



Arab Health World

MAY2024

Doctor of the Month

Dr. Fadi EL Karak
Oncology Specialist

Hospital of the Month

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Center Beirut

RAND Corporation

Hospitals Charged Insurers %254
More Than Medicare

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For my Father ...

It's been one year and few months since you are gone. According to time in real life that's one year and five months but to me it feels like an eternity. I still wake up in the morning thinking this is a nightmare and you're not really gone. At night I look at you bed and check you are still sleeping there, I look at every corner in our house where you left me there alone at the cold. You know on daily bases I remember those thoughts we used to discuss at the balcony while we watch the sunset together, your small garden at the balcony where you used to sit every morning to have coffee is not anymore the same it was, it is surviving but still sad I did my best to let it live again but even plants have their own way to speak up and we can feel it, sadly they said their words with their lovely green color and delivered their message to me. At night, I look every day to the sky and make a wish on the brightest star I see and I believe it is you.

When I was young you told me we grieve for ourselves because the deceased are in a better place. As a man, I know that is true, but I still miss you terribly. For nine years I watched you endure horrific pain. I prayed and pleaded with God to heal you. Towards the end of your life, I was so angry that my prayers were not answered. You were not supposed to die unable to eat; it seemed like such a cruel death sentence for such a good man.

When you died my grief became so overwhelming and suffocating that on numerous occasions, I was convinced that I too was dying. My heart was so heavy and the pain was unbearable. You played a major role in my life and now you were gone. For my entire existence we spoke every single day, even when I was away in college or abroad That's 45 years of saying "I love you", 45 years of being a Daddy's boy, 45 years of feeling safe, 45 years pure, unconditional love. And now just like that you were gone.

Watching Mom mourn you is unbearable, there are times I'm certain I can hear the sounds of her heart breaking. I watched Mom selflessly care for you throughout your marriage, but with extra care the past 9 years. So much that it was not uncommon for you to shout to the doctors that you were alive because of Mom. As your health began to fail, Mom was the one breathing life into you each day. I will never forget how your eyes would light up with joy when Mom entered the room. You and Mom showed me what true, unconditional love looks like. Hearing the gut-wrenching sounds of Mom mourn you is a heartbreaking, agonizing experience.

Till we meet again, let your soul freely fly high and rest in haven.

Sincerely
Marwan Nammour





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Dr. Fadi EL Karak

Dr. El Karak is a medical doctor specialized in Hematology and Medical Oncology from Saint-Joseph University of Beirut from which he holds a Masters in Science. He is also a holder of a Masters in Clinical Development of Products of Health from the (CDU) Claude BERNARD University in France.

Dr. El Karak has performed a fellowship at Léon BERARD Cancer Center in Lyon-FRANCE and at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School in Boston. USA. He has authored and co-authored over 100 publications in leading international journals.

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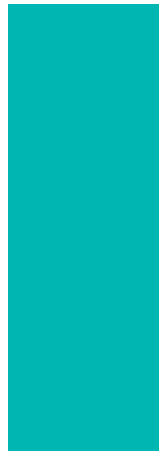
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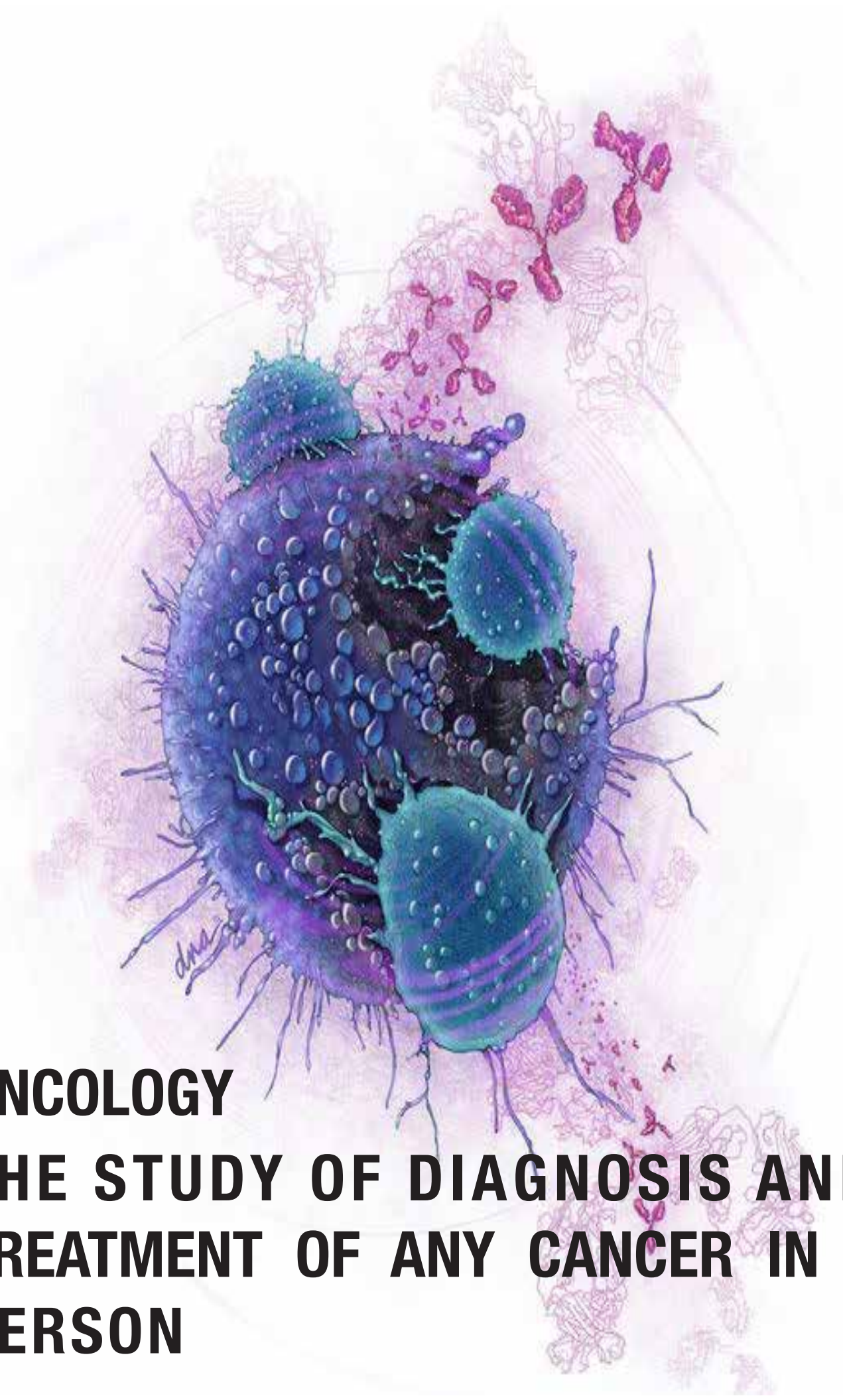
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THE STUDY OF DIAGNOSIS AND
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Experts Decry Low Reporting Of Lung Cancer in Sub Saharan Africa

The burden of lung cancer is huge and grossly underreported in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa, a medical expert, Prof. Kelechi Okonta, has said.

Professor Okonta who is a consultant cardiothoracic surgeon, and public health expert at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, Rivers State, Nigeria, said to this end, many people are suffering from lung cancer and hardly know because of lack of awareness and proper diagnosis.

He disclosed this while delivering a lecture titled “Epidemiological Molecular Characteristics and Challenges with the Management of Lung Cancer:

An Inquisitive Look at Nigeria and Sub Saharan Africa” at the Princess Margaret Cancer centre, Prosserman Centre for Health Research, Mount Sinai Hospital at the University of Toronto, Canada.

He was the first African to be invited and given such a privilege by the institution to deliver a lecture on lung cancer. Thus clearly identifying Prof. Okonta’s expertise in the area of lung cancer research in the world.

Prof. Okonta said poor reportage of lung cancer in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa poses a serious challenge to the health system of the region.

He said lung cancer in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa is being underreported because of poor and lack of data and inaccurate recording in the system.

He said the lack of a lung cancer registry in Nigeria poses a big problem in creating lung cancer awareness in the country.

Professor Okonta, who is also the Head of the Department of Surgery, University of Port-Harcourt Teaching Hospital, Choba, Rivers State, said lung cancer risk is higher in Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infected populations than in general populations, and it is most common in non acquired immunodeficiency syndrome deficiency malignancy, poor diagnostic and diagnostic facilities.

He also stated that lung cancer has a consistent association with cigarette smoking but noted that most of the patients with lung cancer in our environment are non-smokers, giving credence to the fact that other carcinogens possible from the inhalation of petroleum products may be implicated. He added that polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon compounds present in tobacco and petroleum products cause lung cancer.

“Various chemical products in refineries can cause cancer following prolonged exposure to some of the emitted carcinogens.”

He further said that increased refinery activities, urban dwellers’ pollution, and occupational and environmental activities increase the risk of lung cancer in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa.

The host, Prof. Geoffrey Liu, in his opening statement stated how Prof. Okonta was selected all the way from Pretoria, South Africa, following his extensive publications in the area of lung cancer. He further stated that he was looking forward to collaborating with Prof. Okonta and their institution in the area of lung cancer.

RAND: Hospitals Charged Insurers 254% More Than Medicare Rates In 2022



RAND Corporation's newest report has similar findings as earlier iterations reviewing 2020 and 2018 differences. The gap between insurance plans and Medicare's payments to hospitals for inpatient and outpatient services widened over the course of just a couple of years, a new study from RAND Corporation finds. In 2022, employers and private insurers paid hospitals on average 254% of what Medicare would have paid for the same care services, a jump from 224% in 2020. There was a 247% difference back in 2018. The report found there is significant variation by state. Some states, California, Florida, Georgia, New York, South Carolina, West Virginia and Wisconsin had prices that exceeded 300%, while states like Arkansas, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan and Mississippi had prices below 200% of Medicare. "The utility of this work is that it gives employers important tools they can use to become better-informed purchasers of

health care services," said Peter S. Hussey, director of RAND Health Care, in a statement. "Hospitals account for the largest share of health care spending in the U.S. so this report also provides valuable information that may aid policymakers interested in curbing healthcare costs."

RAND: Private plans paid hospitals 224% more than Medicare rates. Even though hospitals and insurers are required to post transparent pricing data, some hospitals still don't comply with regulation and insurers have been known to post duplicative data.

"The widely varying prices among hospitals suggests that employers have opportunities to redesign their health plans to better align hospital prices with the value of care provided," said Brian Briscoe, who currently leads the RAND hospital price transparency project, in a statement. "However, price transparency alone will not lead to changes if employers do not or cannot act upon price

information.”

Insurance prices for certain prescription drugs surpassed 278% of average sales price and 106% of average sales price paid by Medicare, according to the news release. Hospital, payer price transparency compliance improves, but new requirements are kicking in this year.

The American Hospital Association (AHA) disputed much of the report, saying it only looks at less than 2% of overall hospital spending and offers a “skewed and incomplete picture,” said Molly Smith, group vice president for the AHA, in a statement.

“In benchmarking against woefully inadequate Medicare payments, RAND makes an apples-to-oranges comparison that presents an inflated impression of what hospitals are actually getting paid for delivering care while facing continued financial and other operational challenges” she said. “In addition to the ongoing flaw of relying on a self-selected sample of data, their analysis is suspiciously silent on the hidden influence of commercial insurers in driving up health care costs for patients, as evidenced by issues like the recent concerning allegations against MultiPlan.” Lawsuits in recent weeks from health systems have alleged Multiplan has anticompetitive business practices.

Researchers based their analysis on the healthcare claims from self-insured employers, 12 states’ all-payer claims databases for insurers that chose to participate—though this accounts for just 6% of the country’s commercial insurance



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hospital spend. The data extended to more than 4,000 U.S. hospitals in every state but Maryland.

The researchers attributed variation in rates hospitals were able to demand to their market power, rather than their Medicare or Medicaid patient share.





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Oncology Care Partners' digital transformation: AI, CDS & Virtual Care



The group practice's SVP of digital health reveals how she and her team have created new care models, integrated artificial intelligence enabled clinical decision support and used other emerging technologies to power better care journeys.

By Bill Siwicki May 08, 2024

Dr. Chevon Rariy is digitally transforming oncology care at her practice with virtual care, artificial intelligence-powered clinical decision support and other technologies, in part via an AI app called Marigold.

Rariy is chief health officer and senior vice president of digital health at Oncology Care Partners, an oncology group practice centered on value-based care. There she is tasked with designing oncology delivery systems for both virtual and in-person care models.

Rariy is board certified in internal medicine and endocrinology, and is fellowship trained in clinical research at Harvard Medical School's Brigham & Women's Hospital and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, with a medical degree from Harvard.

She serves on several nonprofit and private boards that support the advancement of digital health, technology and equity, and is an advisory council member at the American Telemedicine Association.

Previously, she led clinical strategy at

Amazon Care and served as vice president for enterprise virtual health at Cancer Treatment Centers of America (now City of Hope), where she led the team into digital health adoption in oncology.

Healthcare IT News spoke with Rariy to discuss how she has designed and used virtual care models for oncology systems, where the integration of AI comes in, the overarching strategy of digital transform, and the kinds of emerging technologies she is using to create better care journeys for the cancer patients Oncology Care Partners treats.

Q.You have designed virtual care models for oncology systems. Please talk a bit about how you went about designing them, and how you've used them in patient care?.

A.Designing virtual care models for onco systems requires a comprehensive approach that combines patient-centric care principles with cutting-edge technology. Initially, we embarked on an in-depth analysis of the existing landscape, delving into patient journeys and care evi

gaps, treatment protocols, and healthcare provider and care team workflows.

Collaborating closely with patients, oncologists, nurses and technology experts, we pinpoint key pain points and opportunities for innovation. This process ensures our virtual care models are tailored to the unique needs of oncology patients, addressing challenges such as transport barriers, symptom management and psychosocial support.

Once the design phase is complete, we focus on seamless integration and implementation of these virtual care models into clinical practice. This involves rigorous testing, iterations and collaboration to ensure efficiency, security and user-friendliness.

Our virtual oncology systems facilitate remote consultations, real-time symptom monitoring and access to educational resources, empowering patients to actively engage in their care journey. By fostering stronger connections between patients and their healthcare teams, we aim to improve treatment adherence, enhance quality of life, and, ultimately, achieve better clinical outcomes.

In patient care, these virtual care models serve as a lifeline for oncology patients, creating an ability to obtain psychosocial support. Patients can conveniently access their care teams for symptom management, participation in care planning and timely psychosocial support, addressing barriers to care all from the comfort of home.

Also, our virtual platforms facilitate multi-disciplinary collaboration among the healthcare providers, ensuring comprehensive and coordinated care delivery.

By leveraging technology to bridge gaps in care, we strive to revolutionize oncology care, making it more accessible, efficient and patient-centered.

Q. Where are you integrating artificial intelligence into the practice of oncology, and how does the AI work to improve care?

