacea towards better relationship with Doc/better health
  • Unsure of need for access or benefit
  • supportive of their doc and practice
  • Privacy, confidentiality

• GPs hesitant, 50:50
  • Will this help vs open floodgate of need
  • How do we charge? Patients willing to pay?
Strategies: going from innovation to adoption

• Engage- in a conversation about portals
• Not “all or nothing”- Start with what people want
• Start small- 1 practice, 1 patient, 1 function at a time...spread the learning
• Share/borrow openly
• Achieve consistency on things that are important
  • Technology meets HIS/ISO standards privacy, security, audit trails + patient input + governance
• Encourage- reward schemes, recognition (tax breaks!)
• Research/evaluate what works best
Thank you!