



HEALTHCARE MEETS EXPERIENCE IMPROVEMENT:

# Making The Case For Patient Experience



**COVID-19 has forced healthcare organisations to reinvent the way they deliver care. As businesses are scrambling to adapt, it's never been more important to listen to your patients, visitors and employees to inform how your organisation will rebuild, move forward, and improve the quality of care at the same time. Patient Reported Outcome Measures, otherwise known as "PROMs", are one piece of the patient experience puzzle that we can use to do just that.**

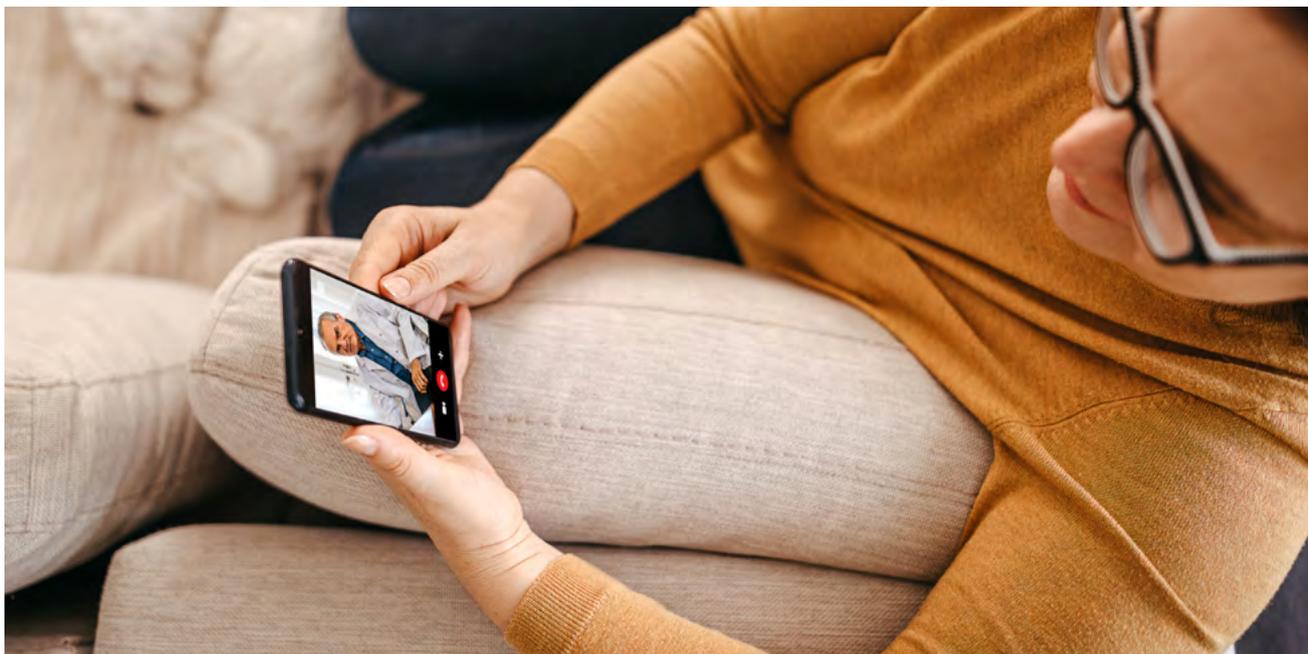
What if there were a way that we could hear directly from patients about their quality of life and other health

outcomes, and what they expect from their healthcare experiences? What if we could track these things before, during and after interventions to understand if patients are happy with their treatment plans? What if we were able to track trends over time, identify holes in the system and save hard-earned taxpayer dollars?

This nirvana is already being realised in healthcare organisations that have implemented a patient experience (PX) program. In this paper, PX experts **Jason Macedonia** and **Jarrard O'Brien** weigh in on what it looks like to future-proof the healthcare industry in a post-pandemic

era. It's no longer an option whether or not to put the patient at the centre of his or her healthcare decision-making. Asking for feedback on people's experience, as well as their health outcomes, are critical pieces of information to guide patient and clinical decision-making, improve quality, and inform investment.

After speaking with Jason and Jarrard, both leaders in the patient experience landscape, we've outlined the case for PX, as well as best practices for embedding a PROMs collection method.



# The Case for Patient Experience

Before we jump into PROMs, it's important that the benefits of patient experience programs are well understood. Here are five ways a PX program can make people healthier as well as transform your organisation:

**1 Patient experience data leads to informed and actionable insights**

Experience-based surveys captured in-the-moment with patients and/or family members create the unique opportunity for service recovery and intervention.

Both of these have an immediate safety, clinical or experience-related benefit.

**2 With a visible PX program in place, healthcare workers are less likely to churn**

When healthcare professionals can see the impact of patient experiences, they become empowered to make positive changes. They begin to see their contribution to excellent patient experience which increases staff engagement and satisfaction at work.

**3 By empowering patients to provide feedback, they tend to feel more accountability for their own healthcare and recovery**

When patients' needs and wants are taken into consideration they feel empowered.

Having a stake in their own recovery plan makes patients feel self-efficacy, accountability and motivation to recover.

**4 Your organisation can expect to recover costs**

After your organisation starts collecting experience data, you'll be able to make informed business decisions. You'll see where the opportunities are to improve service to patients, you'll be able to plan and allocate funding more effectively, and you'll be able to recover costs across the business.

**5 Your organisation can truly make a difference in patient's lives**

Once you have a patient experience survey capability in place, Healthcare have a real opportunity to level-up through capturing patient experiences through a survey capability, and also by collecting patient reporting outcomes measures (PROMs).

# What are PROMs and how are they used in the organisation?



Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are a method of determining the impact of healthcare from the patient's perspective. There's definitely a difference between *outcome-focused* and *experience-focused* patient surveys.