A. Clinical decision support systems powered by AI analyze patient data, including medical history, genetic info and treatment outcomes, to provide evidence-based recommendations for



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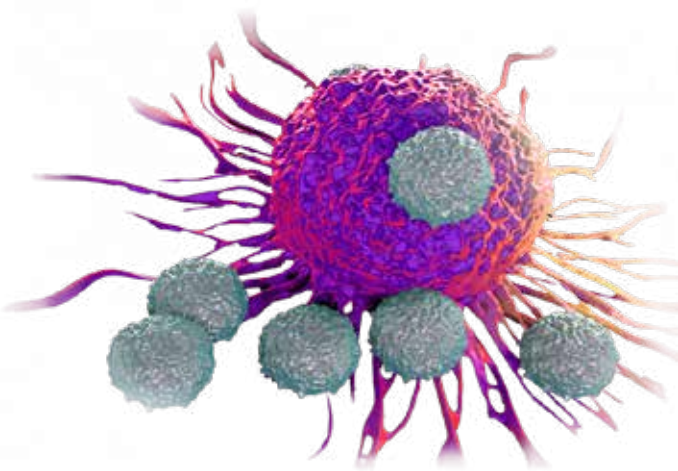
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These tools assist oncologists in navigating complex decision-making processes by offering insights into optimal treatment pathways tailored to individual patient profiles. By synthesizing vast amounts of clinical and genomic data, AI can identify patterns and correlations that may not be apparent to human clinicians, leading to more accurate diagnoses, treatment selection and prognostic assessments.

By leveraging patient engagement tools that are AI-driven and individualized, we are transforming the way oncology care is delivered by dynamically adjusting interventions based on patient responses. This patient-centered approach fosters greater engagement and empowerment, enabling patients to play an active role in their care.

Q. How are you using the strategy of digital transformation to enhance oncology care?

A. Digital transformation in oncology is not solely about harnessing technology to enhance care; it also entails adopting human-centered design principles.

Oncology practices can enhance efficiency, communication and patient satisfaction, ultimately improving outcomes for individuals affected by cancer.

By prioritizing the needs and experiences of patients and healthcare providers, digital transformation aims to streamline processes, facilitate communication and empower patients in their care journey.

Furthermore, digital transformation facilitates patient enablement and empowerment by providing patients with

greater access to information and resources. Q. What kinds of emerging technologies are you using to create better care journeys for the cancer patients Oncology Care Partners treats? And how are you deploying them?

A. Oncology Care Partners is leveraging a variety of emerging technologies to create better care journeys for cancer patients. Moreover, digital innovations like telemedicine platforms and remote monitoring solutions broaden the scope of oncology care, extending support beyond conventional clinic environments and allowing patients to receive continuous support regardless of their location throughout their wellness journey.

Telemedicine platforms enable convenient virtual consultations, reducing barriers to accessing specialized care and empowering patients to actively participate in their treatment plans.

Remote monitoring solutions allow patients to track their symptoms and even vital signs from home, fostering a sense of control and engagement in their care. We couple that with escalations to multi-disciplinary care teams to ensure proactive, timely intervention.

Additionally, through the implementation of unique electronic health record systems for instance, oncologists gain access to comprehensive patient data, enabling more informed decision-making and seamless care coordination.

Clinical decision support tools are available at the point of care. We also leverage interoperable technology features and care platforms into our care delivery model, we aim to improve coordination, enhancing communication among healthcare providers, and ultimately provide cancer patients with more personalized and integrated care experiences.

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Healthcare Asset Tracking Makes Transformative Impact On Patient Safety And Operations



The integration of asset tracking systems in healthcare is more than a logistical enhancement – it is a crucial component in the overarching framework of patient safety.

Charlie Green | May 13, 2024

In healthcare facilities, ensuring patient safety is a top priority. A significant but frequently overlooked aspect of this is the management of medical equipment and the repercussions mismanagement can have.

This article investigates how purposeful and highly optimized asset tracking extends beyond simple logistical roles to become integral to improving patient care and safety, as well as many additional benefits to healthcare organizations.

The vital role of asset tracking in healthcare

Asset tracking in healthcare entails sophisticated technological systems to oversee the precise location, operational status, and readiness of medical apparatus. This includes a spectrum of instruments from rudimentary tools like scalpels and syringes to critical, life-sustaining devices such as ventilators and defibrillators. The overarching objective is to guarantee that

essential equipment is readily accessible, in optimal working condition, and safe for use whenever required. So, what are the primary benefits healthcare organizations can expect to receive through optimized and organized asset tracking?

Assistance with managing continuous budgetary constraints

The NHS, like many healthcare systems, faces escalating costs driven by an ageing population, the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases, and rising prices of medical technologies. In this environment, finding areas where operational efficiency can be enhanced without compromising patient care is paramount. Asset tracking systems stand out as a solution that can deliver substantial cost savings while simultaneously boosting the quality of care. Lost or mismanaged assets represent a substantial financial drain for healthcare

organizations. A study conducted by Nursing Times revealed that the NHS could save up to £1 billion annually through management of medical equipments.

Misplaced items not only need to be replaced, costing healthcare providers considerable sums, but also lead to operational inefficiencies and increased expenditures on urgent replacements and rentals.

For example, an audit in an NHS trust identified that approximately 10 per cent of assets were lost or stolen, leading to unnecessary and repetitive capital expenditure that could have been avoided with robust asset tracking protocols. Furthermore, a report by the Department of Health estimated that the NHS spends around £300 million each year just on locating and maintaining equipment a sum that could be markedly reduced through improved tracking systems.

Asset tracking technologies such as RFID and IoT-enabled devices provide real-time data on the location, status, and maintenance needs of medical equipment. This capability not only ensures that medical devices are used efficiently but also extends their lifespan through timely maintenance, thus deferring the need for costly replacements.

For instance, automated alerts about service requirements and usage patterns help manage device wear and tear proactively.

Enhancing patient safety through reliable equipment management

Optimal functioning of medical equipment, crucial for patient safety, necessitates meticulous maintenance and regular updates. Asset tracking systems play a critical role by automatically notifying healthcare staff when equipment needs servicing or replacement, thereby mitigating risks of malfunctions that could compromise patient health.

The integration of Radio Frequency Identification technology, for example, facilitates real-time surveillance of device conditions and operational patterns. This proactive stance not only prolongs the lifecycle of medical instruments but also ensures their reliability in exigent clinical

scenarios, according to studies published in journals like Healthcare Management Science. This advanced approach supports healthcare facilities in maintaining continuous operational readiness and enhances the overall safety environment.

Reducing errors in surgical settings

Surgical accuracy hinges critically on the availability and readiness of sterile instruments. Advanced asset tracking systems ensure this by meticulously overseeing sterilization processes and tool readiness, significantly lowering the risk of infections and procedural anomalies. According to research conducted at a Boston hospital, the deployment of an automated tracking system reduced delays related to surgical instruments by 35 per cent. This decrease in delays is instrumental in minimizing risks associated with prolonged waiting and errors in instrument setup.

Further, these technologies enhance operational efficiencies, allowing surgical teams to focus more on patient care rather than logistical concerns, thereby elevating the overall safety and success rates of surgical procedures.

Optimizing emergency response with precision asset tracking

In emergencies, the swift availability of operational medical equipment is vital. Asset tracking systems enhance hospital emergency responses by facilitating the rapid location and deployment of necessary equipment.

For instance, in cardiac emergencies, the prompt availability of a functional defibrillator can be lifesaving. Asset tracking ensures these critical devices are not only immediately accessible but maintained in optimal condition, thus crucially impacting life-saving intervention and improving survival rates during critical care situations. This efficiency in equipment management directly correlates with improved patient outcome in emergency scenarios.

Conclusion

The integration of asset tracking systems in healthcare is more than a logistical enhancement-it is a crucial component in the overarching framework of patient safety.

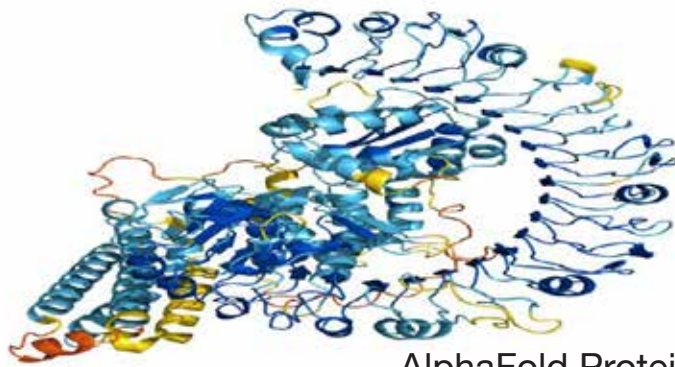
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Researchers wrestle with accuracy of AI technology used to create new drug candidates



AlphaFold Protein Structure Database

Artificial intelligence (AI) has numerous applications in healthcare, from analyzing medical imaging to optimizing the execution of clinical trials, and even facilitating drug discovery.

AlphaFold2, an artificial intelligence system that predicts protein structures, has made it possible for scientists to identify and conjure an almost infinite number of drug candidates for the treatment of neuropsychiatric disorders. However recent studies have sown doubt about the accuracy of AlphaFold2 in modeling ligand binding sites, the areas on proteins where drugs attach and begin signaling inside cells to cause a therapeutic effect, as well as possible side effects.

In a new paper, Bryan Roth, MD, PhD, the Michael Hooker Distinguished Professor of Pharmacology and director of the NIMH Psychoactive Drug Screening Program at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, and colleagues at UCSF, Stanford and Harvard determined that AlphaFold2 can yield accurate results for ligand binding structures, even when the technology has nothing to go off of. Their results were published in science.

“Our results suggest that AF2 structures can be useful for drug discovery,” said Roth, senior author who holds a joint appointment at the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy. “With a nearly infinite

number of possibilities to create drugs that hit their intended target to treat a disease, this sort of AI tool can be invaluable.”

AlphaFold2 and Prospective Modeling

Much like weather forecasting or stock market prediction, AlphaFold2 works by pulling from a massive database of known proteins to create models of protein structures. Then, it can simulate how different molecular compounds (like drug candidates) fit into the protein’s binding sites and produce wanted effects.

Researchers can use the resulting combinations to better understand protein interactions and create new drug candidates.

To determine the accuracy of AlphaFold2, researchers had to compare the results of a retrospective study against that of a prospective study. A retrospective study involves researchers feeding the prediction software compounds they already know bind to the receptor.

Whereas, a prospective study requires researchers to use the technology as a fresh slate, and then feed the AI platform information about compounds that may or may not interact with the receptor. Researchers used two proteins, sigma-2 and 5-HT2A, for the study. These proteins, which belong to two different protein families, are important in cell communication and have been implicated

in neuropsychiatric conditions such as Alzheimer's disease and schizophrenia. The 5-HT2A serotonin receptor is also the main target for psychedelic drugs which show promise for treating a large number of neuropsychiatric disorders.

Roth and colleagues selected these proteins because AlphaFold2 had no prior information about sigma-2 and 5-HT2A or the compounds that might bind to them. Essentially, the technology was given two proteins for which it wasn't trained on essentially giving the researchers a "blank slate."

First, researchers fed the AlphaFold system the protein structures for sigma-2 and 5-HT2A, creating a prediction model. Researchers then accessed physical models of the two proteins that were produced using complex microscopy and x-ray crystallography techniques. With a press of a button, as many as 1.6 billion potential drugs were targeted to the experimental models and AlphaFold2 models. Interestingly, every model had a different drug candidate outcome.

Successful Hit Rates

Despite the models having differing results, they show great promise for drug discovery. Researchers determined that the proportion of compounds that actually altered protein activity for each of the models were around 50% and 20% for the sigma-2 receptor and 5-HT2A receptors, respectively. A result greater than 5% is exceptional.

Out of the hundreds of millions of potential combinations, 54% of the drug-protein interactions using the sigma-2 AlphaFold2 protein models were successfully activated through a bound drug candidate. The experimental model for sigma-2 produced similar results with a success rate of 51%.

"This work would be impossible without collaborations among several leading experts at UCSF, Stanford, Harvard, and UNC-Chapel Hill," Roth said. "Going forward we will test whether these results might be applicable to other therapeutic targets and target classes."

Source:

University of North Carolina Health Care

BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM AND ALPHA PHARMA COLLABORATE TO LOCALIZE PRODUCTION OF ONE OF ITS TYPE 2 DIABETES MEDICINES IN SAUDI ARABIA

Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,

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⁴For 12 hours compared to Biotrue Multi-Purpose Solution, based on a laboratory study.

⁵Data on file, Bausch & Lomb Incorporated, Rochester, NY.

⁶Standardized Testing (ISO 14729) against *S. aureus*, *P. aeruginosa*, *S. marcescens*, *C. albicans*, *F. solani*.

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BAUSCH + LOMB

Boehringer Ingelheim and Alpha Pharma Collaborate to localize the production of one of its Type 2 Diabetes Medicines in Saudi Arabia



•Patients in Saudi Arabia will be able to access one of Boehringer Ingelheim 's prominent type 2 diabetes medicines,manufactured by Alpha Pharma in Saudi Arabia.

•Boehringer Ingelheim is driving localization capacities with robust partnerships in alignment with Vision 2030.

•Knowledge and technology transfers are paramount to Boehringer Ingelheim's expansion in Saudi ArabiaJeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Thu, 02/08/2024

Under the patronage of the Local Content and Government Procurement Authority, Boehringer Ingelheim, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, announced today the successful transfer of manufacturing operations of one of its innovative medicines for the treatment of type 2 diabetes to Alpha Pharma in Saudi Arabia. This announcement follows Boehringer's 2023 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Investment, focusing on boosting cooperation in pharmaceutical localization and knowledge transfer to enhance the health of communities in the Kingdom. The collaboration with the leading Saudi pharmaceutical manufacturer, Alpha Pharma, aims to combat type 2 diabetes in the Kingdom and is fully aligned with the Kingdom's Vision 2030 pillars. The announcement was formalized through a signing ceremony that took place in Jeddah with the presence of key representatives from the Ministry of Investment, the Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources and National center for Industrial development, the Local Content and Government Procurement Authority, in addition to leadership figures from Alpha Pharma and Boehringer Ingelheim. The medicine is used in the treatment of type 2 diabetes. As a research driven company that believes in partnering for success, this collaboration reinforces Boehringer Ingelheim's commitment to patient-centricity in Saudi Arabia where it takes a holistic view of the broader therapeutic needs in the field of interconnected cardio-renal-metabolic conditions, including type 2 diabetes. The partnership between Boehringer Ingelheim and Alpha Pharma underscores the crucial role of a collaborative approach

in improving treatment outcomes for patients and contributing to a healthier community.

Waleed Mashak, General Manager and Head of Human Pharma at Boehringer Ingelheim said:

"Today marks a momentous occasion for both our company and Alpha Pharma as we stride forward in our journey of improving human health across the Kingdom. Aligned with Vision 2030 and Boehringer Ingelheim's objectives, today's announcement reflects our ongoing commitment to drive focused investments towards local manufacturing and bring cutting-edge medications to Saudi patients." Mashak added: "transferring the production of our treatment to Saudi Arabia also means integrating Saudi talent further into the pharmaceutical industry, driving greater impact and building on our belief of partnering for success."

Shaikh Yaser Al Naghi, Chairman of Alpha Pharma and Group CEO of Cigalah Healthcare said:

"I am proud of the collaboration that Alpha Pharma has established with Boehringer Ingelheim. Localizing the manufacturing of an innovative medication by a leading global pharmaceutical firm marks an important milestone in our commitment to advancing healthcare accessibility in Saudi Arabia. By bringing the type 2 diabetes medication directly to patients in Saudi Arabia, we reinforce our dedication to improving health outcomes in the Kingdom.

