

Achieving a 360 Degree View of the Patient

Why Patient Identity Is a Top Priority for Healthcare Systems

A recent survey of healthcare leaders reveals that although patient identity impacts nearly all aspects of health system operations, most healthcare organizations lack confidence in their ability to assemble a complete and accurate, 360-degree view of the individuals they serve. This inability to know “who is who” can harm patient outcomes, decrease profitability and slow key strategic initiatives like digital transformation and population health management.

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Executive summary

The challenges facing healthcare systems seem to proliferate with every passing week. Low margins and staffing shortages have been exacerbated by the pandemic, causing health system leaders to struggle with nearly all aspects of operations and patient care. As a result, health system leaders must consider disruptive strategies that increase revenue, profitability, and patient outcomes. Tactics such as M&A, digital engagement and care management tools, and innovative ways to attract and retain patients must all be considered. These strategies both impact and depend on the fundamental issue of accurate patient identity solutions.

A recent survey by Sage Growth Partners illustrates the deep and wide impact of patient identity management – an often overlooked or under-valued prerequisite to achieving operational, financial, and patient care goals.

Patient identity is linked to nearly all strategic priorities



88% of respondents view patient identity as being important to improving the patient experience



More than 60% of respondents consider patient identity as being important to every function and initiative within the organization



75% say it is important to improving care management



73% view patient identity as critical to enabling a digital front door



72% of respondents are “concerned” or “extremely concerned” that siloed, inaccurate personal data hurts care quality and the bottom line

Key Findings:

Health system strategic priorities revolve around the patient



42% of respondents ranked improving patient satisfaction as the top strategic priority

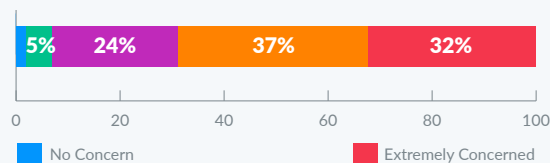


37% ranked digital transformation initiatives as their number one priority, with 83% identifying improving patient access as the number one driver for digital solutions

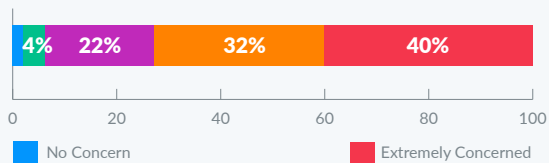
Patient identity is linked to nearly all strategic priorities

Managing risk and population health, as well as the impact of person data on the bottom line, are concerning factors.

Identity issues make it hard to manage risk and population health and exacerbate health inequities.



Siloed, inaccurate person data hurts care quality and the bottom line



Few have confidence in their patient identity solutions



Only 14% of respondents are extremely satisfied with the level of accuracy of their patient identity management solutions

Healthcare Leaders Overwhelmingly Agree That Patient Identity is Crucial Across Almost All Functions

Improving patient experience is the top priority of healthcare leaders

With the acceleration of telemedicine and of retail healthcare providers such as CVS and Walgreens, healthcare consumers now find themselves in the driver’s seat for the first time. As such, the patient experience is more important than ever. In fact, improving patient satisfaction scores was identified as the No. 1 strategic priority among healthcare leaders.

Strategic Priorities

Health systems are focused on improving patient scores (42%), digital transformation initiatives (37%) and addressing workforce shortage and resiliency (32%) as their top three strategic priorities



Accurate patient identity can increase the patient experience and patient satisfaction scores. Inaccurate data can result in unnecessary and incorrect test results, delays in treatment, and poor patient outcomes. Patients who receive wrong information from a provider are likely to switch to a new provider.

“Enrichment data is very important, [such as] social determinants, sex, race: if this is not here it can cause harm to the patient.”

- Audrius Polikaitis, Chief Information Officer and Asst. VP of Health Information Technology, University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System

The importance of social determinants of health

Nearly all survey respondents (91%) say it is either extremely important or somewhat important to have a complete, comprehensive view of enrichment data such as race, ethnicity and where people live, for example. This data is crucial to meet strategic goals such as improving patient scores and digital transformation initiatives. Similarly, 92% say that social determinants of health are crucial to achieve analytics goals.

