Helping patients and families use DHTs: lessons at scale

ⓘ About Cincinnati Children's Hospital

Cincinnati Children's Hospital is a nonprofit, comprehensive pediatric health system. As a leader in research and education, Cincinnati Children's is consistently ranked as one of America's best children's hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report* and is one of the top recipients of pediatric research grants from the National Institutes of Health.

🎯 The opportunity

- The rise of digital health technologies has transformed healthcare delivery, creating unprecedented opportunities to expand access and improve outcomes for children and families.

- Cincinnati Children's recognized the potential to break down barriers by integrating digital tools into patient care, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.

💬 The challenge

- Supporting patients and families in adopting new technologies and approaches is difficult.

- Families had varying levels of comfort and skills with technology, often tied to socioeconomic factors. Ensuring equitable access requires thoughtful solutions.

- With patients and families speaking diverse languages, ensuring effective communication is essential to foster trust and understanding.

- Providing tailored technical support for each family can quickly become unsustainable, necessitating scalable yet personalized solutions.

⚙ The approach

Cincinnati Children's mission was clear: to ensure families—regardless of their technical skills, language preferences, or circumstances—can confidently navigate and benefit from these innovations. The hospital aimed to address not only the

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technical aspects of digital health but also the human side, fostering an inclusive, supportive experience that met families where they were. The multi-faceted strategy included:

- Digital health navigators stationed in waiting rooms of underserved communities, offering on-site assistance and education.

- Support staff helpline staffed 7 am-6 pm daily.

- Text reminders, including tech checks the day before and 30 minutes before telehealth appointments.

- Communication language preferences (English or Spanish) and an interpreter application integrated with the video visit platform that supports more than 50 languages.

- Input from families on communication preferences and "how-to" videos to build confidence in using digital tools.

- Proactive check-in for new remote patient monitoring (RPM) patients within first week of enrollment.

The success

✔ 92% of patients rated their telehealth encounter as 9 out of 10.

✔ Over 100,000 annual telehealth encounters and over 600 monthly RPM patients supported through this strategy.

" Positive patient and family experience is essential for adoption. You must provide families with necessary and different support options to meet diverse needs at scale."

— Jennifer Ruschman

Assistant Vice President, Digital Health, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center