Boehringer Ingelheim's presence in Saudi Arabia dates back to the 1970s. As a research-driven company that develops breakthrough therapies to transform lives, the company is steadfast in its mission to build on its legacy and s Providing support in the field of cardio-renal metabolic diseases, including type 2 diabetes.



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Maximizing Your Chances Of Pregnanc Ovulation Induction Strategies”

Before pregnancy can occur, the egg cell must mature and be released from the ovary to the fallopian tube. This moment is called ovulation. Ovulation usually happens in the middle of the menstrual cycle.

If the cycle is 28 days long, ovulation occurs on the 14th day. The menstrual cycle is a susceptible system.

It is regulated by the hypothalamus (CNS) and pituitary gland. It can be disturbed easily and end up in anovulation, For example, stress, changes in body weight, and too short a night’s sleep can cause anovulation.

Women with Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) often suffer from infertility due to irregular ovulation.

It might also be that a woman has regular periods; everything seems normal, but pregnancy has not started after trying for some time. When the cause of infertility is unknown, ovulation induction is often used as the first treatment option since it can help develop follicles and ovulation.

The principle of ovulation induction is to enhance ovulation by stimulating the ovaries with medication to produce one follicle and one mature egg per cycle. Medication can be administered as tablets or injections under the skin.

Currently, letrozole is the primary oral medication used for inducing ovulation. Tablets are taken once a day for five days, shortly after a menstrual cycle begins.

Ovulation

Common Signs



Letrozole is an aromatase inhibitor. It is also used to treat certain types of breast cancer in women after menopause. When Letrozole blocks the activity of aromatase, it causes a decrease in estradiol levels. This leads to the release of the hypothalamic/pituitary axis from estrogenic negative feedback, which increases FSH secretion and stimulates ovarian follicle growth. Gonadotropin injections are necessary if tablet treatments do not work or if pituitary hormones are secreted too little. The progress of the ovulation induction is monitored with ultrasound examination (the number and size of the follicles and the thickness of the endometrium) and measuring the progesterone level a week after assumed ovulation. Follow-up

improves the chance of getting pregnant and reduces possible risk factors (multiple pregnancy). For the treatment to be successful, intercourse must be timed near the time of ovulation. A urine ovulation test (LH test) sold at a pharmacy can be used to help with timing.

The chance of pregnancy with ovulation induction is around 10-15% per cycle. By using the medication for several cycles, the probability of pregnancy increases. Other therapies should be considered if pregnancy is not achieved within 4–6 cycles.

Dr. Heli Efendi, Consultant

Syntegon At Achema: A new Approach To Liquid Pharmaceutical Processing



At Achema, Syntegon showcases its comprehensive expertise in the flexible processing of liquid pharmaceuticals. In addition to an advanced filling machine, an expanded inspection system, process and assembly solutions and comprehensive service offerings will be on display.

“Regulations such as Annex 1, high-value drugs, and the increasing use of RTU containers require highly efficient technologies along the entire value chain,” explains Tobias Göttler, Director Product Management Pharma Liquid at Syntegon. “With innovative solutions, extended functions for proven systems, and new services, we enable pharmaceutical manufacturers to produce sensitive drugs according to the most recent requirements of the pharmaceutical industry.”

ALF 5000 V: highly precise filling technology

Syntegon demonstrates how this can be achieved with the ALF 5000 V for the

precise and gentle filling of small volume small-volume parenterals. “When filling high-priced products such as blood plasma derivatives, the focus is on high yields, minimal product loss, and precise filling processes,” Göttler emphasizes. “The consistent further development of our successful platform fulfills these requirements with new functionalities.” Syntegon’s ALF 5000 V is a flexible solution that enables pharmaceutical manufacturers to combine two filling systems on one platform. While the time-pressure filling system is suitable for large quantities, the peristaltic pump with up to twelve filling stations enables gentle product handling and precise dosing of very small batches. Thanks to the optional twin fill process from the new “Max Pro” portfolio, the filling weight can be optimally determined and readjusted via main and secondary dosing with 100% in-process control at any time.

Hot topic RTU: comprehensive expertise

Ready-to-use (RTU) containers are very popular for both small batches and high-performance lines. Visitors can gain insights into Syntegon's comprehensive technological and pharmaceutical expertise in the "RTU Open Space" at the booth. In addition to virtual presentations of the Versynta portfolio for small and micro batches, the experts from Syntegon will offer comprehensive advice on all aspects of RTU containers – from Annex 1 compliance and filling with 100% IPC to the use of gloveless barrier technologies.

AIM5: first-class inspection

After filling, the highly precise inspection of products and containers ensures product quality. "With the AIM series, Syntegon has been setting standards in the flexible inspection of vials, syringes, cartridges, and ampoules for decades as is proven by several hundred machines installed worldwide," says Göttler.

At Achema, the company demonstrates live for the first time how visual inspection and leak detection (CCIT) can be efficiently combined on a space-saving AIM5 for vials. The machine on display features a combination of a pre-rotation tower and camera technology for visual inspection of liquid and lyophilized products as well as a state-of-the-art measuring sensor in the star wheel for oxygen measurement.

RMA assembly machine: flexible assembly of small batches

Pens and autoinjectors play a key role in antidiabetics and weight management products. They can be precisely assembled thanks to the new RMA from Syntegon. This space-saving, semi-automatic assembly machine for clinical trials and small batches was developed by Syntegon in close cooperation with customers. The system supports pharmaceutical manufacturers in determining the properties of their drug delivery systems and assembling them in accordance with regulatory standards. The RMA follows Syntegon's design philosophy on scalability, offering customers a seamless and easy transition to machines with higher outputs when increasing capacity for a market launch.

Annex 1-compliant thanks to new services

Compliance with regulatory standards is also the focus of Syntegon's service offerings. In addition to the successful RABS retrofits for existing equipment, the patented Settle Plate Changer SPC 1000 has recently been added to the portfolio "Viable monitoring has become even more important when filling sterile products in the context of EU GMP Annex 1" says Steffen Gröber, Global Product Manager Service at Syntegon. "Settle plates may be exposed to cleanroom air for a maximum of four hours and must then be replaced, The new automatic settle plate changer significantly reduces manual operator intervention to replace the plates.

This greatly decreases the necessary production interruptions and the negative impact on machine availability." The SPC 1000, which is available for both existing and new machines, fulfills a further requirement of Annex 1, reducing human intervention in the process zone and the risk of contamination to a minimum.

Comprehensive expertise for liquid pharmaceutical processing

Visitors to the Syntegon booth can also obtain advice on customer and pharma services. These include, for example, service agreements, the cloud-based software solution Synexio, as well as qualification and validation services. With its broad portfolio, Syntegon covers all steps in the production of liquid pharmaceuticals, including a new bioprocessing system and formulation systems for small-volume parenterals from the subsidiary Pharmatec as well as freeze dryers with a patented loading and unloading concept from Schoeller Bleckmann Medizintechnik (SBM).





FlexiTab XL

This single station tablet press machine with enhanced DAQ software is designed for R&D and galenics. As a single punch machine, the FlexiTab XL is ideal for early stage tablet development, clinical trial batches, the screening of powders or granules for subsequent product development.

The assessment of multi-layer drug dosing and characterization of powder properties. A large range of tablet and oblong shapes can be produced creating many layers, using up to three APIs. The tablet press formulator can manually or automatically sequence tablet production.

TPR 200

TPR 200 is a highly flexible and robust rotary tablet press for both R&D and small to medium size production batches. Thanks to a small footprint, this highly efficient tablet compression machine is economic and very compact. It is capable of producing approx. 230,000 tablets per hour, including bi-layer tablets with a set of conversion parts. The tablet press machine is easy to operate and to clean. Its range of functions is optimized to suit all tablet manufacturers who want to improve their (OEE) Overall Equipment Effectiveness.



SYNTEGON

<https://www.syntegon.com>



TPR 500

This highly flexible tablet press for medium and large production batches is the optimal solution for high productivity and quality combined with excellent usability. Reduced maintenance and cleaning efforts thanks to its hygienic design, as well as fast and easy change overs enable you to better focus on production.

The **TPR500** provides high output and yield capabilities at an excellent price-performance ratio. With a 56 station die table, this tablet compression machine can produce up to 403,200 tablets per hour with standard tooling on a very small footprint. Our integrated die technology enables you to produce up to 16 mm tablets.

TPR 700

The TPR 700 is the largest tablet press of the TPR machine series and capable of producing more than a million tablets per hour. This highly flexible tablet press machine is suited for a wide range of compressible products including pharmaceutical, confectionery (mints), nutraceutical (vitamins), medicated lozenges and non-pharmaceutical materials. The high speed, double-sided press features the latest technological advances in hardware and software. It can also produce bi-layer tablets with a set of conversion parts. Reduced width corner pillars provide excellent access to the production area. When using the exchangeable turret option of this tablet press, you can achieve an even wider range of tablet sizes and outputs.



Healthcare of the future underpinned by innovation



The pandemic has shown us that health care demands can rapidly accelerate advancements in the industry. At a time of surging demand and cost-control pressure facing healthcare providers, the industry is undergoing a transformation made possible by technologies and innovation that are redefining healthcare for the future.

Hospital entities have begun to reevaluate their healthcare preparedness and how their healthcare systems work.

The pandemic has highlighted that hospital infrastructure has not been built to sustain a large influx of patients for a long time, and this is a prominent concern today for healthcare providers.

According to the (WHO)World Health Organization, it is projected that the proportion of the world's population over 60 will nearly double from 12 per cent to more than 22 per cent over the next 30 years, which means that the industry is going to be further strained. There will be a larger population of people with chronic diseases going to hospitals for treatment. This type of demand is going to force hospitals to be more productive, more efficient, and make the best use of their resources and care settings.

Operational excellence is going to hold core importance for the entire healthcare ecosystem.

Additionally, the healthcare sector in the MENA region is witnessing a phase of significant growth due to increased demand for healthcare services. A report suggests that the MENA region's health care market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.7 per cent from US\$185.5 billion in 2019 to US\$243.6 billion in 2023.

Already, there is a trend where patients, taxpayers and insurance companies are demanding improved efficiencies at hospitals to reduce costs and wait times across the healthcare landscape. Hospitals are seeking ways to eliminate redundant tasks, minimise wasted resources and streamline processes to become more effective in their delivery.

Today's hospitals were built for episodic, acute situations for a short amount of time. Hospital leaders are now realising they need to adjust to providing long-term care for chronic diseases.

Hospital stays for many complex diseases now require longer treatment, especially specialist elderly care where demand is set to soar in the next 30 years. This approach

is not sustainable due to limited bed availability and shortages of nurses and doctors. Unsurprisingly, there is a significant trend to move certain care and therapies from the acute hospital setting to less acute point-of-care, closer to the doctor's offices and in some cases, to the homes.

To enable and facilitate this substantial migration to the home, novel technologies will be necessary. This is where technology companies come into play that can enable healthcare providers to make that transition from the hospital to the home or the point of care.

As we look into the future, we can expect hospitals to increasingly utilize more remote therapy, remote patient monitoring and real-time information gathered from outside the four hospital walls, which will eliminate the need for patients to be at hospitals as often.

Streamlining the process for providers to effectively deliver patient care in this way will help to increase provider satisfaction and reduce the amount of non-value added work on their plates.

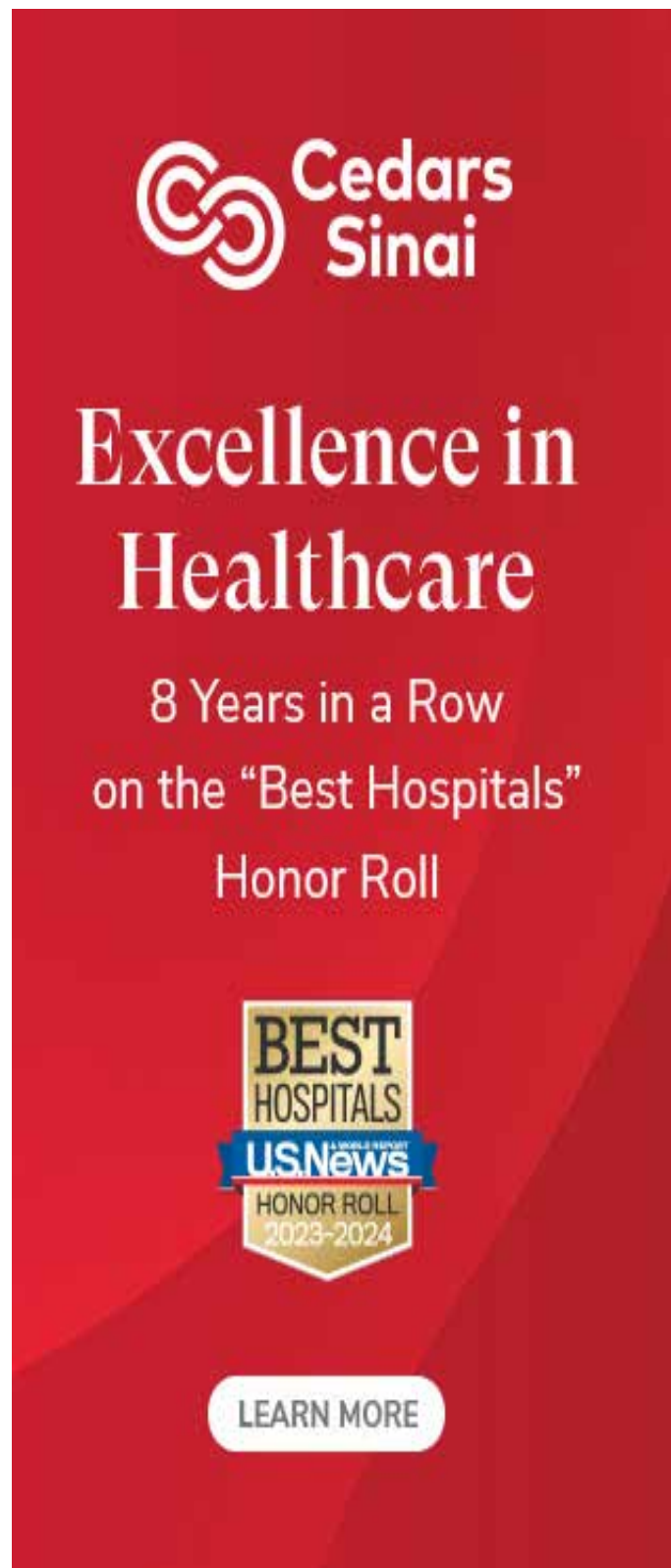
Overcoming mental barriers to change and training hospital professionals on new processes will be a critical challenge to overcome for the industry. This is one area where innovative technology has a significant opportunity to bring about efficiencies and cost reductions. In the coming years, we expect more hospitals to adopt advanced technologies that will help digitalise the patient care ecosystem and plug the gaps to ensure effective and efficient care delivery. Accordingly, digital health centres and real-time monitoring systems, among other technologies, can improve healthcare outcomes.

Future improvements in diagnostic tools will be able to help diagnose some critical illnesses for patients and provide key information through remote devices to enable a level of information that patients do not have today. Additionally, with patient data and advanced data analysis, technology can help shed light on future health risks and play an important role in disease prevention.

