



The Direct and Indirect ROI of Digital Care

By MedBridge

Overview

As increasing numbers of healthcare organizations adopt the value-based care model, it has become even more essential for organizations to improve outcomes while managing costs. Even for organizations not yet moving towards value-based care, these goals continue to be important to ensure success.

In addition, patients are increasingly wanting and expecting a greater level of personalization, convenience, and flexibility in their care experience. In this new environment, digital care is helping organizations boost patient satisfaction while managing higher volumes of patients more efficiently and effectively, leading to improved direct and indirect ROI.

In this guide we'll cover:

- Why digital care is such a powerful tool for boosting ROI.
- The three levels of digital care.
- The most common types of digital care and the value they provide.

Table of Contents

[Direct Versus Indirect ROI](#)..... 3

[How Digital Care Improves ROI](#) 5

[Common Types of Digital Care—And the Value They Provide](#)..... 7

[How MedBridge Helps](#)..... 9

[References](#)..... 10

[About MedBridge](#).....11



Direct Versus Indirect ROI

Return on investment (ROI) in healthcare can be assessed through both direct and indirect measures. While direct ROI provides a clear financial picture, indirect ROI offers insights into broader, often non-monetary benefits that also contribute to success with value-based care. A comprehensive assessment of ROI in healthcare often requires considering both direct and indirect factors.

Healthcare organizations need to balance financial considerations with their mission to provide quality patient care. Investments that might have a positive impact on patient outcomes but do not provide immediate direct financial returns are often still valuable depending on the organization's overall goals.

Direct ROI

Direct ROI involves measuring the concrete financial benefits directly associated with a healthcare investment. This may include cost savings or revenue generation. Some examples include reducing hospital readmission rates, minimizing medication errors, increasing referral volume, and implementing cost-effective technologies such as remote therapeutic monitoring (RTM) that directly lead to higher reimbursement and/or lower operational costs.

Four Ways Digital Care Can Improve Direct ROI

- Lower hospital readmission rates
- Fewer medication errors
- Increased referral volume
- Higher reimbursement

Indirect ROI

Indirect ROI focuses on the non-financial, intangible benefits that result from healthcare investments. These outcomes may contribute to overall improvements in patient care, satisfaction, or operational efficiency, even if they aren't immediately quantifiable in monetary terms. In fact, indirect ROI is often more challenging than direct ROI to quantify numerically. Organizations might use surveys, qualitative assessments, or other non-financial metrics to gauge the impact on various aspects of healthcare delivery.

Indirect ROI is particularly relevant for assessing the long-term impact of healthcare interventions. For example, benefits such as an improved patient experience, better patient satisfaction, higher staff morale, and a positive work environment can indirectly contribute to sustained financial success over the long term.

CORA Health Services Significantly Improved ROI with Digital Care and Remote Monitoring

CORA improved patient activation by **243%**, boosted patient retention by **69%**, and achieved an average reimbursement of **\$152.51** per episode of care. [Find out how.](#)



How Digital Care Improves ROI

Digital care can significantly improve direct and indirect ROI, but it's important to understand the different types of digital care available and their pros and cons in order to determine which types are best for your organization.

The Three Different Levels of Digital Care

Self-Managed Care

Self-managed digital care is a patient-centered approach to care that empowers patients to take control of their own health by tracking their health data, communicating remotely with their providers, following a personalized online care plan, and accessing targeted education and recommendations. Digital self-management tools might include wearable devices, patient mobile apps, remote monitoring, home exercise programs, patient education, and telehealth.

Self-managed digital care is rapidly growing in popularity and adoption due to factors such as a growing demand for personalized healthcare and an increase in chronic conditions such as diabetes, COPD, and osteoarthritis. Chronic conditions can be difficult for patients to manage on their own, and digital care tools provide a way for patients to track symptoms, perform exercises, and learn about their condition outside of office visits.