Patient experience and digital transformation are inextricably linked

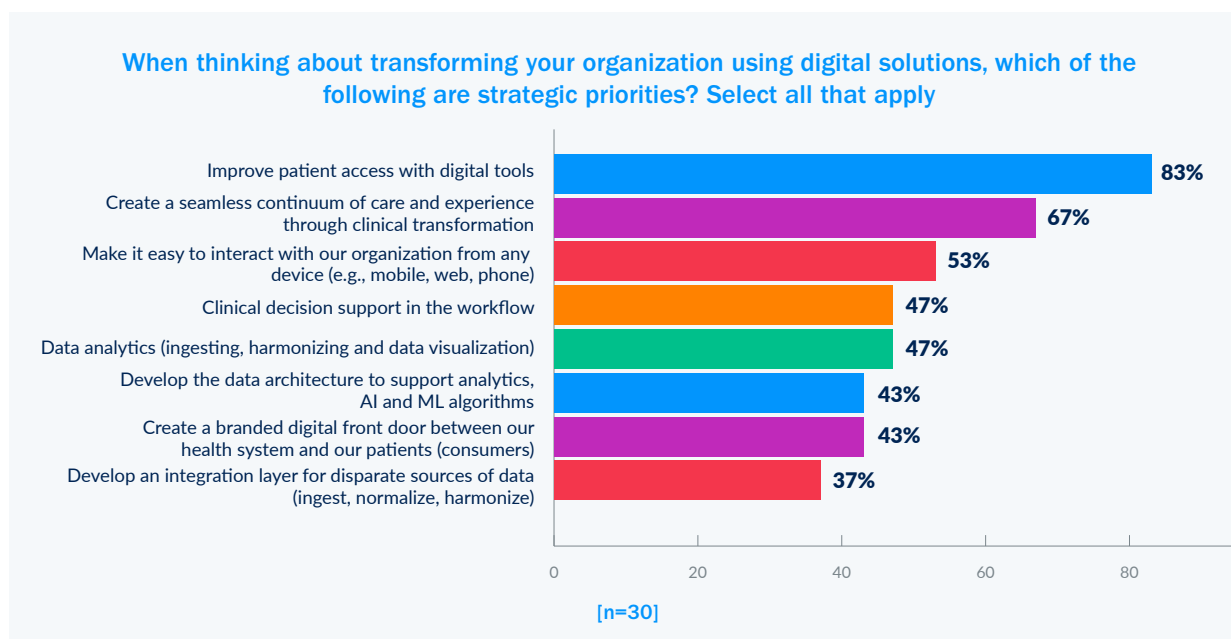
Next to improving patient satisfaction scores, healthcare leaders list digital transformation initiatives as their second highest priority. An overwhelming majority of respondents (86%) believe that the pandemic has accelerated the need for digital transformation to attract and retain patients.

Digital transformation initiatives are primarily about improving patient access and creating a seamless clinical and patient experience.

Digital Transformation Priorities

Although patient experience is the central theme around digital transformation priorities, improving care and efficiency and obtaining actionable analytics are also top of mind for health system leaders.

The major challenges to achieving this revolve around being able to provide patient and staff friendly technology experiences, along with competing resources and integrating disparate systems and data sets. These obstacles to deploying digital solutions highlight the importance of patient identity in integrating data sources, and implementing seamless solutions quickly with fewer resources.



As health systems pursue growth, poor patient data becomes magnified

Health system growth is fundamentally about attracting and retaining patients – either organically or inorganically. 80% of survey respondents identify the desire to expand service lines as a future goal. In addition, hospital systems list reducing patient leakage and acquiring new patients as other top strategies to pursue revenue growth.

Many health systems turn to mergers and acquisitions to bolster new growth. In many cases, the acquiring companies wind up with multiple EHR solutions, which leads to further fragmentation of patient data and increases patient identity issues. Notably, most respondents admit that standardizing operational processes is the most important challenge following merger activity.