Despite all the challenges and upcoming changes in the healthcare industry, it is

an exciting time and opportunity to use novel technologies to help improve the health and well-being of patients worldwide.

Charbel Rizkallah is the Senior Healthcare Director at Honeywell Sensing & Safety Technologies.



The image is a red graphic with white text and logos. At the top left is the Cedars Sinai logo, consisting of two interlocking circles and the text "Cedars Sinai". Below the logo, the text "Excellence in Healthcare" is written in a large, white, serif font. Underneath that, in a smaller white serif font, it says "8 Years in a Row on the 'Best Hospitals' Honor Roll". At the bottom center is a gold and blue award badge from U.S. News & World Report. The badge has a gold background with "BEST HOSPITALS" in black, "U.S. News & World Report" in white on a blue banner, and "HONOR ROLL 2023-2024" in gold. Below the badge is a white rounded rectangle with the text "LEARN MORE" in black.



Market outlook

Demographic Factors

Population size **88 237 124**

Fertility rate¹ (2021) **1.6**

Share of population over age 65 (%) **22.1**

A stylized graphic of the German flag (black, red, and gold horizontal stripes) waving across the top of the page.

GERMANY

Socioeconomic factors

GDP per capita (EUR PPP2) **41 246**

Relative poverty rate³ (%) **14.7**

Unemployment rate (%) **3.1**

GERMANY

Data and information sources

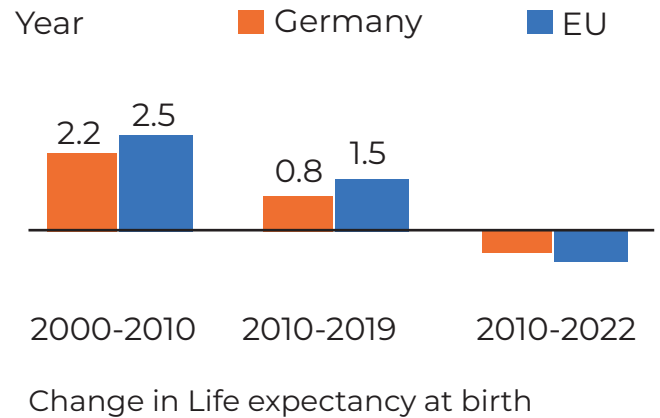
The data and information in the Country Health Profiles are based mainly on national official statistics provided to Eurostat and the OECD, which were validated to ensure the highest standards of data comparability.

The sources and methods underlying these data are available in the Eurostat Database and the OECD health database. Some additional data also come from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) surveys

Health Status

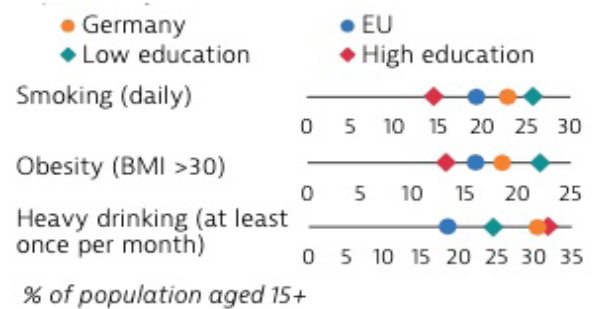
Since 2000, gains in life expectancy in Germany have been lower than the EU average. The drop in life expectancy between 2019 and 2022 – Reflecting the impact of COVID-19 pandemic

– Was moderate in Germany, and on a par with the EU as a whole. At 80.7 years in 2022, life expectancy at birth was equal to the EU average.



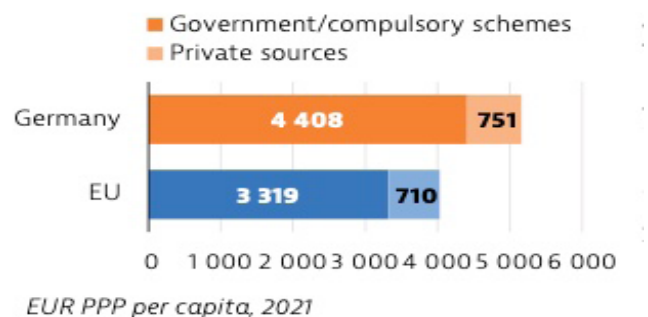
Risk Factors

Germany had higher rates of smoking, obesity and heavy drinking than the EU averages in 2019. People with low levels of education are more likely to smoke or be obese. Rates of heavy drinking are above the EU averages among people with both high and low levels of education, but those with high education levels tend to engage in heavy drinking more often.



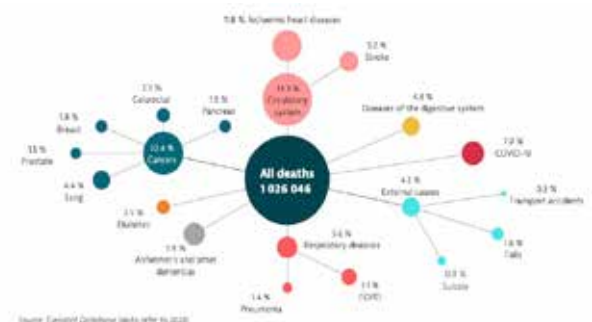
Health System

In 2021, Germany's health spending was the highest in the EU and much higher than the EU average, amounting to EUR 5 159 per capita. The share of public funding for healthcare was 85.5 %, which is higher than the EU average of 81.1 %. Out-of-pocket payments are among the lowest in the EU, at 12 % compared to 15 % across the EU.



Effectiveness

Avoidable mortality from both preventable and treatable causes combined was higher in Germany in 2020 than in many other EU countries, but still below the EU average. After years of steady reductions, as in other EU countries, the number of preventable deaths in 2020 increased in Germany as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Health in Germany

The drop in life expectancy caused by COVID-19

was on par with the average across the EU. In 2022, life expectancy at birth in Germany stood at 80.7 years, which is equal to the EU average (Figure 1). Germany's life expectancy grew by 0.8 years between 2010 and 2019 – a comparatively small increase relative to other EU countries that had similar levels of life expectancy in 2010. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic,

Germany's life expectancy fell by only 2.4 months in 2020 compared to the fall of almost 11 months across the EU; in 2021, life expectancy fell by about 3.5 months – a reduction in line with the EU average. As in other European countries, men in Germany tend to live shorter lives than women, with a gender gap of almost 5 years, slightly below the EU average.

Circulatory diseases and cancers remain the main causes of mortality

Increases in life expectancy primarily result from reductions in premature deaths from leading causes of mortality – notably circulatory diseases (including ischaemic heart disease and stroke) and cancer. However, over the last decade, Germany's death rates have been falling at a slower rate than previously for circulatory diseases and some cancers like lung cancer. Simultaneously, there has been an increase in mortality rates from respiratory diseases like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and influenza, particularly among people aged 65 and over. These two factors partly explain the overall slowdown in life expectancy gains prior to the onset of the pandemic. In 2021, circulatory diseases accounted for 33 % of all deaths in Germany. Among these, ischaemic heart disease remains by far the leading cause of mortality, responsible for more than one in eight deaths in 2021, and stroke was the second leading cause of death. Cancers accounted for 22 % of all deaths, with lung cancer being the most frequent cause of death by cancer (Figure 2). During the first year of the pandemic, Germany reported over 500 39 deaths due

to COVID19-, which accounted for 4 % of all deaths – a comparatively low proportion relative to most other EU countries. In 2021 this number increased and approximately 7) 500 71 %) of deaths were registered as being due to COVID19-; of these, 89 % occurred among people aged 65 and over.



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Fuel breakthroughs

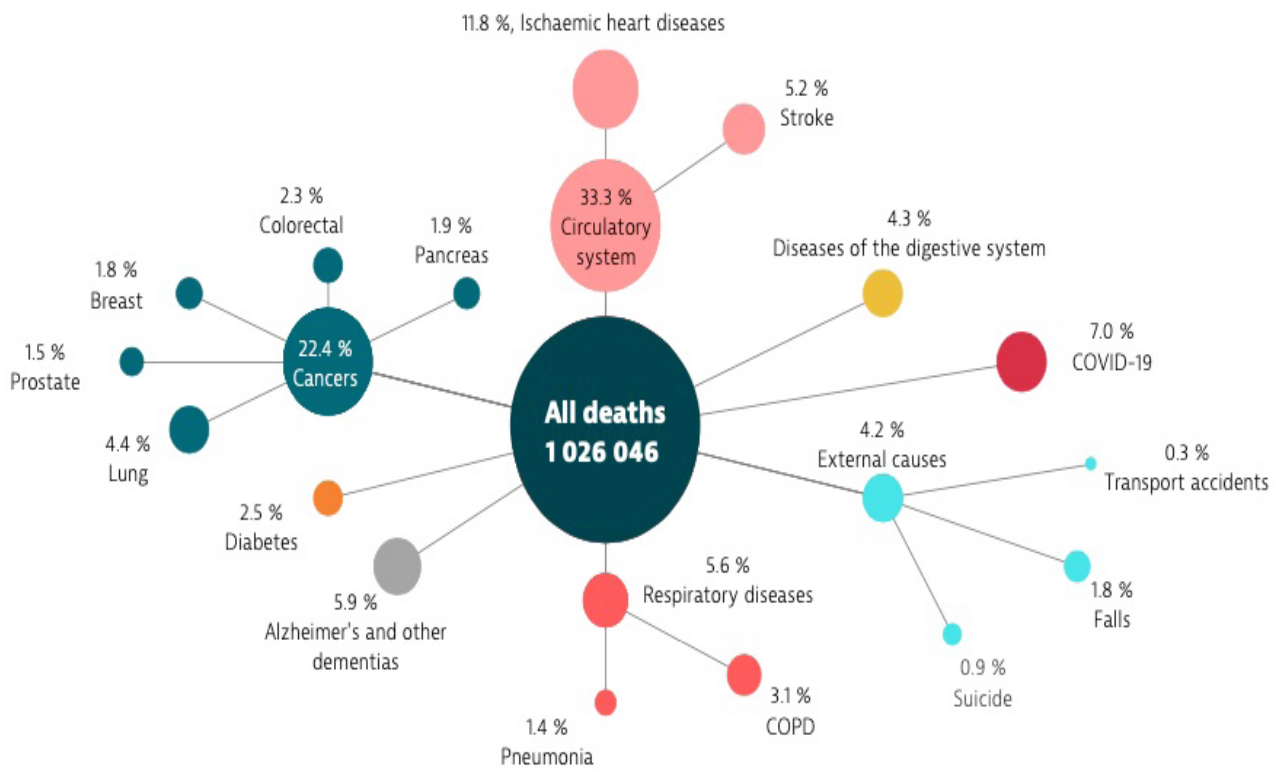
The life sciences industry continues to experience unparalleled innovation and investment and talent flow in the the sector and breakthrough discoveries happen at a rapid pace.

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COVID-19 accounted for a Significant number of deaths in 2021



Source: Eurostat Database (data refer to 2021).

Throughout the pandemic, Germany experienced an unusual pattern in the rate of excess mortality, which increased in both 2021 and 2022, despite a year-on-year decline of more than one third in registered COVID-19 deaths in 2022. This surprising finding may be partly attributed to the number of deaths caused by the record-breaking heat wave that struck Germany in the summer of 2022 and the unusually deadly wave of influenza that swept the nation that winter.

More than two in five Germans aged 65 and over have more than one chronic condition

Although ageing at a slower pace than in most other EU countries, over the past decade, Germany's demographic structure has been shifting towards an older population due to rising life expectancy (before the pandemic) and persistently low birth rates. From 2012 to 2022, the EU average share of the population aged 65 and over increased from 18 % to 21.1 %, while Germany's share increased from 20.7 % to 22.1 %.

This is projected to increase to 28 % in 2050. As chronic conditions are more common among older adults, Germany's population structure partly explains its above-average share of people aged 65 and over reporting more than one chronic condition. Germany's population had a life expectancy at age 65 of nearly 20 years in 2020, which is approximately five months longer than the EU average. Healthy life years (defined as disability-free life expectancy) stood at more than 11 years, compared to less than 10 years across the EU. More than 26 % of Germans aged 65 and over reported disabilities resulting in limitations in basic activities of daily life, such as dressing and showering, which is a slightly higher share than the EU average. Nonetheless, these limitations were highly concentrated among those aged 80 and over.

Breast, prostate and lung cancers contribute significantly to the burden of cancer in Germany
According to estimates from the Joint Research Centre based on incidence trends

from previous years, around 529 000 new cases of cancer were expected to be diagnosed in Germany in 2022. Cancer incidence among both German men and women was slightly lower than the EU averages. Figure 4 shows that prostate, breast, lung and colorectal cancer are the leading cancers among the population. Reductions in risk factors like smoking could reduce the burden of several types of cancer.

Risk factors

Tobacco smoking and unhealthy diets are persistent public health challenges. In Germany, nearly four in every ten deaths in 2019 can be attributed to behavioural risk factors such as smoking, dietary risks, alcohol consumption and low physical activity – a level comparable to the EU average.

Environmental factors such as air pollution also account for a sizeable number of deaths: in 2019, an estimated 30 000 deaths (or 3 % of all deaths) were attributable to fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and ozone exposure alone. Unhealthy diets are associated with 14 % of annual deaths in Germany, which is similar to the rate of deaths linked to tobacco consumption. Self-reported data reveal that nearly one in five adults in Germany (18.5 %) were obese in 2019 – a proportion slightly higher than the EU average (16 %). Among adolescents, one fifth of German 15-year-olds were either overweight or obese in 2022 – a rate that has gradually increased over the past decade and now hovers around the average across EU countries. This trend has been fuelled in part by a relatively high prevalence of poor dietary habits, especially among male adolescents in Germany. In 2022, only 24 % of 15-year-old boys reported consuming vegetables on a daily basis, which is one of the lowest rates across the EU, but the share of boys who reported eating fruit every day increased to 31 % – slightly higher than the EU average (29 %). On the other hand, people in Germany are, on average, significantly more physically active than in the majority of other EU countries. In 2019,

nearly half of the adult population reported engaging in at least 2.5 hours of weekly physical activity, compared to less than a third across the EU. However, only 12 % of 15-year-olds reported doing some at least moderate physical activity every day in 2022 – a proportion below the EU average (15 %).

The number of tobacco smokers has continued to drop in recent years In recent years, the number of daily tobacco smokers in Germany has continued its long-term decline, falling by 4.7 percentage points between 2017 and 2021. This reduction in the prevalence of daily tobacco smoking was slightly slower among men, who – as in other EU countries – are more likely to smoke than women. A more varied pattern can be observed among German adolescents: in 2022, 17 % of 15-year-olds reported smoke tobacco in the past month, down from 19 % in 2014 but higher than the rate recorded in 2018 (15 %). Moreover, electric cigarettes and shisha pipes have become more popular in recent years, especially among young people. In 2019, 16 % of 15- and 16-year-olds reported smoking electronic cigarettes – a higher proportion than the EU average of 14 %. Some tobacco-control laws differ between states within Germany for example, laws on smoking in public places vary from weak regulations in some states to full smoking bans in all public institutions in others.