Self-managed care can be especially effective for musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions, especially when used in tandem with in-person visits, because MSK conditions often don't need surgical intervention and can be treated with standardized, evidence-based exercises.

\$149.4B

is what the global market size for self-managed digital care is projected to reach by 2027, and will continue growing at a rate of 18.6 percent from 2022 to 2027.¹

How Digital Care Improves ROI

Continued

Hybrid Care

Hybrid healthcare combines the benefits of self-managed digital care and in-person visits. It draws on technology for virtual sessions, patient monitoring and progress tracking, patient education, automated reminders, and home exercises. At the same time, patients continue seeing clinicians in person on a regular basis.

One of the primary benefits of hybrid care is the ability to bridge the gap between patient and provider. After all, patients want a personal connection with their care provider—in fact, 85 percent of patients believe personalized care is important.² With hybrid care, the goal isn't to provide less care, but more targeted care. Even in a traditional model, the vast majority of the patients' time will be spent outside of the clinic, so what they do at home will be just as crucial to their recovery as what happens in person. A hybrid care model allows more interaction between the care team and the patient when they are outside the clinic, so clinicians can maximize the time they get in person with their patients. This way the patient doesn't receive less care, but more precise care. It's not about losing visits, but about gaining more frequent touchpoints.

While self-managed digital care and in-person care each have advantages and disadvantages, when used together they create a synergy that results in better, more cost-effective patient care.

Assistive Care

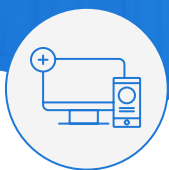
For patients who need a higher level of hands-on intervention, assistive care prioritizes in-person visits but draws on digital care tools for triaging and tracking. For example, an organization's digital care platform might flag a patient with balance problems and a recent hip surgery as needing frequent in-person visits for several months in order to reduce the risk of falling during the healing process. As a result, that patient is seen more quickly and his visits are scheduled for once or twice a week.

As the patient continues through his care program, his provider might use remote therapeutic monitoring (RTM) to remain in contact with him between visits, track his progress, and monitor his level of pain and difficulty in order to intervene quickly if any problems arise and help make his in-person visits more effective.



85%

of patients prefer a more personalized care experience.²




Common Types of Digital Care—and the Value They Provide

Digital Front Door

Patients are no longer walking in through a physical door three times a week for rehab sessions. Instead, they want greater convenience and flexibility in how they access care. To avoid the risk of losing patients and market share, organizations must find ways to provide easier access to personalized care. To meet patients where they are—while minimizing costs and optimizing quality of care—organizations are creating a layer of digital technology that spans the patient journey.

A digital front door encompasses digital tools and technologies such as telehealth, home exercises, patient education, RTM, patient adherence tracking, and in-app messaging and reminders to improve the patient experience from beginning to end.

 **80% of patients—and not only those from Gen Z—want to interact with their healthcare providers using a smartphone.**³

Remote Therapeutic Monitoring

Remote therapeutic monitoring (RTM) allows providers to bill for the remote management of patients with musculoskeletal and respiratory conditions using medical devices (including certain software) that collect non-physiological data, such as patient adherence and reported pain levels.

Implementing a digital therapy program that includes RTM can help your clinicians better manage, motivate, and engage patients throughout their episode of care, reducing costs, boosting outcomes, and elevating patient satisfaction.



61%

of patients would consider switching to a healthcare provider that offers a digital front door.⁴

Motion PT increased patient engagement by 11 times with the [MedBridge Remote Therapeutic Monitoring Solution](#).

Common Types of Digital Care— and the Value They Provide

Continued

Telehealth

Telehealth has exploded in popularity since the beginning of the pandemic, and the flexibility and cost savings it provides have kept it a popular option for patients. Key benefits include:

- Better access to care for patients.
- Improved patient engagement, outcomes, and satisfaction when organizations combine telehealth with in-person visits.
- Easier patient management with virtual triaging.
- The ability to stay better connected with patients, improving rapport and quality of care.

