



# The value of patient-centered experiences

**Understanding patients' journey  
through the healthcare system**

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# Meeting the needs of an empowered consumer

**With increased choice under the Affordable Care Act and the explosion of new and disruptive technologies, health plans must start treating patients as empowered consumers.**

Every day brings new federal mandates to provide lower costs and transparency into patient fees. With higher deductibles and out-of-pocket costs, patients expect proactive, high quality healthcare experiences. Competition over who gets to manage these patients' care is fierce. The simplest way to think about it is that health plan buyers are now consumers. And consumers are much more powerful than "patients."

Health plans need a better understanding of what makes these consumers tick. Plan considerations. Choice of providers and treatments. Interactions around coverage and reimbursement. These are all potential touch points to better serve the consumer. However, health plans are wrestling with how to engage.

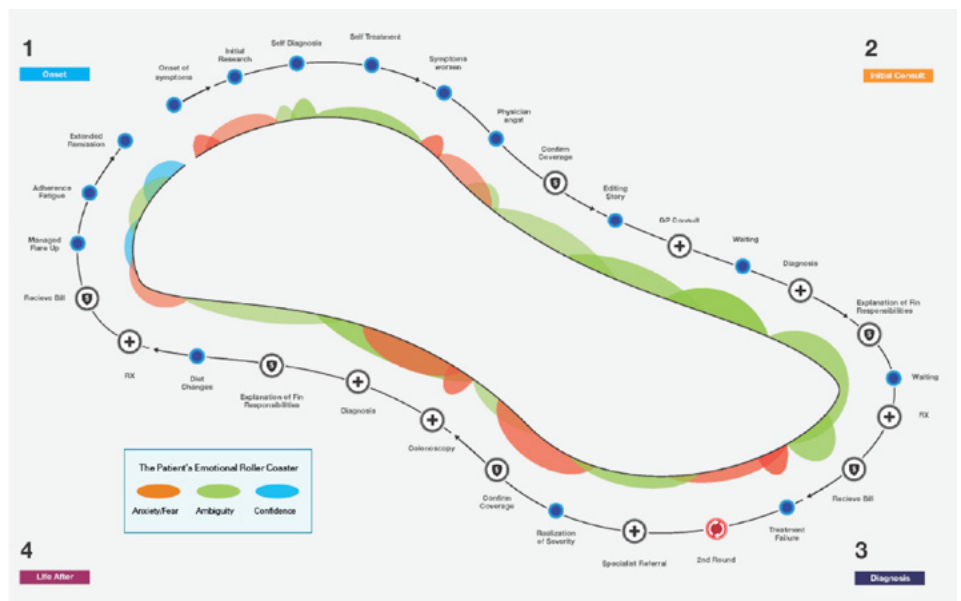
- How can health plans maximize consumers' positive experiences and minimize any negative ones?
- How can they encourage behaviors that not only help these consumers but also drive their own desired business results?
- How can they engage with patients at every step along the healthcare journey and meet them "where they are"?

## Patient-centric journey mapping

Health plans can better strategize, plan, design, and build consumer-focused experiences by using personas, empathy mapping and Patient-Centric Journey Mapping.

Journey mapping is a technique historically used by marketers in industries like retail and financial services. The approach involves gaining insight into consumers' psyches and evaluating touch points along their journeys of interactions with organizations from their points of view. In healthcare, a patient-centric journey map charts all the patient interactions and touch points with health plans and providers, as well as retail health outlets.

### Example: Patient-Centric Journey Map



# Driving better patient care and meeting health plan goals

Through Patient-Centric Journey Mapping, KPMG couples advanced data and analytics-derived insights with concepts from human behaviorism, cognitive psychology and operations. The intersection of these techniques create a map of a patient's temporal, physical and emotional journey through the healthcare system.