Goals for growth

More than 80% want to expand service lines; The other top goals were reducing patient leakage and acquiring new patients



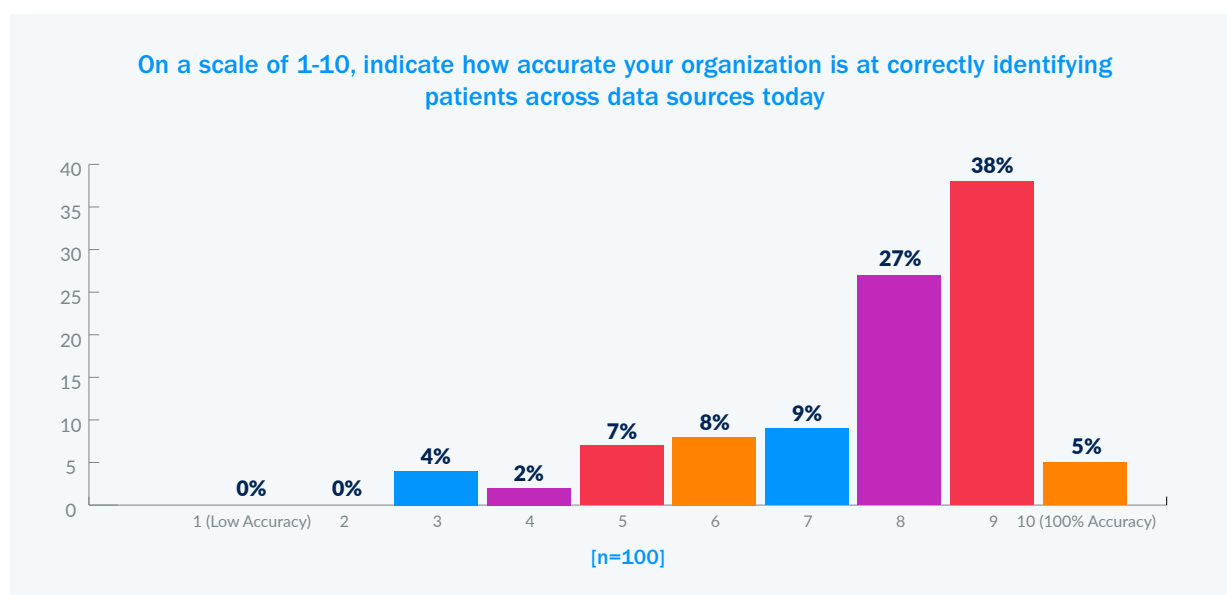
Enhanced patient identity strategies can not only help to solve post-merger challenges, but also drive overall revenue gains. For example, improved patient identity tactics can also lead to increased revenue growth by reducing patient leakage. In our survey, more than half of respondents (57%) say that patient leakage accounts for double digit revenue losses.

The State of Patient Identity

There is good news and bad news when it comes to patient identity in healthcare organizations. Although approximately 43% of survey respondents claim to be able to accurately identify patients with a confidence level of 9 or higher, that suggests that the majority do not possess that ability, leading to a competitive disadvantage for most of those health systems. With approximately 130 million patients seen annually in hospital ERs alone,¹ that means data could be incorrect for more than half of them.

Confidence in ability to accurately identify patients across data sources

On a scale of 1-10, only 43% of the respondents were able to accurately identify patients across data sources with a confidence level of 9 or higher.



Healthcare data sources (such as EHR or lab data) contain errors, including incomplete or redundant data. Identity errors or incomplete consumer data can impede consumer-centric growth and increase marketing costs. The incomplete consumer data could also negatively impact quality scores tied to value-based reimbursement, patient outcomes and brand reputation.

“How you align billing data isn’t the biggest issue; the clinical implications of duplicate records are. Multiple people are required to fix one duplicate.”

– Large non-profit healthcare system

Although 60% claim to be able to identify patients accurately, only 14% of healthcare executives are “extremely satisfied” with the level of accuracy. Additionally, 54% are only somewhat satisfied with their level of duplicate management accuracy, 21% are neutral, 11% are dissatisfied – suggesting that despite the evolution of the EHRs, this problem screams for additional technology solutions.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Emergency Department Visit Rates by Selected Characteristics: United States, 2018

A majority of healthcare organizations believe that technology solutions can improve the patient experience.