Heavy drinking remains an important public health concern in Germany **Obesity (adults)** While alcohol consumption among adults has declined slowly over the last 10 years, it is still above the EU average (at 10.6 liters per capita compared to an EU average of 9.8 litres in 2019) and the percentage of adults in Germany engaging in heavy drinking¹ is high, with three in ten adults reporting heavy drinking at least once a month between states within Germany; for example, in 2019. This is the fourth highest share in the EU after Romania, Luxembourg and Denmark. The average of 15-year-olds who in 2022 reported having been drunk more than once in their life (30%) is also significantly higher than the EU average (18%), underlining the need for further targeted prevention programmes.

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Spotlight on mental health

The burden of mental health conditions among Germany's population is considerable

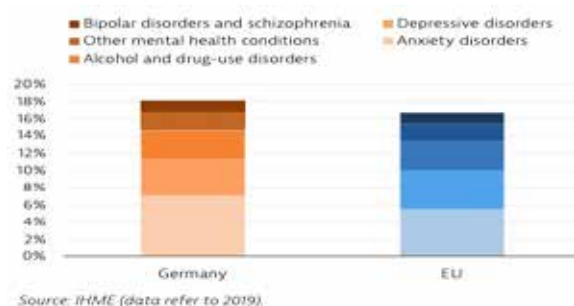
The available evidence suggests that mental health problems affect a large proportion of Germany's population. According to estimates from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), almost one in five people (18 %) in Germany had a mental health issue in 2019, which is equivalent to about 15 million people. This rate was just above the EU average (17 %).

The most common mental disorders in Germany were anxiety disorders (estimated to affect 7 % of the population), depressive disorders (4 %), and alcohol and drug-use disorders (3 %). The economic costs of mental health conditions are significant in Germany, with direct and indirect costs estimated at over 4.8 % of the country's GDP, or EUR 146.5 billion, in 2015 (OECD/EU, 2018).

Depression rates in the lowest income group are among the highest across the EU. Data from EHIS show that 9.4 % of people in Germany reported having depression in 2019 (compared to the EU average of 7 %). There were striking differences between genders and income groups in the risk of experiencing depression. Some 21.1 % of women in the lowest income quintile reported having depression in 2019, which is nearly three times higher than the rate among those in the highest quintile (7.7 %). For men, 17.4 % in the lowest income quintile reported the condition, making them four times as likely to experience depression as men in the highest quintile (4.6 %). Use of antidepressants has been growing over many years: the rate increased from 47 DDDs per 100 000 population in 2010 to 64 DDDs per 100 000 in 2021. During the same period, however, use of anxiolytics fell from 4.9 DDDs per 100 000 to 3.2 DDDs per 100 000. The pandemic exacerbated risk factors associated with poor mental health and highlighted the link between precarious financial circumstances and heightened risk of depression. According to Eurofound

survey data (Eurofound, 2021; 2022), 64% of people in Germany living in households that reported financial difficulties were considered to be at risk of depression during the pandemic, compared to 42 % of those who did not report such difficulties. These proportions were above the EU averages of 62 % among those with financial difficulties and 37 % among those without.

Almost one in five people with bipolar disorders and schizophrenia, other mental disorders and anxiety disorders



Suicide rates in Germany have been decreasing gradually

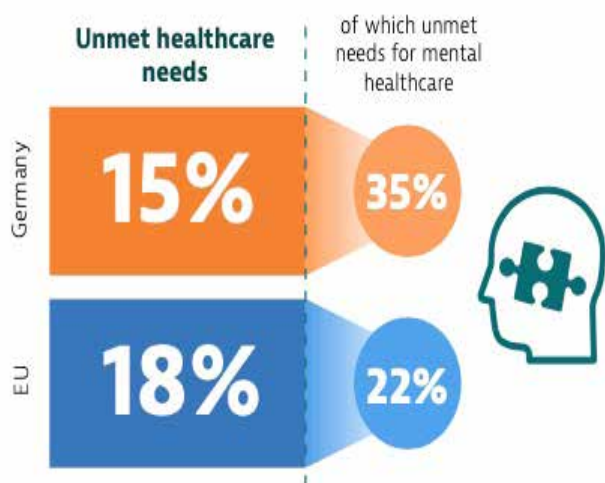
Historically, suicide rates in Germany have been higher for men than for women. While numbers have been falling for both genders in the past 15 years, with slight upticks at certain intervals, a large difference remains between men (16.6 per 100 000 population) and women (4.8 per 100 000 population). The rates in 2020 were nearly the same as the EU averages for both genders. During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the rates remained stable compared to 2019.

Mental health services in Germany are provided at different levels of care, and increasingly in specialised facilities. Provision of mental healthcare is somewhat fragmented across ambulatory, inpatient and rehabilitative care. A phase of deinstitutionalisation that started in the mid-1970s led to an increase in the number of community-based institutions, supervised residential arrangements, ambulatory crisis intervention centres and centres for psychosocial counselling and social support. Since 2000, there has been growth in capacity through specialised hospitals, and in general hospitals with

specialised mental health wards, often dedicated to prevention and rehabilitative care and specialising in caring for patients with addiction problems and psychosomatic conditions.

Characteristically, all inpatient psychiatric care units have very high occupancy rates of around or above 90 %. In 2000-18, the average length of stay decreased from 29.5 days to 26.2 days (Blümel et al., 2020; WHO, 2021). Ambulatory care for people with mental health problems is supported by a growing number of office-based psychiatrists, neurologists and psychotherapists working in the ambulatory care sector.

Over one third of unmet healthcare needs during the pandemic were for mental healthcare



Note: Survey respondents were asked whether they had any current unmet healthcare needs and, if so, for what type of care, including mental healthcare.

Source: Eurofound (2021; 2022).

Unmet needs for mental healthcare represented a substantial share of all unmet healthcare needs during the pandemic

As in many other EU countries, a significant number of people in Germany did not have their mental healthcare needs met during the pandemic. According to a Europe-wide survey carried out in the spring of 2021 and 2022, 15 % of the German population reported unmet needs for healthcare, of which over one third (35 %) were for mental healthcare (Figure 24), proportionally more than the average unmet needs for mental healthcare across the EU.

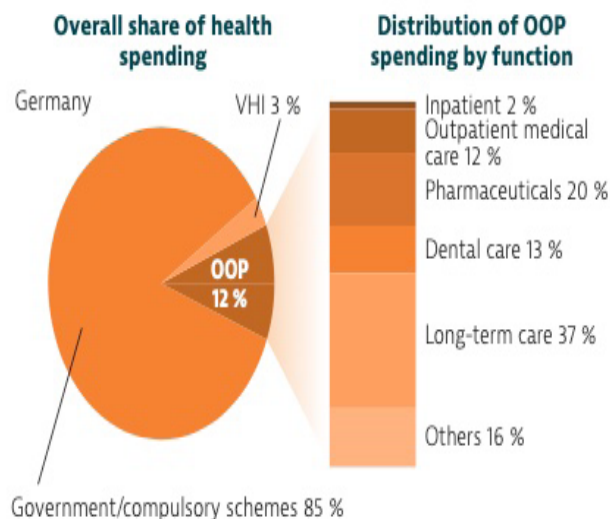
Access to ambulatory psychotherapeutic care differs between regions, and long waiting times are increasingly being addressed

The availability of ambulatory psychotherapeutic care has been recognised as a key problem in mental healthcare in Germany with long waiting times for a therapy place and significant differences between regions.

National studies registered waiting times that were over three times as long in some rural regions (up to 11 weeks) as in some urban regions (3.4 weeks). The Healthcare Strengthening Act of 2015 started targeting the issue of long waiting times, among other provisions, by installing central service points for booking psychotherapeutic appointments in regions.

Besides access, the quantity, scope and quality of ambulatory psychotherapeutic services vary, in some instances largely, between local communities and regions in Germany. Despite recent advances, psychosocial facilities are often less well equipped than those for somatic care, and access to occupational rehabilitation and comprehensive social integration is still considered insufficiently developed. To fill some of the gaps in mental healthcare, public health offices provide social psychiatric services, including counselling, social work, home visits and crisis intervention, directed particularly at the most disadvantaged individuals among the population with mental health issues.

Payments for long-term care and pharmaceuticals account for the majority of out-of-pocket spending in Germany



Key findings

Germany's life expectancy was equal to the EU average in 2022, at 80.7 years. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on life expectancy was more moderate in 2020 than in 2021, but overall life expectancy fell by approximately seven months between 2019 and 2022, which is on a par with the EU average. As in other EU countries, men have a lower life expectancy than women in Germany, but the gender gap of almost five years is slightly below the EU average.

- Smoking and unhealthy diets represent the largest behavioural risk factors in Germany. While the total rate of adult and adolescent smokers has declined slowly in recent years, the emergence of electronic cigarettes and pipes has attracted young people in particular. Fuelled by low levels of physical activity and unhealthy diets, the rate of overweight and obese adolescents has also been increasing steadily, underlining the need for targeted prevention measures. Moreover, heavy drinking is still a major problem in Germany, and 8 % of all deaths are linked to alcohol. These risk factors are also driving the leading causes of preventable mortality – lung cancer, alcohol-related diseases and ischaemic heart disease.
- In 2021, spending on health in Germany was the highest in the EU. There was a considerable increase in the growth rate of public funding between 2019 and 2020, and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The largest share of health expenditure goes on inpatient care, reflecting Germany's large hospital sector, followed by outpatient care. At 12 % in 2021, out-of-pocket payments in Germany rank among the lowest in the EU. Payments for long-term care and pharmaceuticals account for the majority of out-of-pocket spending.
- Germany has high numbers of nurses, physicians and hospital beds per capita. While the number of physicians in hospital has been increasing since the introduction of the diagnosis-related group-based payment system in 2004, the number of nurses working in hospitals is not sufficient. Changes to hospital payment

rules to exclude the costs of nursing personnel from the case-based payment system are designed to increase the number of nurses in these facilities.

Moreover, in addition to increasing the number of nursing graduates, the dedicated Nursing Training Initiative contains several measures aimed at attracting more people to the profession.

- The numbers of hospital beds and hospital discharges in Germany are very high. A new Government Commission has been established to propose solutions to the hospital-reliant health system, with a view to strengthening decisions on allocation and increasing efficiency. Proposals include the introduction of a new remuneration system for inpatient care provision and the possibility of providing ambulatory care within hospitals.
- The strategic priority of nurturing a pandemic-resilient health system is embedded within Germany's Recovery and Resilience Plan, which dedicates funding to digital and technical strength of public health services and to wide-ranging modernisation of hospitals, encompassing digital infrastructure, emergency capacities, telemedicine and information technology and cybersecurity, as well as the development of COVID-19 vaccines.
- Anxiety and depressive disorders, as well as alcohol and drug-use disorders, make up the bulk of Germany's mental health burden; they also disproportionately affect those in lower income groups.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, over one third of reported unmet healthcare needs were related to mental healthcare. In particular, the pandemic exacerbated risk factors and highlighted the link between precarious financial circumstances and heightened risk of depression. Some 64 % of people in Germany living in households with financial difficulties were at risk of depression during the pandemic, compared to 42 % of people without financial difficulties.



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GLUCOMANNAN

Is It an Effective Weight Loss Supplement?



Glucomannan is a natural, water-soluble dietary fiber extracted from the roots of the elephant yam, also known as konjac. It may be an effective weightloss supplement. However, only when taken properly. Weight loss is not always easy, and long-term success requires dedication and perseverance.

Countless supplements and diet plans are marketed as effective weight loss strategies, claiming to make things easier. Glucomannan comprises 40% of the dry weight of the elephant yam, which is originally from Southeast Asia. It has a long history of use in herbal mixtures and traditional foods like tofu, noodles and konjac jelly.

In addition to being sold as a dietary supplement, it's used as a food additive an

emulsifier and thickener denoted with the E-number E425-ii

Glucomannan has an exceptional ability to absorb water and is one of the most viscous dietary fibers known.

It absorbs so much liquid that a small amount of glucomannan added to a glass of water turns the entire content into a gel. These unique properties are believed to mediate its effects on weight loss.

How Does Glucomannan Aid Weight Loss?

Glucomannan is a water-soluble dietary fiber. Like other soluble fibers, it's believed to promote weight loss in several ways:

- It's very low in calories.
- It takes up space in your stomach and promotes a feeling of fullness (satiety), reducing food intake at a subsequent meal.
- It delays stomach emptying, contributing

to increased satiety.

•Like other soluble fibers, it reduces the absorption of protein and fat.

It also feeds the friendly bacteria in your intestine, which turn it into short-chain fatty acids like butyrate, shown to protect against fat gain in some animal studies. Feeding your gut bacteria may also have other benefits. Some studies have shown a correlation between altered gut bacteria and body weight.

Glucomannan differs from most other soluble fibers, as it's exceptionally viscous, making it particularly effective for weight loss.

Does It Really Work?

Several randomized controlled trials have studied the effects of glucomannan on weight loss. These types of studies are the gold standard of scientific research in humans.

In the largest study, 176 healthy but overweight people on a calorie-restricted diet were randomly assigned either a glucomannan supplement or a placebo. Three different glucomannan supplements with varying dosages were tested. Some also contained other fibers.

These were the results after 5 weeks:

As you can see, weight loss was significantly greater among those who supplemented with glucomannan.

Several other studies agree with these results. Glucomannan caused modest weight loss in overweight and obese individuals when regularly ingested before a meal. It's particularly effective when combined with a weight-reducing diet. The same applies to all weight-loss methods—they work best in combination. Other health benefit, In addition to promoting weight loss, glucomannan may improve some heart disease risk factors. According to a systematic review of 14 studies, glucomannan can lower:

- Total cholesterol by 19 mg/dL (0.5 mmol/L).
- “Bad” LDL cholesterol by 16 mg/dL (0.4 mmol/L).
- Total cholesterol by 19 mg/dL (0.5 mmol/L).
- “Bad” LDL cholesterol by 16 mg/dL (0.4 mmol/L).
- Triglycerides by 11 mg/dL (0.12 mmol/L).
- Fasting blood sugar by 7.4 mg/dL (0.4 mmol/L).

It primarily reduces blood cholesterol by decreasing the absorption of cholesterol in your gut.

According to this research, adding to your diet glucomannan could potentially lower your risk of developing heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

As a water-soluble fiber, glucomannan has also been successfully used to treat constipation.

Dosage and Side Effects

For weight loss, a dosage of 1 gram, 3 times per day is considered sufficient.

Mixed with water, glucomannan expands and can absorb up to 50 times its weight. Therefore, the recommended dosage of glucomannan is lower compared to other fiber supplements.

Glucomannan does not have any effect on weight loss unless it is taken before a meal. Timing recommendations range from 15 minutes to 1 hour before a meal.

Glucomannan is well tolerated, generally considered safe.

However, if glucomannan expands before reaching the stomach, it may cause chock or block of the throat and esophagus, the tube that moves food from your mouth to your stomach.

To prevent this, it should be washed down with 1–2 glasses of water or another liquid. Some people may experience mild side effects, such as bloating, flatulence, soft stools or diarrhea, but these negative effects are uncommon.

Glucomannan can also reduce the absorption of oral medications like sulfonylurea, a diabetes drug.

