

ACCOUNTABLE HEALTHCARE, CONSUMERISM, AND PATIENT SATISFACTION

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Extended Abstract

The rise of consumerism in healthcare (e.g., Thompson & Cutler, 2010) is in part responsible for pharmaceuticals' drastically increasing spending on advertising to consumers for their prescription drugs (Donohue, 2006). Patients want a greater control over their dollars, greater choice of providers, and want support for a personalized care plan regarding healthcare options (Gauthier & Clancy, 2004). At the same time, this past decade has seen an explosive growth of ACOs (Accountable Care Organizations) (Sobkowiak, Sprague & Knag, 2014). However, little is known about the effectiveness of such new health care management system in the face of patient consumerism, especially for Type II diabetes patients. Understanding the issue is important for pharmaceutical companies for their marketing decisions. Yet, the issue has still not been well addressed in the literature. This research seek data from type II diabetes patients since it is a non-life threatening disease that affects large population worldwide (International Diabetes Federation, 2006); thus, it leaves relatively more room for patient choice, setting a stage for studying the role of consumerism in healthcare.

To fill the gap, this research intends to shed light on the role of ACO principles on doctor-patient engagement, patient satisfaction, and the treatment decision-making for Type II diabetes patients. Second, this research intends to investigate how patient-centric decision making may influence patient's familiarity with and receptiveness to alternative treatment options. Third, this research intends to illuminate the impact of consumerism on the patients' healthcare provider decision-making and medications. To this end, we use GLP-1 (Glucagon-like peptide-1) agonists as alternative medications for Type II diabetes patients, propose hypothesis and research questions, survey type II diabetes patients, and report preliminary results of the data pending a more thorough analysis using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS SEM).

This research hypothesizes that patients' attitudes toward GLP-1 in general will be positive and that patients will have greater intention to use an oral form compared to an injection form of the GLP-1 medication. Further, this research proposes that the use of ACO Principles by healthcare providers will be positively associated with doctors' patient-centric decision-making, patients' tendency to provide input in the decision-making process, and patients' satisfaction with health care providers. Lastly, this research anticipates that healthcare consumerism will be positively related to patients' satisfaction with healthcare providers and their attitudes towards GLP-1.

To address aforementioned hypothesis and research questions, we used a face-to-face survey and personal in-depth interview method. This research uses a snowball sampling approach to locate the eligible patients. Interviewers are the students who are enrolled in the principles of marketing class (n = 120) taught by an author, a required class for all business majors and minors. The class was required to do a field marketing research project (12% of the course grade) for one of two topics. Approximately half of the class opted to do this topic primarily because they knew patients in their social network, while the other half chose to do a different project. All research assistants were informed about the seriousness of the diabetes and were told that the research is intended to understand how patients cope with the disease and to understand their opinions about health care providers and medications. All the volunteer research assistants were thoroughly trained for topics that could influence interviewer bias including sources of error, reliability and validity issues, and were also tested on their knowledge about basic marketing research including aforementioned topic as part of mid-term exam. The volunteers were instructed to identify two Type II diabetes patients in their networks, ask them to participate in the study for 30-40 minutes in total, administer self-reported survey if they agree, conduct interviews with open-ended

questions while recording the interviews, transcribe the recording at a later time, and turn in both surveys, both transcriptions, and recorded audio files along with their reports. To motivate the interviewers to be serious in data collection, they were instructed to report on data collection procedure (e.g., time, place, and duration of the interview), their findings from two interviews on research questions, and their conclusion on the field research project. Participants' contact information (email or telephone number) was also collected for integrity check purpose. After all the deliverables were collected, 15% of the participants were randomly selected (Malhotra, 2012), and were contacted to verify their participation. All the participants contacted confirmed their participation. Further, all the interviewers' reports were carefully read and checked for the integrity of the data.

Data analysis results reveal that the use of ACO principles is positively related to patient-centric decision-making, patients' tendency to provide input in the decision-making process, and patient satisfaction with their healthcare providers. Further this research finds that consumerism is associated with not only patients' satisfaction with healthcare providers, but also their attitudes towards an alternative new medicine.

Our research expects to contribute to the healthcare management and marketing literatures in a few ways. This research is one of the first studies investigating the effectiveness of ACO principles in shaping healthcare provider behaviors and patient satisfaction with them. Further, this research fills the gap in consumerism literature by establishing the role of consumerism in shaping patients' expectation about their doctor's adoption of patient-centric decision making and medication attitudes and purchase intentions. This has some significant implications for not only hospitals but also pharmaceuticals as the latter try to calibrate their target market and determine a positioning strategy.

References Available upon Request.