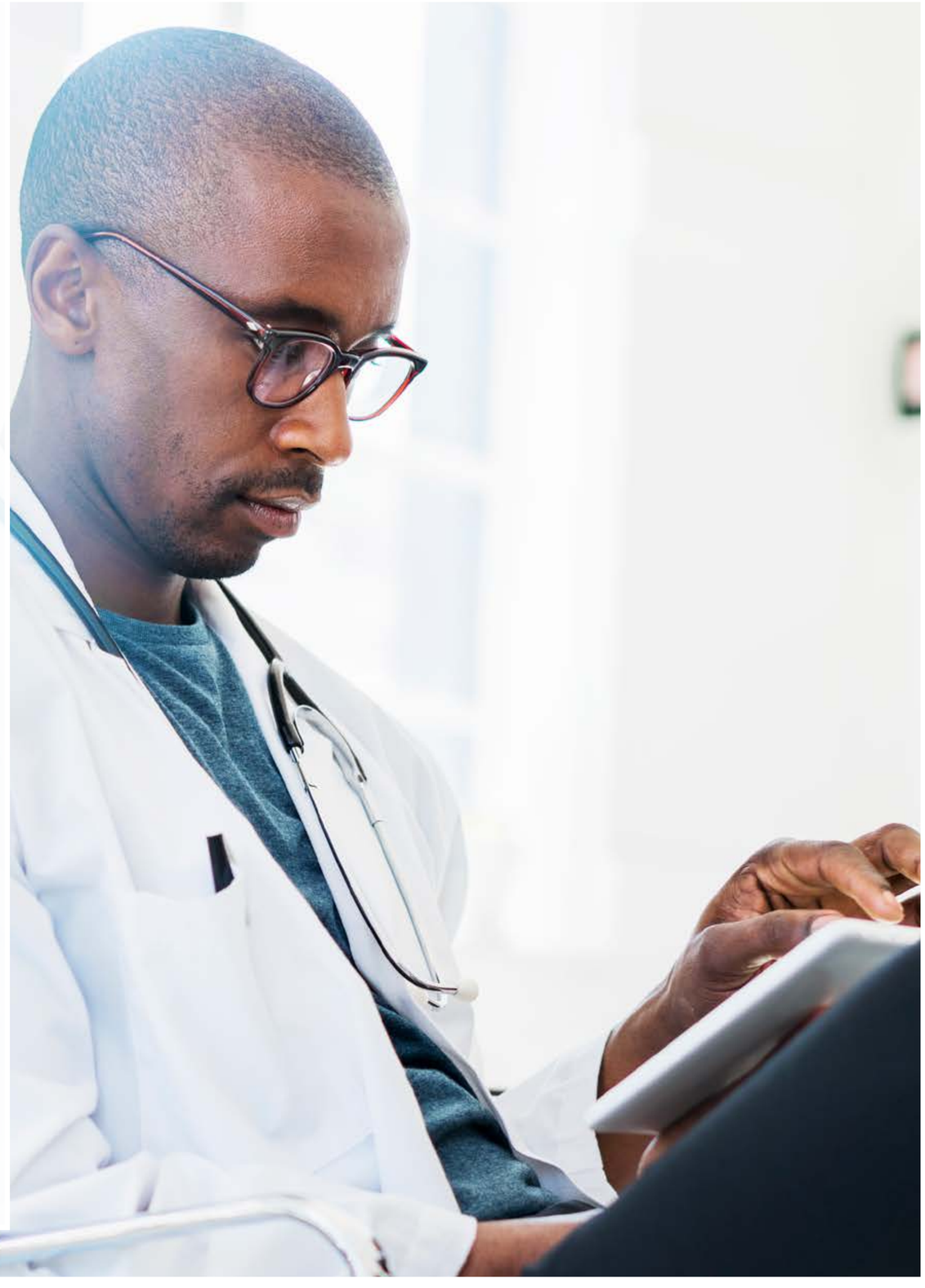
# 5 ways to integrate patient-specific analytics reports into the clinical workflow

# **More responsibilities and complexity** require enhanced technology solutions

In the era of value-based care, the responsibilities of clinicians and their practices have grown well beyond just caring for patients. Today, clinicians and practice managers must additionally work to improve quality, identify risk, and increase efficiencies—to help control costs and maximize payments—all while providing the best care possible, for more patients, with greater needs and expectations. It's a tall order.