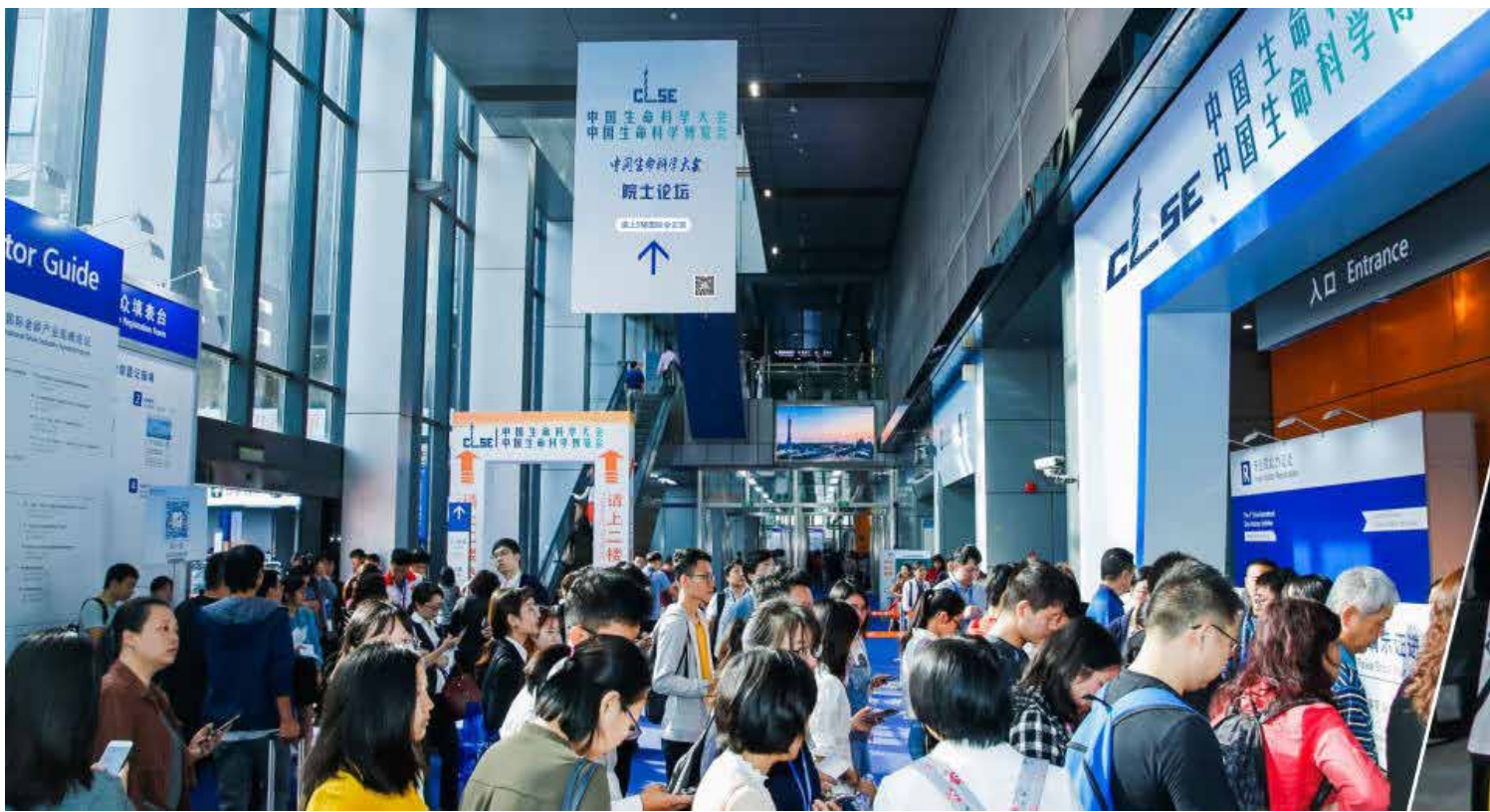
This can be avoided by taking medication at least four hours after or one hour before ingesting glucomannan.

Should You Try Glucomannan?

Judging by the evidence, glucomannan is an effective weight-loss supplement. But as with any weight-loss strategy, it doesn't work in isolation.

The only known way to lose weight in the long term is to make a permanent change to your lifestyle.

Glucomannan may help make that easier, but it won't work miracles on its own.



CHINA LIFESCIENCE CONFERENCE 2024 AND CHINA GUANGZHOU INTERNATIONAL LIFESCIENCE EXPO: GUANGZHOU, CHINA.

***CHINA LIFE SCIENCE CONFERENCE 2024 AND
CHINA GUANGZHOU INTERNATIONAL LIFE SCIENCE
EXPO***

**June 1-3, 2024; Venue: China Import and Export
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The Consortium of Life Sciences Societies of China Association for Science and Technology (CAS) represents the first collaboration of learned societies within the China Association for Science and Technology. CAS, a cooperative organization, was established through the joint efforts of 11 national learned societies in the lifesciences field.

The inaugural conference took place in Beijing on October 15, 2015, where leaders of CAS highlighted the importance and impact of the Consortium. Currently, the Consortium has 23 member societies under the hood.

China Life Science Conference

The 2024 China Life Sciences Conference and China Life Sciences Expo (CILSE) is set to establish itself as a leading

international event in the life science community of China and the world. With its high standard, large scale, strong academic leadership, and close industry integration, CILSE is poised to become the most influential brand event in the field. In response to the call of the CPC Central Committee to «implement the healthy China strategy» and the « Belt and Road» initiative, the conference aims to enhance its international influence. To achieve this goal, the conference will feature keynote speeches from numerous academicians, expert professors, and international

leaders in the field of life science, fostering academic value and promoting international exchanges and cooperation in the areas of life science and health.

Numerous specialized sub-forums will be organized to facilitate advanced academic exchanges in the field of life science. These forums will revolve around the future development of life science and will encompass a wide range of themes.

Their objective is to bring together scientists and technological experts from various backgrounds by conducting comprehensive evaluations, establishing prestigious awards, proposing significant plans, and assuming crucial roles. Through these efforts, they aim to enhance China's international influence in life sciences, foster further breakthroughs in research and technological innovation, and highlight the accomplishments and capabilities of scientists in this field. By adopting the innovative approach of combining academic conferences with exhibitions, the conference will specifically focus on areas such as molecular diagnosis, antibody drugs, cell and gene therapy, mRNA, epigenetics, single-cell analysis, multi-omics, biological big data, vaccines, antibodies, exosomes, early tumor screening, tumor detection, and organ transplantation. The ultimate goal here is to promote interdisciplinary

integration and development, facilitate communication and collaboration between upstream and downstream industries.

The «2024 China Life Science Expo» is set to present a comprehensive display of cutting-edge technologies, products, and solutions within the life science sector. Anticipating over 50,000 professional attendees, this event aims to serve as a one-stop service platform for scientists and researchers in the field. Moreover, it will offer exhibitors an extensive business opportunity and establish itself as an indispensable platform for the exchange and collaboration between science, technology, and industry. The event welcomes the presence of distinguished teams with impressive products and advanced technology at the expo, as the event has all the necessary arrangements for the participants with promising business prospects.

The «Light of Life» Exhibition


The «Light of Life» exhibition at the 2024 China Life Science Conference will be overseen by the Consortium of Life Science Societies of the China Association for Science and Technology. It will showcase the «Top Ten Progresses in Chinese Life Science» from 2023. The organizers are currently looking for exceptional units/teams/individuals in 12 different fields such as cell biology, molecular biology, tumor biology, and bioinformatics, among others, to participate in the exhibition. Each year, outstanding units/teams/individuals from each field will be chosen to exhibit alongside the «Top Ten Progresses in Chinese Life Science». Participating units will receive recognition and promotion, helping to establish brand value, enhance image, and encourage the integration of production, learning, and research. This initiative aims to facilitate transformation, and cooperation of achievements.

The exhibition will utilize various communication strategies, including exhibitions, forums, publications, email campaigns, and media promotions, to facilitate the fullest extent of exchanges, collaborations, achievement transformations, and investment opportunities.

The Life Science Star Award

The Organizing Committee of China Life Science Expo and Guangdong Benchmarking Exhibition Co., Ltd. have collaborated to establish the Starlight Award. This prestigious award aims to recognize source innovation, enhance international cooperation, and acknowledge exceptional scientists and innovative talents who have made significant breakthroughs in life science and medicine. It also aims to commend leading enterprises in the industry, promote scientific and technological advancements, and drive industrial development in life science, medicine, pharmacy, and related fields in China. Additionally, the award seeks to foster the growth of leaders in the biotechnology sector and contribute to the industrialization and application of innovative achievements in China's life science research and technological innovation.

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Lift your confidence – and possibly sexual satisfaction – with a pubic lift



Breast augmentation has long been one of the most popular procedures in plastic surgery, and that doesn't seem likely to be changing any time soon. This procedure involves enhancing the shape, size and placement of the breasts, most commonly with the use of breast implants.

The idea of breast augmentation may traditionally conjure images of oversized, bolted-on implants, but the most popular varieties in recent years lean towards a more natural look that works well with the unique frame and appearance of the patient.

Even with the widespread awareness about breast augmentation, many patients and prospective patients may be unfamiliar with the different types of implant options available to help them achieve their goals – silicone and saline. Both types of implants are similar and can help you reach your desired results, but there are a few key differences between them that have contributed to a notable shift in the preferred option among patients.

To help understand these key differences between silicone and saline and the shift in popularity, we reached out to two experts in the field of breast augmentation – Michelle Roughton, MD, and Kristy

Hamilton, MD – for their insights on the topic.

The differences between silicone and saline breast implants

When considering the different implants available for breast augmentation, comparing silicone and saline is a pretty good place to start. While generally similar and both safe, these implants do differ in several key areas, including weight, consistency and appearance.

“Both implants consist of a silicone shell with different interior fills,” said Dr. Hamilton. “Modern silicone implants are filled with silicone cohesive gel, like a ‘gummy bear’. The days of liquid silicone fills are gone. Silicone implants are by far the most popular today because they are lighter weight than saline and both feel and look more natural. Saline implants are filled with sterile salt water.”

While silicone implants were once avoided because of their potential for rupturing and leaking, they are by far the most preferred type of implant for women seeking out breast augmentation for two reasons.

“In a nutshell, I tell my patients the silicone implants feel more natural and last longer,” said Dr. Roughton.

When choosing the right type of implant

for a patient, it all comes down to their individual preferences. This also involves taking into consideration the shape and cohesiveness of the implants to find the right fit for the patient.

“In addition to implant fill, implants can be round or shaped, smooth or textured,” said Dr. Hamilton. “When choosing silicone implants, there are also different degrees of cohesiveness – or ‘gumminess’ available from which to choose.

More cohesive implants will look perkier with more upper-pole fullness, while less cohesive implants will relax into a more natural, tear-drop shape when placed in the body. Choosing between those looks is a matter of personal preference, which is why I spend so much time working with patients to get inside their heads to determine how they’d like to look in order to choose the right implant for them.”

Another consideration when choosing the right type of implant is a patient’s body type. Many patients are after something that both looks and feels natural rather than something oversized or uncomfortable.

The patient’s measurements are of prime importance we, as plastic surgeon call this bi-dimensional planning, said Doctor Hamilton. I guide patients in this category to determine what range of implants they can choose from that will fit their frame appropriately.

Subsequently, I have patients try on sizers in a surgical bra to get a general idea of what volume they like, both in terms of look as well as weight, to ensure they’re not too heavy. Finally, I review photos, or ‘wish pics,’ to help patients choose the level of gel cohesivity they would like – firmer will yield more cleavage.”

Providing your plastic surgeon with a visual of what you hope to achieve with breast implants can be one of the most helpful steps in the consultation process. “I think ‘wish pics’ or goal photos are the most helpful,” said Dr. Roughton. “The least helpful thing I’ve found is the word natural which has vastly different meanings to different women.

I use a VECTRA device, which can give them some idea of what different sizes will look like on their body.”

The presence of social media in driving implant trends.

Patients are now coming to consultations with more understanding about the different types of implants because of social media.

“I have been amazed at how much more knowledgeable my patients are today compared to five years ago,” said Dr. Roughton. “All of my patients have some knowledge before consultation. They’re excited to see and feel saline and silicone implants and the differences in cohesivity, but the amount of information they have beforehand is incredible.”

This increase in patient awareness can be attributed to the growing use of social media among younger age groups in addition to the greater availability of accessible information online.

“There has indeed been a significant shift in the level of awareness among patients about breast implants and breast augmentation surgery, and I do attribute it to the rise of social media as the primary form of information gathering for Gen Z and millennials,” said Dr. Hamilton.

Social media can be a great place for patients to find information, but there’s no guarantee that the information is accurate. To counter this, it’s important plastic surgeons keep their patients properly informed throughout the process. Overall, social media has created a positive influence because education is essential for patients choosing to proceed with breast augmentation,” said Doctor Hamilton.

“However, with social media also comes the increased ability to propagate misinformation which sometimes needs to be corrected during the consultation. My breast augmentation consults are at least an hour, and patients almost always comment that they learned a significant amount during them. Patient education is essential.”

Tips for patients interested in breast augmentation

As with any plastic surgery procedure, there are a few key steps that you can take to set yourself up for success on your breast augmentation journey.

Always choose a board-certified plastic surgeon. While it may sound like a broken record, finding a board-certified plastic surgeon who is an ASPS member is a

crucial step in the process of pursuing breast augmentation.

“It sounds simple but many are confused – tricked even – by a ‘club’ that ‘certifies’ cosmetic surgeons,” said Dr. Hamilton. “It is not a real board of medicine. The key is to see what training the surgeon has. He or she must have completed a plastic surgery residency or fellowship training program.”

Do your research before your consultation

When planning for your initial consultation, do your homework and take the time to research the procedure, the different types of implants and what to expect following the surgery.

“There is so much information online that you can be pretty prepared prior to your consultation,” said Dr. Roughton. Doing your homework can also involve researching the surgeon themselves, including looking at their before and after galleries.

“Be sure you like the results,” said Doctor. Hamilton. “A gallery represents the surgeon’s very best work, so you will likely be receiving a look similar to what is presented there.”

By preparing for your consultation, you can set yourself up for a positive and informed discussion with your prospective surgeon.

A healthy lifestyle is key It’s easy to get so caught up in planning for recovery after your procedure that you forget about what you need to do prior to your breast augmentation. One key step to take is to ensure that you are following a healthy lifestyle, including exercise, eating nutritious foods and getting adequate sleep.

“Prior to surgery, engage in a healthy lifestyle, avoid drinking, stop smoking or using nicotine products entirely and make sure all your supplements and medications are approved by your plastic surgeon,” said Dr. Hamilton.

Plan ahead for your recovery

It’s also important to properly plan to set yourself up for success in your recovery. This involves taking time off work as well as taking a closer look at your long-term calendar to ensure that you have plenty of space to rest and recover.

“Also, if you’re actively planning a pregnancy or still nursing, it’s not the best

time to have elective surgery,” said Dr. Roughton.