Patient identity is a pervasive problem across every operating aspect of nearly all hospitals. It is crucial for C-Suite leaders to have a better understanding of the critical contribution that accurate data makes to the entire operating system. Patient identity is a major part of that foundation.

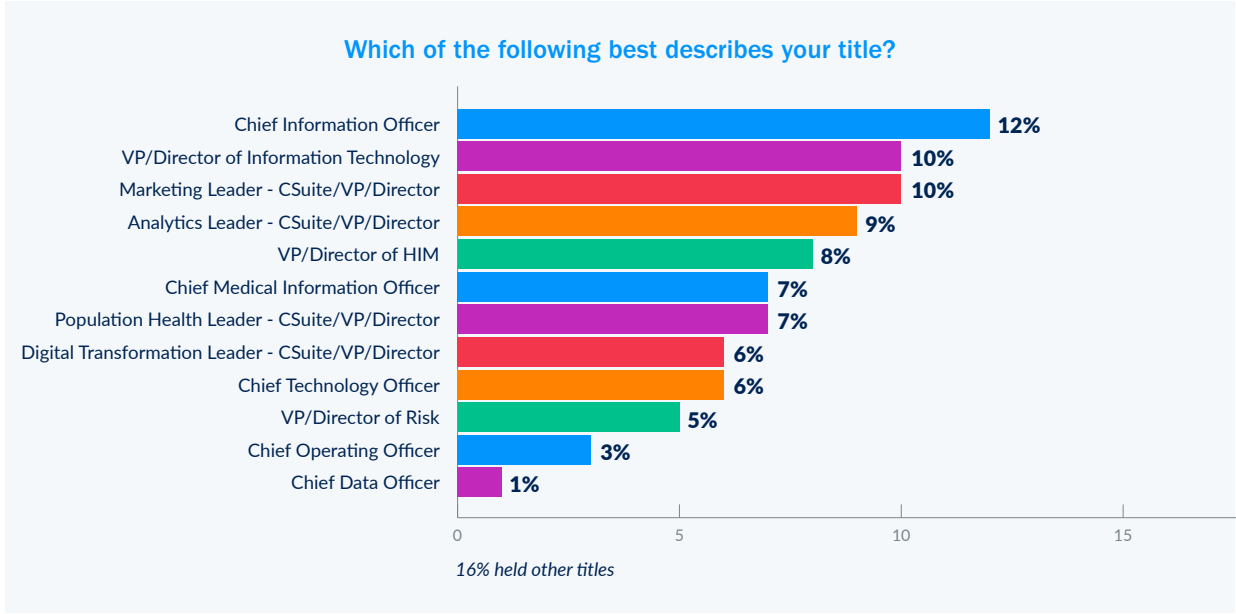
Existing solutions are not adequately solving this challenge. New solutions are required, especially those which go above and beyond the basic MPI functionality in EHRs, which cannot be relied on as a silver bullet fix. Our survey data reveals that 68% of healthcare organizations believe that technology solutions can help them to improve the patient experience. Additional benefits identified by healthcare leaders include:

- Improved operational efficiency (64%)
- Improved patient satisfaction (58%)

Methodology:

This survey of 100 healthcare executives was conducted by healthcare consultancy Sage Growth Partners and commissioned by Verato, the leading provider of next-generation identity resolution technology. As part of the survey, Sage Growth Partners also conducted 31 in-depth interviews with healthcare leaders. About 75% of the respondents were from health systems; the remaining were split amongst individual short term acute care hospitals and academic medical centers.

Survey respondent titles





About Verato

Verato, the identity experts for healthcare, enables smarter growth, improved care quality and efficiency, and better population health by solving the problem that drives everything else—knowing who is who. Over 70 of the most respected brands in healthcare rely on Verato for a complete and trusted 360-degree view of the people they serve to accelerate the success of their digital health initiatives and fully understand consumers' preferences, risks, and needs from the beginning and throughout their care journey. Only the Verato HITRUST-certified, next generation cloud identity platform enables interoperability across the complex digital health ecosystem with unprecedented accuracy, ease, and time-to-value. With an enterprise-wide single source of truth for identity, Verato ensures that you get identity right from the start. For more information, visit verato.com.



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