

# Patient portals don't appear to have much traction

August 16 2018



(HealthDay)—Patient portals have not taken off as expected, according

to an article published in *Medical Economics*.

Portals enable patients to view their [health records](#) and lab results online, share the information with other providers, and exchange secure messages with their physician's office. But both anecdotal reports from physicians and some government reports have found that few patients are actually using them.

Patients who are less likely to use the portals include those who are older, poor, or lack [broadband access](#). Another barrier is patients who see several providers may have multiple portals requiring multiple passwords and log ins. However, some physicians are not utilizing all the portal features that could improve practice workflow. For instance, online appointment scheduling is routine in other sectors, but often remains unavailable in health care practices. Both doctors and patients like using the portal for messages about normal lab test results or visit summaries.

"From a doctor's standpoint, one of the nicest parts is the ability to communicate more easily with [patients](#)," Betsy Greenleaf, D.O., said in the article. Her practice has been using portals for about five years.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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Citation: Patient portals don't appear to have much traction (2018, August 16) retrieved 23 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-08-patient-portals-dont-traction.html>

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