It's not uncommon for medical centres to ask patients about their experience post-treatment. This practice is known as "patient reported experience measures", otherwise known as PREMs, and is useful for benchmarking the organisation's performance and understanding general patient satisfaction.

To level-up in healthcare, organisations must go beyond collecting experience data, and focus on capturing outcomes. "Patient reported outcome measures" (PROMs) are an important supplement to your organisation's clinical outcomes

data to understand a full, 360 view of your patients' health and wellbeing. Once you have a holistic understanding of each patient, you can expect to see a more accurate picture of the impact of healthcare on each patient's life.

PROMs come to life when patients complete standard questionnaires before and after interventions. These self-reported aspects of a patient's health status include both physical and mental health, their current quality of life, and even their social health. Patient-reported outcomes are fundamental to understanding whether healthcare services and procedures are improving the patient's quality of life, or if they are simply churning patients through a system without considering their fundamental needs.

# From New York to New Zealand, we are still in an “emerging” state of PROMs adoption and collection

In New Zealand, very few district health boards are currently collecting PROMs.

**Jarrard O'Brien** is the Executive Director for Human-Centred Design at Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health in South Australia. He was formerly the Associate Director of a New Zealand District Health Board leading the development of a systematic PROMs program.

“It took two years to set up the technological capability to collect PROMs at scale across the organisation” Jarrard says. “The system is a strong example for other healthcare organisations.”

In the United States, the process of PROMs collection is also in its infancy. **Jason Macedonia**, VP of Healthcare &

Patient Experience at **InMoment** can see a discrepancy between where the US wants to be in terms of healthcare outcomes and what the government bodies are actually investing in.

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**“In the US, there is an astonishingly high investment in basic survey collection of the experience, but comparatively very little investment into how we are measuring patient outcomes”**

JASON MACEDONIA

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“While we are so focused on the very basics, unfortunately there are not many organisations validating the true end goal.”

# The First Step Toward PROMs Collection is a Fundamental “Patient-Centric” Paradigm Shift Within the Organisation

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“If you put patients in control of their healthcare experiences, they will design a system that is perfect for them.”

JARRARD O’BRIEN

*Executive Director for Human-Centred Design at Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health in South Australia*

Even before PROMs can be collected, there is a preliminary phase of understanding patients that Jason has started calling **patient-reported introductions**.

Patient-reported intros are a fundamental understanding of what patients expect, need and want from their healthcare experience. It’s a process of individualising the experience for each patient and asking in which ways they would like to engage with healthcare professionals in terms of their healthcare treatment plans.

Jason says that up-front collection protocols are critical for understanding the individual needs of each unique patient.

“It’s important to ask patients which way they like to be communicated to, and hear directly from each person what they are expecting from their healthcare professionals in terms of treatment and their programmes.”

Jarrard echoes a similar sentiment — PROMs collection is a patient-centred philosophy. “While we can make systematic use of validated measures, it’s so important that we ask individual patients what excellent healthcare and outcomes look like to them and their family,” he says.

Open-ended PROMs collection gives each patient control over their own healthcare, whereas itemised, systematic surveys tend to create bias and limit the information volunteered. By asking patients to define which healthcare outcomes are important to them, professionals are avoiding the trap of framing the experience and dictating what *should* matter.

# Enabling Technology is the Second Step Toward an Embedded PROMs Collection Program

A leading New Zealand DHB has taken on the challenge of embedding the technology necessary to make a difference in patients' lives, but it hasn't been an easy road.

After a competitive pitch and the creation of an impressive use case, the DHB partnered with InMoment and set about devising a solution that adhered to five working principles, it must be:



**1. Entirely data driven**



**2. Led by clinical teams or by the community**



**3. Tight security with health data**



**4. Sophisticated natural language processing**



**5. Based on human-centred design**

“The first thing healthcare organisations need to focus on is embedding the technology and to start making data available to clinical teams in real-time,” Jarrard says. “Once the data is integrated into clinical systems and available to healthcare workers in real-time, the impact is that clinical teams are engaged, empowered and can easily access patient-reported outcome data directly from each person’s electronic health record.”

# Once embedded, PROMs collection will help you determine the patient's true quality of life

Physical wellbeing isn't the only aspect of health that should matter to healthcare providers. It's also important to consider social wellbeing, so patients aren't churning through a healthcare system and returning back into a situation that isn't serving them. When a patient fills out a PX survey, social indicators are taken into consideration such as housing, social wellbeing, smoking and alcohol use, and more.

It's also important for organisations to utilise existing clinically relevant data. Jason recommends to take inventory of what you already know about each individual patient embedded within an experience collection protocol.



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**“There are usually existing records and existing clinical indicators that healthcare providers can leverage to help them focus on what each individual patient needs in terms of managing their healthcare treatment plan.”**

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Instead of asking a generic set of questions about the patient's condition, the clinician should be asking deeper, more qualitative questions. By keeping the question open-ended, physicians can truly start to understand how to help patients manage a specific condition from which they suffer.

**WRAPPING UP:**

# **The Potential for Transforming the Patient's Experience with PROMs Collection is Limitless**

Whilst we have an idea of what is possible, the actual impact of PROMs collection is yet to be explicitly determined. In the next decade, both Jay and Jarrard look forward to seeing how the healthcare industry embraces patient experience PROMs collection to drive value-based healthcare and reduce healthcare costs, inform population-level healthcare planning and funding and improve healthcare quality overall.

## **WHAT'S NEXT?**

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*If you'd like to discuss your unique requirements and our experience in the healthcare industry, we'd be delighted to assist. Please schedule an introductory discussion with us by reaching out to [infoapac@inmoment.com](mailto:infoapac@inmoment.com)*

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