Digital Care Pathways

Digital care pathways (DCPs) guide patients through their healthcare journey, from assessment and diagnosis to treatment and follow-up. DCPs are essentially standardized care pathways made digital to enhance the coordination, efficiency, and quality of care delivery.

DCPs include tools such as EMRs and telehealth as well as more comprehensive platforms that can triage patients, analyze patient data, and deliver streamlined, personalized care.

While DCPs can improve the quality and efficiency of care delivery, one important drawback to keep in mind is that if they aren't designed to be used in tandem with in-person visits, they can silo patients in a way that disconnects them from their care team. Other DCPs such as MedBridge Pathways are designed to complement in-person visits in a way that improves patient rapport, connection, and satisfaction.



Digital Therapy Programs Improve Outcomes and Reduce Costs

A recent study published in *The Journal of Arthroplasty* reported that digital patient engagement platforms for total joint patients reduced readmissions and resulted in a mean savings of **\$656.52** per patient.⁸

The Rise of Telehealth and Digital Care

The level of telehealth visits in Oct 2021 remained more than **1,300% higher** than before the pandemic.¹

In 2021, **76% of consumers** surveyed stated that they are interested in using telehealth going forward, up from only 11% prior to COVID-19.²

The global telehealth market is projected to grow from **\$90.74 billion** in 2021 to **\$636.38 billion** in 2028.³

“Telehealth is here to stay. It's not whether telehealth will be offered, but how best to offer telehealth services as we move toward what we're terming **digitally enabled care**—which is not just hybrid care, but more so fully integrated in-person and virtual care based on clinical appropriateness.”

— Meg Barron, Vice President of Digital Health Innovations, American Medical Association⁴



How MedBridge Helps

Our comprehensive digital care platform gives you everything you need to engage patients, improve outcomes, and minimize costs—with no assembly required. It includes:

- ✓ **[Coming Soon!] MedBridge Pathways**
Supplement existing in-person programs with a variety of digital health pathways that segment patients by acuity to keep remote physical therapy at the forefront of MSK care.
- ✓ **Home Exercise Program (HEP)**
Engage patients with an easily accessible and customizable library with thousands of video exercises developed by industry professionals.
- ✓ **Patient Education**
Help patients understand their diagnosis and rehabilitation plan with engaging education to encourage them to effectively manage their care plan.
- ✓ **Patient Adherence Tracking**
Identify behavioral patterns and barriers to adherence to help boost patient satisfaction and improve clinical outcomes.
- ✓ **Patient Insights**
Capture patient insights like pain, difficulty, and perceived progress with surveys and monitoring tools to help build a patient-inspired culture.
- ✓ **Telehealth Virtual Visits**
Replace or supplement in-person visits for low-risk patients with effective, user-friendly telehealth tools.
- ✓ **MedBridge GO Mobile App**
Engage patients and promote adherence by prescribing home exercises in easy daily doses and allowing patients to reach out with questions or concerns via two-way messaging.
- ✓ **Provider Education**
Provide evidence-based online education and training covering telehealth, patient engagement, soft skills, and more.

Organizations partnering with MedBridge have experienced:

- 47% reduced costs per episode of care
- 1,100% increased patient engagement
- Faster access to care by 2.5 days for first appointments
- 12% increased FOTO effectiveness
- World-class NPS® ratings
- 15% fewer no-shows and cancellations
- Higher patient satisfaction, adherence, and loyalty
- More referrals

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ABOUT MEDBRIDGE

Combining powerful digital patient care tools with the highest quality education, MedBridge is committed to making healthcare better for both providers and patients. Organizations across the care continuum use MedBridge to provide an enriched, digitally enabled experience that engages patients while streamlining and simplifying care. Designed with over a decade of insight from more than 300,000 clinicians and 25 million patients, MedBridge has helped thousands of organizations realize better patient outcomes. [Learn more.](#)

See how MedBridge can help your organization. [Contact us to request a demo.](#)