# A need for data-driven, **patient-specific insights**

Technology and data add to this complexity, while also making it easier to deal with. While more data and advanced technologies can help practices achieve their value-based goals, clinicians remain concerned about technology adoption and its potential disruption to both workflow and patient care. And while more practices now have electronic health records (EHRs) in place, they identify “optimizing use of the EHR” as their most pressing information technology problem.[1]

According to a recent survey, 71% of physicians say they’d be willing to spend more time using technology if their EHRs could yield insights unique to their patients.[2]

Nearly 9 of 10 physicians (85%) agree that access to quality/performance measures specific to patients is key to achieving value-based care.[2]

1

# Daily patient chart preparation

At the start of each day, office and practice managers can assist practice clinicians by reviewing physician schedules and ordering patient-specific analytics reports for select patients who have appointments that day.

These reports can be used for daily clinical team meetings, and can help inform physician-patient visits for more productive and efficient interactions.

**Potential benefits for the office/practice manager include:**

- **Closing quality gaps**—for improved outcomes and maximized payments
- **More efficient patient visits**—helping to keep physicians on schedule and patients satisfied
- **Streamlined workflow**—all reports can be ordered through the EHR

1

# Daily patient chart preparation

## Putting it into practice

Each morning, the office manager at a medium-sized primary care practice routinely pulls and reviews patient charts for the day, organizing them for the front desk staff to hand off to the clinicians before each patient visit.

**In reviewing physicians' schedules for the day, the office manager orders analytics reports—offered through her EHR—for the following patient types:**

- **Patients who haven't been in the office for a while.**
  Since their last visit, these patients have either (a) received no care or (b) been cared for by other providers or specialists. In either case, the office manager has found that providing her physicians with more information—about the patient's medical history or gaps in care—enables more productive visits.
- **Patients having their first visit of the year.**
  Similarly, analytics reports provide practice physicians with more information about gaps in care for better visits with these patients.
- **Patients with multiple chronic conditions.**
  For these patients, ensuring that quality measures are being met is essential to improve health outcomes. That's why the office manager runs quality-related analytics reports for them—to help her physicians determine which quality measures have been met and which still need to be.

# Before patient visits

2

Physicians can order patient-specific analytics reports before a patient encounter to better prepare for the visit. Doing so beforehand could mean less time on a computer hunting for needed information and more quality face time with patients.

This is particularly important as it pertains to patient satisfaction—**87% of a physician's time in the exam room is spent on EHRs,[3] while 85% of patients rate "having a doctor who listens" as most important.[4]**

**Potential benefits for the physician include:**

- **More informed patient interviews**—for better care and outcomes
- **More productive clinical encounters**—for enhanced efficiency
- **Improved patient satisfaction**
- **Reduced costs**—by minimizing or avoiding duplicative test ordering

2

# **Before patient** visits

## Putting it into practice

Over the past few years, a primary care physician at a small family practice has experienced an increase in the number of aging patients he sees with multiple chronic conditions.

Because these patients visit different specialists, from endocrinologists to cardiologists, to address their varying conditions, gaps in care are common. The primary care physician finds that his EHR data is often incomplete and doesn't always tell him which tests have been ordered, when they were ordered, and for what purpose. This lack of care coordination can also result in duplicative tests being ordered—resulting in unnecessary costs for the practice.

That's why, before each visit with one of these patients, he runs a quality-related analytics report. This report shows him which quality measures have been met and which ones still need to be met, along with completion dates. Even better, running these reports before the visit allows him to provide this patient population with the kind of care they're more accustomed to receiving as long-time practice patients—**face time with a doctor who knows their care history, and is able to truly listen to better address their most pressing and current concerns**.