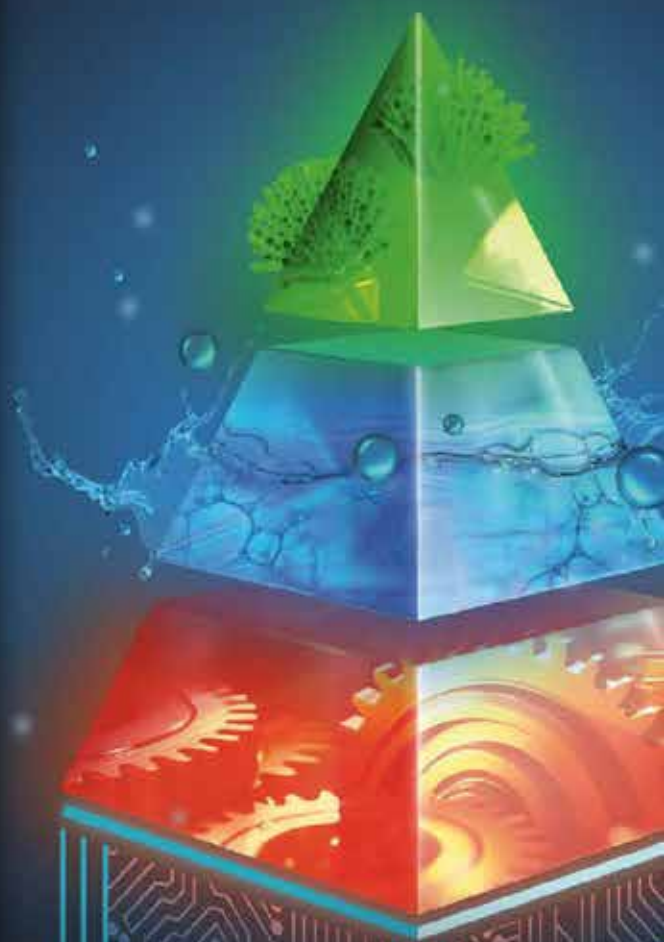
Choosing the implants that are right for you Many patients may be aware of breast augmentation, but they may be unclear on the differences between silicone and saline breast implants. Saline has been traditionally the popular choice among women, but there has been a noticeable shift towards silicone within the past several years, partly because of the prevalence of information online and on social media.

There is no doubt that breast augmentation will continue to reign as one of the most sought-after procedures within the specialty for many years to come. If you’re among the many patients who will be seeking out this procedure, it’s important to understand what choices you have when it comes to implants and work with your plastic surgeons to find an options that works best for your aesthetic goals.



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The one-stop-shop revolution where healthcare meets retail



The widespread presence of retail spaces offers a competitive advantage in healthcare accessibility. Staff writer | May 08, 2024

Globally, the healthcare industry is changing, with routine procedures now extending beyond traditional clinical settings. Retailers are seizing this opportunity, offering popular low-risk interventions like biometric screenings, prescription services and over the counter pharmaceuticals. The widespread presence of retail spaces, coupled with challenges faced by declining footfall, offers the potential for a mutually beneficial partnership. As a result, the healthcare industry is experiencing a shift towards retail as patients start to bypass traditional intermediaries and directly engage with healthcare either online or in retail environments. With most people still regularly frequenting shops, retailers, renowned for customer-focused approaches, can effectively cater to specific appointment requests, extending care beyond traditional clinic hours. Their adeptness in adopting technology also facilitates data exchange with healthcare entities. Advances in gene sequencing and AI open new care possibili-

ties, with e-pharmacies delivering prescriptions, telemedicine platforms connecting patients with physicians, and home tests facilitating self-diagnosis.

Last year, a prominent UK supermarket chain ventured into advanced healthcare offerings by becoming the first major retailer in the country to provide self-diagnostic test kits. Tesco now offers affordable at-home kits for conditions such as bowel cancer, menopause and thyroid issues. The kits were introduced for sale in 500 stores in February 2023. The deal, with provider Newfoundland, marks the first time self-diagnostic test kits for widespread health conditions will be available with any major UK retailer.

Newfoundland co-founder, Frederick Manduca, said: "With long wait times for doctors and hospital appointments and the very high price point of diagnostic lab tests, we're offering rapid at-home tests that arm people with vital knowledge that can alleviate pressure both on the NHS and patients themselves." However, chair of

the Royal College of GPs, Professor Kamila Hawthorne said making self-testing products available over the counter without prescription, “comes with pros and cons”. “They can, of course, provide some peace of mind for patients – and for relatively minor conditions, with clear and easy-to-access treatment options, they may avoid the patient having to seek medical assistance. However, without the appropriate aftercare services, patients may not know how to properly interpret results, or safely and appropriately act on them. In the case of more serious conditions, such as cancer, people may not have the appropriate support in place to deal with what could be very distressing news.”

Elsewhere in Europe, other retailers, such as Boots, ASDA, and DA, provide similar services, emphasising low-risk interventions, while Boots stands out for delivering advanced services requiring specialised training. While Europe has been relatively cautious, the US has seen major retailers including Walmart, Target, Walgreens, CVS Health, Costco, and Amazon entering the healthcare sector. This global trend showcases the evolving role of retailers in healthcare.

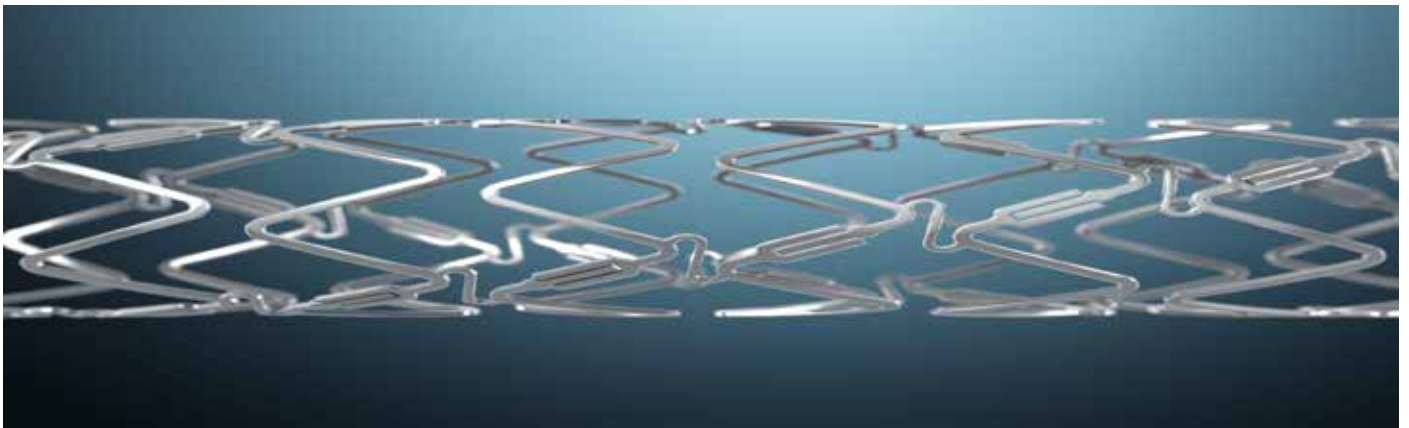
This surge in retail within healthcare is also being driven by wearable devices that provide real-time health monitoring and generate data that heightens our focus on well-being. These consumers electronic track various health metrics, from pulses and calorie counts to sleep cycles and blood pressure. They are progressing toward becoming validated medical devices, gaining approval under EU regulations and extending early diagnostics beyond traditional healthcare settings.

Empowered by these technologies, connected consumers actively engage with clinicians through apps and online portals, responding promptly to health alerts and creating personalised and accessible healthcare. This trend offers patients greater control over healthcare access and utilises technological innovations for a more consumer-focused experience. This shift signifies a departure from traditional models, with a renewed emphasis on understanding and meeting

the unique needs and preferences of patients. From personalised treatment plans to enhanced communication channels, healthcare providers are increasingly adopting strategies that prioritise a consumer focused approach. A new era of convenience in healthcare, one of the key aspects of the retailisation of healthcare is convenience. Patients are now expecting healthcare services to be as accessible and streamlined as their retail experiences. This has led to the rise of virtual consultations, online appointment scheduling, and user-friendly mobile applications that empower individuals to manage their health with ease. The integration of technology into healthcare services is creating a smooth experience for patients, ultimately improving overall accessibility. This trend is breaking down traditional barriers to access by extending healthcare services into unconventional settings. Pharmacies, retail clinics, and even grocery stores are becoming hubs for basic healthcare services, offering vaccinations, health screenings, and routine check-ups. This expanded access not only caters to the needs of consumers but also helps alleviate the burden on traditional healthcare facilities, making preventive care more readily available to the wider population.

In a comprehensive study conducted by Deloitte, the receptiveness of European consumers towards healthcare interventions within retail settings was explored. The research delves into the willingness of consumers to undergo various healthcare interventions in retail spaces, shedding light on the potential convergence of healthcare and retail. The study aims to understand consumer attitudes towards receiving healthcare services in non-traditional settings, offering valuable insights into the evolving dynamics at the intersection of healthcare and retail. The research indicates European consumers are open to changing healthcare behaviours for increased convenience. The alignment of healthcare, society, and retail interests therefore presents a compelling opportunity for collaboration and integrated solutions, promising improvement in patient lives, healthcare delivery and the purpose of retail pro.

Late-Breaking Data Demonstrate Significant Clinical Advantage of Elixir Medical's DynamX Bioadaptor Over Standard of Care Drug-Eluting Stent at Two Years



Dubai, UAE; May 17, 2024 – Elixir Medical, a developer of transformative technologies to treat cardiovascular and peripheral disease, announced two-year results from the BIOADAPTOR Randomized Controlled (1:1) Trial (RCT), comparing the DynamX® Coronary Bioadaptor System to standard of care Resolute Onyx™ Drug-Eluting Stent (DES) from 34 centers in Japan, Europe, and New Zealand. The results, for the first time, demonstrate significant reduction in adverse events and clinical advantage of the DynamX bioadaptor in target lesion failure (TLF) and secondary endpoint of target vessel failure (TVF) driven by sustained low event rates with DynamX compared to a two-fold increase in DES. The data were presented at a late breaking clinical session during the Euro PCR 2024 conference in Paris.

Clinical results show statistically significant benefit with DynamX bioadaptor over Resolute Onyx at two years:

- 65% reduction in TLF rate (1.9% versus 5.5%; $p=0.046$). The significant reduction in TLF was driven by low adverse events across all components of the composite

endpoint with DynamX compared to DES, respectively:

- Cardiovascular death (0% versus 1.8%).

- Target vessel myocardial infarction (0.9% versus 1.9%).

- Target lesion revascularization (0.9% versus 2.3%).

- 68% reduction in TVF rate (1.9% versus 6.0%; $p=0.029$) in DynamX compared to DES.

Two-year lesion subset results:

- 78% reduction (1.9% vs. 8.7%; $p=0.028$) in TLF rate in left anterior descending (LAD) artery lesions treated with DynamX bioadaptor versus treatment with DES

- Small vessels (<2.75mm) TLF rate was 0% vs. 3.5% in DynamX versus DES, respectively

- Long lesions (>23mm) TLF rate was 0% vs. 2.3% in DynamX versus DES, respectively

“These two-year results from the BIOADAPTOR RCT trial are very exciting unlike anything we’ve ever seen before, and represent a new treatment category for patients living with coronary artery disease. The TLF rate curve separation validates how the bioadaptor’s unique

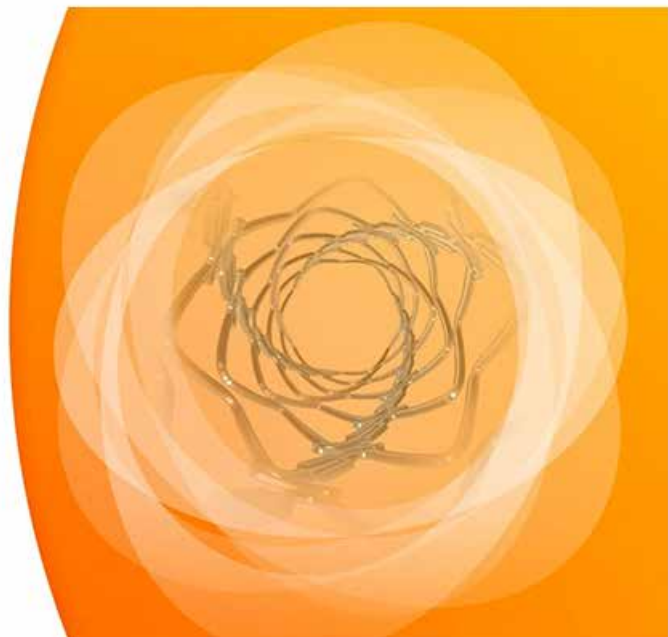
design and mechanism of action restores the vessel viability, including the LAD vessel. It does this by restoring hemodynamic modulation validating the previously demonstrated superior imaging outcomes at one year. These data show that bioadaptor offers sustained, very low event rates across all major endpoints, making it a superior option compared to DES," said Shigeru Saito, M.D., director of the Division of Cardiology & Catheterization Laboratory at Shonan Kamakura General Hospital in Kamakura, Japan. "The 78% magnitude of reduction in clinical events in LAD lesions is particularly important, as the artery provides 50% of a heart muscle's blood supply and undergoes significant hemodynamic movement during every cardiac cycle.

Restoring its function is clearly of significant benefit."The DynamX bioadaptor is different from current standard of care therapies, having a novel mechanism of action designed to return vessel health through three distinct phases of adapting in the body to restore vessel biology. The locked phase establish a maximum flow lumen and restores blood

flow. Unique to bioadaptor, the unlocked and separation phase of bioadaptor's helical strands releases the vessel while maintaining the established blood flow lumen. The final phase provides adaptive dynamic support after the unlocking and separation phase to restore vessel hemodynamic modulation through restoration of pulsatility and adaptive blood flow volume and has shown evidence of plaque stabilization and regression in the lesion.

"We are beyond thrilled with these findings from the BIOADAPTOR RCT," said Motasim Sirhan, CEO of Elixir Medical. "Never before have we seen a vascular technology that addresses the limitations of existing revascularization therapies by restoring artery hemodynamic modulation and stabilizing or regressing plaque volume, as we have with DynamX bioadaptor. These exceptional patient clinical outcomes further validate that the bioadaptor is truly a transformative technology for coronary artery disease treatment."

www.elixirmedical.com



The effect is generated through electromagnetic waves at a lower intensity than that of an ordinary WiFi device or cell phone (harmless to humans and animals).“e4life” is the result of a joint venture between two global leaders: ELT Group and Lendlease

MILAN--(BUSINESS WIRE)--In a global context where the smart home market is forecast to reach 345.6 billion dollars by 2032 (Source: IMARC Group), the sector of home healthcare and devices for air purification and sanitizing experiencing exponential growth.

This started with the COVID-19 pandemic and continues today, with such products now accounting for 11% of the market.

An innovative solution that is radically different from the existing options: meet e4life, a smart device that uses e4shield technology to neutralize airborne viruses, rendering them inactive. This technology, patented in Italy, uses no chemical agents or filters, but instead transmits electromagnetic waves to render the viral load in aerosols inactive.

The e4shield technology, which is at the heart of e4life, originated during the COVID-19 period from an initiative by a researcher at the ELT Group who explored the use of electromagnetic fields to render viruses inactive. Using research by Taiwanese scientists published in the scientific journal Nature as his starting point, he began to obtain his first results by testing different frequencies of electromagnetic waves, initially on COVID-19 and then on other coronaviruses.