Health plans can use the map to identify touch points and discover problems that need to be solved, such as where patients are having negative experiences that might result in their giving up on treatment, misunderstanding viable care options,

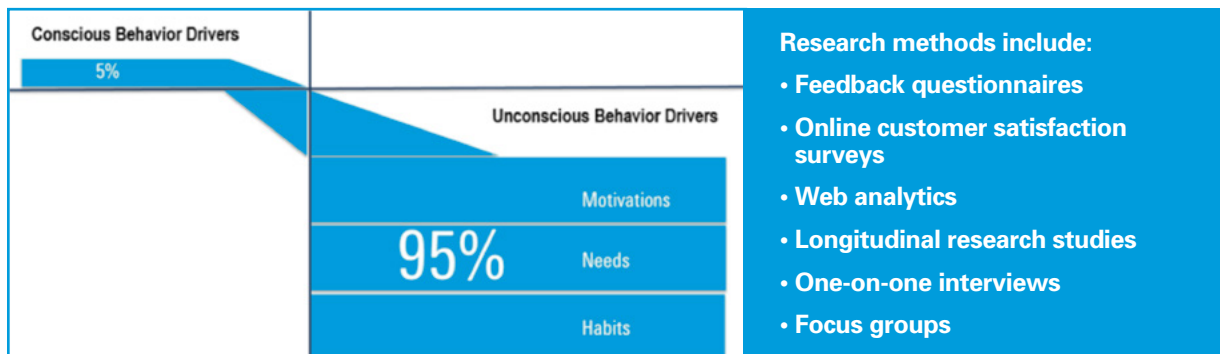
or changing health plans. By looking at specific touch points and related patient behaviors, health plans can focus on creating patient experiences that enhance their relationships, reduce friction and provide value.

## Serving as the Foundation of a Digital Strategy

Creating and utilizing a Patient-Centric Journey Map is an important component of a focused digital engagement strategy and roadmap. There are several steps to the process:

## 1 Uncovering Patient Needs

The first step in creating a digital engagement strategy is conducting both quantitative and qualitative research to understand patients' underlying motivations, needs and habits (see below).



Cutting-edge research in fields including sociology, neuroscience, psychology, game theory, behavioral economics, and others show that up to 95% of any decision or action is based on subconscious motivators.

## 2 Creating personas

Once the research is complete, the results can be parsed to create specific personas – or semi-fictional representations of positive and negative behaviors, traits, and mental models. While there are a multitude of unique experiences, narrowing down to a defined set of personas can help uncover behaviors and drive intended outcomes. For example, one person might love to spend hours on the Internet researching symptoms while another only likes to speak directly to his care provider. One might panic at the first sign of an unusual symptom, another might wait months before taking action. And, of course, there are many persona variations even within specific disease states.





### 3 Plotting the Results

The user research and personas drive the creation of a visualized journey map with many layers, including:

- The journey with relevant touch points, as seen from the patient's perspective
- "Moments of truth" where patients could be at a crossroads between positive and negative impressions of a health plan
- Mapping of emotional states along the journey that help health plans determine where they have emotional permission to engage members and where they should avoid an interaction

### 4 Choosing Touch Points to Focus Effort, Investment and Strategy

The journey map then becomes a blueprint to evaluate where, when and how digital solutions are likely to have a positive impact on patients. This step serves as the foundation of a digital strategy and provides guidance for evaluating, designing and implementing digital solutions. There's no shortage of emerging digital technologies to utilize for member engagement. The trick is having a strategic baseline from which to evaluate and choose the right technologies to meet patient needs.

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### The Value of the Patient Journey

Understanding the patient experience and intervening with real-world and technological interventions are not only valuable to patients. They are critical components of the industrywide transition to value-based healthcare, as well. Patients' engagement in their own healthcare and positive feelings about their experiences can impact how often they visit their doctors, their adherence to medication regimens, and their dedication to self-care. At the end of the day, a more engaged patient should be a healthier patient.

### How KPMG Can Help

KPMG has experienced teams that assist health plans with patient journey mapping, digital strategies and other transformation efforts. The teams include both digital and mobile creative and technical practitioners and healthcare strategy professionals. KPMG provides end-to-end digital services to health plans that stem from helping change the way clients think and innovate, to understanding and evaluating opportunities along the patient journey, to creating and implementing digital strategies, to designing and developing cutting-edge digital experiences.

Our historical work in healthcare includes helping health plans transition to consumer-focused models through end-to-end business transformation strategies and advanced data and analytics.