# During **patient encounters**

3

Physicians can order patient-specific analytics reports during a patient encounter for a more complete evaluation and a more informed action plan going forward.

A report that flags historical data-related gaps in an EHR, for example, can help physicians form a better assessment of patient health efficiently and effectively. A quality-related report can help them make better clinical decisions and determine an action plan, and a risk-score-related report can help physicians more accurately document patient diagnoses.

**Potential benefits for the physician include:**

- **Efficient clinical encounters**—for improved patient satisfaction
- **Greater accuracy in diagnoses and better-informed action plans**—for improved patient outcomes and quality scores

# During **patient encounters**

3

## Putting it into practice

A primary care physician at a large practice is in the exam room with a relatively new (within the past 2 years) female patient. She's presenting with fatigue, constipation, and frequent headaches.

The patient knows that in the past, her previous physician tested her for a thyroid disorder, iron deficiency, and vitamin D deficiency. But she can't remember when she was tested, or what the exact results were. She knows she wasn't treated, but she remembers being referred to as "borderline."

The primary care physician runs a number of reports right there in the office with the patient: (1) a historical data-related report, to fill in gaps in the patient's medical history (e.g., what tests were run; what the results were; if there's anything in her history that could be contributing to her current symptoms), and (2) a quality-related report, which can identify quality gaps and provide prompts to develop an action plan for the patient going forward. **The primary care physician now has a better picture of the patient's history and health, and knows which tests to order to make an accurate diagnosis.**