“In terms of electricity, viruses are similar to a battery, with a positive charge inside them and a negative charge present on the shell of the outer surface. The unique e4shield technology subjects viruses to a precise oscillating electromagnetic field that resonates with the outer shell until it breaks. This renders the viruses completely inactive, so they are no longer infectious,” explains Vincenzo Pompa, CEO of e4life.

“**e4life**” has been launched under a joint venture between two global leaders: ELT Group, a world leader in electronic defense systems for over 70 years, and Lendlease,

specializing in major urban regeneration projects.

Efficacy and certifications

e4life has proven efficacy of over 90% and its neutralizing effect is instantaneous. There is no need for the environment to be evacuated, because it is harmless to humans and animals. The electromagnetic impulses it uses are safe (with an intensity lower than that of an ordinary cell phone or WiFi device).

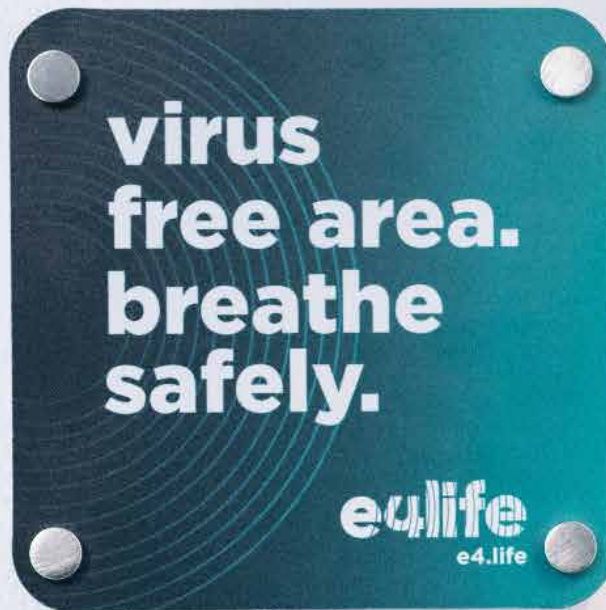
That is true of both the environmental version of the device (e4ambient), which acts in an area of about 50 square meters, and in the wearable version (e4you), EC and SAR certified, which guarantees that the device can be worn for as long as wished, without any concerns for health.

The technology used in e4life devices has been subjected to rigorous scientific tests and has been validated by the Celio Military Hospital, an independent institute ViroStatics and by a recent study published by the European Society of Medicine (Source:Esmed.org), the association of doctors, researchers and professionals from all over the world, with the common aim of promoting health globally.

The e4shield technology has also been the subject of a recent battery of tests at the Department of Biomedical and Clinical Sciences at the University of Milan (Italy): bioaerosol systems were recreated in a controlled laboratory environment where the SARS-CoV-2 virus represents seasonal influenza viruses (H1N1) were exposed for the required time to radiation generated by a prototype e4shield device, which uses the SRET (Structure Resonant Energy Transfer) phenomenology.

The results obtained confirm those from previous tests: an extraordinary efficacy of nearly 90%.

e4life is currently certified as effective against COVID-19, including variant and seasonal influenza, but the technology is constantly evolving and can be adapted to an increasing number of viruses and, in the near future, to other micro-organisms too. Continuous scientific research will enable the devices to expand the number of types of pathogens that they can render inactive.



NEW FRONTIER IN FIGHTING VIRUSES

The “e4shield” technology.

underpinning “e4life” devices, subjects’ viruses to a precise oscillating electromagnetic field that resonates with the outer shell until it breaks. This renders the viruses completely inactive, so they are no longer infectious.

Electromagnetic waves can render flu and covid viruses inactive, with a success rate of over 90%. this is the “e4life” new smart prevention device.



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Biological Benefits: On a biological level, massages can lower your heart rate and blood pressure, fostering a sense of calm. The physical touch in a massage stimulates the nervous system, decreases stress-related hormones, and promotes a



feeling of tranquillity from within.

Emotional Equilibrium: Emotionally, massages are deeply soothing. They create a nurturing environment that allows you to disconnect from daily stresses. This restorative experience can lead to improve self-awareness and a renewed balance within.

Physical Harmony: Lastly, the physical aspect of massage therapy relieves muscle tension, improving posture and flexibility. This alleviates physical discomfort and supports a healthier, more active lifestyle, which is intrinsically linked to mental health.

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SALUDA MEDICAL RECEIVES FDA APPROVAL FOR EVOKE SPINAL CORD SYSTEM

A medical device company specializing in neuromodulation with a portfolio of therapies driven by closed loop tech to treat debilitating neurological disorders, has received full approval from the United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for the Evoke Spinal Cord Stimulation (SCS) System.

The Evoke System is indicated for the treatment of chronic intractable pain of the trunk and/or limbs, including unilateral or bilateral pain associated with failed back surgery syndrome, intractable low back pain, and leg pain.

The Evoke System is the first and only available SCS system capable of instantaneously reading, recording, and responding to evoked compound action potentials (ECAPs) the nerves' response to stimulation to provide precise, continue to optimize therapy. Unlike commercially available SCS devices, the Evoke System was designed to maintain optimal pain inhibition by adjusting therapy more than 100 times per second. The Evoke System also captures and records millions of data points per day to provide clinical teams with unparalleled neurophysiological insights in context of therapy performance. Nagy Mekhail, MD, PhD, professor at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine, director of evidence-based pain medicine research and education in the Department of Pain Management at

the Cleveland Clinic, and lead author and medical monitor for the EVOKE Study, said: "The ground-breaking technology behind the Evoke System's ability to measure spinal cord activation has had many of us excited for a long time. More exciting than the technology, though, is the unparalleled quality of the evidence backing this system which demonstrates pain relief coupled with clinically significant improvements in physical and emotional functioning, sleep quality, and health-related quality of life. This evidence gives me confidence that Evoke is well-suited to address the unmet need of providing long-term, durable pain relief with this therapy.

Simply put, this is one of the most important innovations in the field of Neuromodulation since Dr. Norman Shealy developed the first spinal cord stimulation device in 1967."

This is the first Premarket Approval (PMA) based on a double-blind randomized controlled trial (RCT), the EVOKE Study, for an SCS system. This Study substantiated the Evoke System's designation compared to open-loop SCS in treating overall back and leg pain. In the closed-loop arm of the EVOKE Study, greater improvements in clinical outcomes coincided with more consistent spinal cord activation within subjects' therapeutic window.

The company plans to implement a controlled, limited release of the Evoke System in the second half of 2022 among select trial sites before initiating a full commercial release in 2023.

<https://www.med-technews.com/>



**Practicing visual
accessibility in optometry
offices**

Ensuring health care accessibility is crucial because it establishes an environment that is approachable for individuals of diverse abilities, including those with vision impairments. Patients with visual impairment frequently encounter difficulty physically maneuvering in and around environments that are not designed to accommodate their unique needs.¹ From the moment a patient enters the doors of your practice, they should feel comfortable and able to access the physical space and documented resources they need until the moment they leave to ensure a productive visit.

Maintaining the accessibility of optometry offices also guarantees that individuals of all visual capacities may receive essential eye care treatments. Optometry offices that prioritize accessibility allow patients with ocular diseases to receive necessary care for diseases such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and macular degeneration. Additionally, regular eye examinations are essential for effectively managing visual problems in individuals with low vision.

Eye care providers have the expertise to prescribe corrective devices and low-vision aids and provide advice on lifestyle modifications that might improve the quality of life for people facing visual difficulties.

To enhance accessibility for patients with low vision in optometry offices, it is necessary to address the existing barriers. This article will explore a few methods to do so.

Physical environment improvements

First, it is important to name methods that help establish a physically secure environment. Improving office signage can be a part of this process of achieving improved visual accessibility. Legibility of signage can be enhanced by using prominent, bold fonts on signs and printed materials. It is advisable to further consider the use of tactile signage.

Ensure that signage is positioned at a height that is easily visible to individuals and in critical areas throughout the office to effectively direct patients. Opting for high-contrast colors, such as black text on

a white or yellow background, facilitates readability compared with low-contrast colors, such as blue text on a green background. Reducing physical obstacles is another method of establishing a physically secure environment. This can be achieved by ensuring that the corridors and entryways are free from obstructions that may cause patients to collide with objects or one another, having smooth flooring to minimize tripping, and using furniture with distinct color contrasts to clearly define different regions of the office. Having well-illuminated areas with uniform illumination is crucial for minimizing both glare and shadows. Individual preferences can be accommodated by using adjustable lighting solutions.

Making paperwork accessible

When patients come in for eye examinations, there is typically at least some paperwork that needs to be signed. Forms such as these are typically written in a font style that is very small, with little space between each line. It can be quite challenging for most patients who have vision impairment to properly read the text presented on these forms. By making forms and educational materials available in large print, an office can make its services more accessible to people with vision impairment. It would also be useful to provide digital access through the office website or email, as many patients are able to make use of technological features such as zooming in or using text-to-speech options.

During the eye examination

When evaluating visual acuity in individuals with low vision, it is crucial to exhibit patience and tailor the examination to suit the specific needs of each person. It is important to select a testing methodology that is appropriate for the patient's visual status.

Visual acuity

One of a primary challenges encountered during an eye examination is the process of measuring visual acuity. Commonly used visual acuity charts often only go to a level of 20/400 and/or jump to 20/800 or require the use of central vision only. Although it is common for technicians to

rely on counting fingers to assess visual acuity, there are more accurate methods for obtaining precise visual acuity measurements. It is advisable to use charts that are specifically tailored for individuals with limited vision.

These charts incorporate larger optotypes, increased spacing between optotypes, and enhanced contrast. Two examples of charts specifically created for patients with low vision are the Lighthouse and Feinbloom charts. Early Treatment Diabetic Retinopathy Study charts are versatile in that they allow for adjustments in distance similar to the previously mentioned examples. These charts allow accurate assessments of visual acuity regardless of how limited the patient's vision may be. The same applies to near vision acuity testing. The conventional Rosenbaum pocket acuity card fails to adequately accommodate people with visual impairments. One way to improve the measurement of near visual acuity is by investing in more accessible charts, such as the MNREAD

Medical examination

Additionally, we can implement strategies to accommodate patients with visual impairments, thereby ensuring a comfortable examination experience for them. First, it would be considerate to verbally guide patients through the various phases of the examination, as they might struggle to see our actions in their peripheral and/or central vision. Phrases such as "I will approach you closely with this bright light to examine your pupils" or "I am moving this instrument toward you; may I assist you in positioning your chin and forehead correctly?" allow the patient to maintain awareness of the situation and avoid feeling helpless in the examination room. Upon concluding the visit, it is crucial for the physician to deliver a verbal summary of the assessment and plan, as the patient might lack the means to access and read the online portals when reviewing their results or details of the visit.

Keep staff up to date on accessibility

When overseeing an optometric clinic, there are numerous subjects and competencies

that necessitate staff training. Every eye care facility will inevitably encounter patients with low vision. Everyone on the staff, including receptionists, technicians, and medical assistants, should undergo training to be cognizant of the requirements of individuals with low vision in order to provide essential support. This is crucial for cultivating an inclusive and empathetic atmosphere. Technicians should be aware of the importance of reducing unnecessary transportation between testing and assessment rooms with such patients to minimize fatigue or risk of falling. As discussed above, it is also crucial to identify the appropriate use of specific visual acuity charts and verbally explain each step of the examination, including scans. Proper staff training will allow everyone to demonstrate respect and consideration while addressing patients' needs.

Conclusion

To go above and beyond, consider the use of assistive devices and technologies to enhance the patient's visual experience and address specific challenges associated with visual impairments. If this is not a possibility at the practice currently, collaboration with specialists in low vision can also provide valuable insights for optimizing visual function for individuals with low vision.

Access to eye care services can have a substantial impact on an individual's ability to maintain their independence as well as their general quality of life.

It is possible for people with low vision to lead lives that are more meaningful if they can address concerns regarding their vision, obtain suitable visual aids, and receive recommendations on better engagement in daily activities.

Ensuring that optometry offices are accessible to those with low vision is crucial for fostering equal access to health care, improving management of eye diseases, allowing early detection of these diseases, and pursuing education and support that would yield improve in the quality of life for individuals with visual impairments.

April 19, 2024
Lynda Charters

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AI MEDICAL ASSISTANTS SEE RAPID GROWTH AS HEALTH SYSTEMS TURN TO TECH AS A CURE FOR THE BURNOUT CRISIS



Health systems across the country face the same pressing problem: rising levels of burnout among physicians. It's a challenge that's reaching a crisis point.

Nearly all physicians in the U.S. said they feel regularly burned out and over half of them have considered either leaving the profession or adopting non-patient-facing roles, according to a recent athenahealth survey conducted by Harris Poll.

A growing number of hospitals and health systems are betting on advancements in AI as part of the cure for what ails physicians. Specifically, providers are investing in AI medical scribes and generative AI tools to help alleviate drudgery of administrative work that takes up so much of clinicians' time.

Health systems also plug technologies as a benefit for patients: doctors can spend more time talking face-to-face with their patients during the exam rather than typing into a computer.

Companies like Abridge, Suki, Nabla and Microsoft's Nuance use ambient voice tech and AI to convert a patient-clinician conversation into a structured clinical note draft and then integrate it into the patient's medical record.

Doctors also are optimistic about health-care AI by 83% saying AI help to reduce administrative burdens and increase efficiencies, according to that same athenahealth survey.

Chicago-based Rush University System for Health is working with technology company Suki to trial its AI assistant. The trial will start with a «few hundred» physicians and then the technology deployment will expand to more physicians, according to Punit Soni, CEO and founder of voice AI tech company Suki. «The endgame is to roll this out to all of Rush end-to-end to make sure that all the clinicians across the health system can use the product,» he said.

The nonprofit health system includes Rush University Medical Center, Rush University, Rush Copley Medical Center and Rush Oak Park Hospital, as well as an extensive provider network and numerous out-patient care facilities.

«After using other AI documentation solutions, Suki stood out to us for its depth of integration with Epic, ability to do more than documentation, and competitive cost,» said Bina Desai, M.D., chief medical informatics officer of Rush in a statement. «We understand the profound impact that AI solutions can have on our clinicians as well as patient care and are excited to introduce Suki to our network. We are excited to see how the solution will boost engagement and reduce burnout.»

Suki offers other capabilities beyond ambient note generation, according to Soni, such as Siri-like dictation features and coding, and the tool can answer questions through data retrieval.

The company says it can help clinicians complete notes 72% faster on average. It also claims other benefits for health systems such as a significant reduction in claim denials, with a 48% decrease in amended encounter rates, and opportunities to generate incremental revenue and improve efficiencies.

Heather Landi Apr 18, 2024

Featured Events!



Abu Dhabi Global Health Week
13-15 MAY 2024
Venue: ADNEC & ABU DHABI CITY

NEW YORK METRO
May 3-5, 2024
Venue: New Jersey Convention & Expo Center



Expomed Euraisa
April 25-26-27, 2024
Tüyap Fair and Congress Center, Istanbul

April 25 - 27, 2024

SANTEXPO 21-23 MAY 2024
The Annual Event For The Health & Medical-social sectors Paris Expo - Porte de Versailles



MEDICA 2024
11 to 14 November 2024
Venue: Düsseldorf, Germany.




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