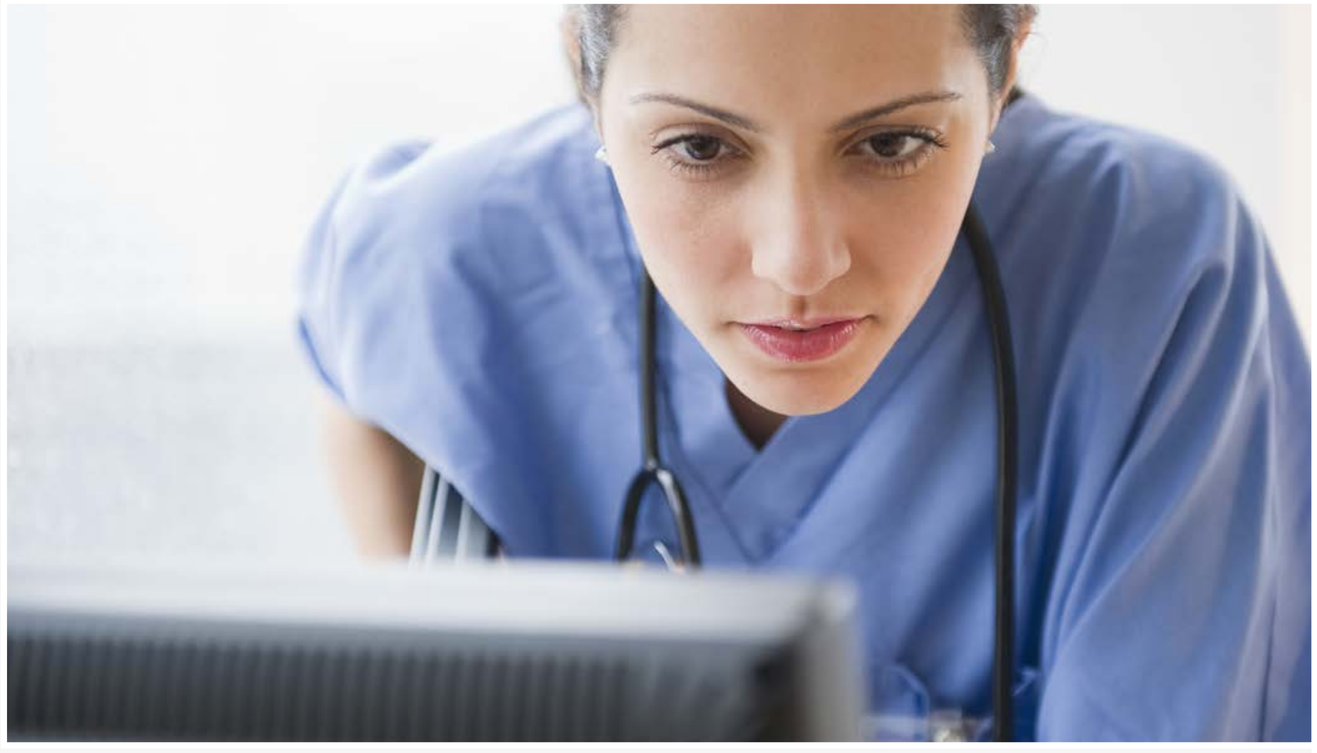
# Routine risk-score assessments

4

Physicians can order patient-specific analytics reports to help ensure risk-score accuracy and identify any gaps or inaccuracies. These reports offer specific codes to help with proper documentation within the EHR, which can help ensure adequate reimbursements—and save valuable practice time.

**Potential benefits for the physician and the practice include:**

- **Accurate documentation of disease burden**—for more accurate payments
- **Making use of unstructured patient data**—for more accurate coding
- **Improved care delivery and increased practice efficiency**
- **Accurate identification of potential high-risk conditions**—for improved patient outcomes
- **Potentially better financial performance**



# Routine risk-score assessments

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## Putting it into practice

A medium-sized practice has recently implemented a new initiative to address risk adjustment, requiring physicians to run risk score-related analytics reports for patients with chronic conditions.

During a visit with a patient who has both diabetes and cardiovascular disease, a physician in the practice runs a risk score-related report. She's glad she did. It reveals that although she has entered a code for the patient's diabetes (he has concerns about his blood sugar levels), she has not entered the code for his heart disease, which is still required for risk-score accuracy and accurate payment. She can now make this correction in the EHR.

# 5

# **New patient** visits

To prepare for visits with new patients, physicians or office and practice managers can order patient-specific analytics reports to access and review patient history—and enhance the patient interaction.

**Potential benefits for the physician and office/practice manager include:**

- **Better new-patient encounters**—for improved patient satisfaction
- **A complete patient picture**—for a more informed action plan and improved patient outcomes
- **Improved care delivery and increased practice efficiency**

## Additional opportunities

Patient-specific analytics reports can also be run before or during visits with:

- Higher-risk patients
- Patients who have difficulty following through with testing and adhering to medication and/or a care plan
- Long-term patients—to help ensure proper risk-score reporting from visit to visit

# New patient visits

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## Putting it into practice

A new patient has made an appointment with a primary care physician at a small practice. To better prepare for the visit, the physician asks her practice manager to run a historical data-related, patient-analytics report.

The report lists past diagnoses, medications, laboratories, surgical procedures, vaccinations, radiological imaging studies, clinician visits, and cardiac studies over the past 12 months.

As a result, the physician learns about a recent surgery and a prescription for Percocet. **This helps avoid unnecessary tests and potential medication conflicts that could endanger the new patient, who may not remember all of her medical history.**

# Conclusion

As they work to improve quality, identify risk, and increase efficiencies, all while providing the best care possible for patients, clinicians and practices can benefit from the kind of data-driven insights that advanced technologies offer.

Patient-specific analytics reports, which can be run before, during, or after the clinical encounter, can help extend the value of a practice's EHR, filling in gaps and enhancing patient visits—leading to better health outcomes and improved practice economics.

## Get the patient-specific insight you need with **Data Diagnostics®**

Ordered through an EHR, Data Diagnostics, a QuestQuanum™ solution, enables more complete patient evaluations by supplementing patient data from the EHR with historical, quality-related, and risk score-related analytics reports.

This allows for more informative patient encounters, more confident clinical decision-making, and improved performance against changing benchmarks.

## References


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4. Wen LS, Tucker S. What do people want from their health care? A qualitative study. *J Particip Med.* 2015;7:e10.


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