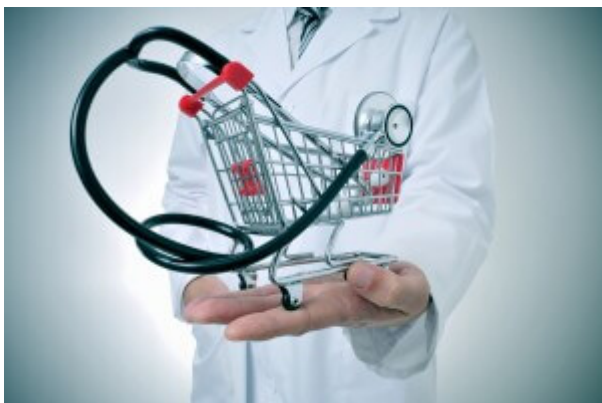


The Emergence of Health Care Consumerism

A connection to the internet affords the average person access to [unprecedented levels of information](#). Frequently, this is cited as the “democratization of information.” And, by all means, it’s a good thing. The more accessible information is, the [more knowledgeable](#) our populace. There are demonstrable benefits ranging from earning an online degree to remembering who won the 1998 Grammy for Record of the Year (it was “[My Heart Will Go On](#)” by Celine Dion).

But the changes are not just academic. The internet allows companies to compete against one another on a global scale. Consumers are not beholden to the prices that their local brick-and-mortar store offers; they can search for the best deal anywhere on the planet. This advantage is known as [consumerism](#), and it’s spreading.

Health care and insurance have never been known as buyers markets. But the [rise of disruptive health IT](#) is changing that. Consumers are beginning to participate more in their care while simultaneously demanding increased transparency in the products they receive. And with medical



records being more accessible and [interoperable](#) than ever before, patients have much more control over their health and care. For example, the [rise in wearable technology](#) helps people track their health in real time and [web-based tools](#) allow patients to compare reviews and

prices before going in.

For the most part, the industry is reacting positively. Care is becoming more outcome-oriented rather than focused on procedures completed. With the direction of the government, care providers are being encouraged to share and analyze records on a larger scale, which should lead to cost savings and improved care.

The government's subsidized care programs, Medicare and Medicaid, are following suit. Many states are shifting to a [managed care program](#) that pays based on value rather than volume. Similarly, states like Michigan are offering their Medicare and Medicaid populations [mobile tools](#) that empower patients to access and manage their care. As a catalyst for healthcare innovation, CNSI is aligning itself with recent trends in the healthcare marketplace to best meet the needs of the government agencies that have to make the most of taxpayer dollars while responding to increasing demand.

What are other examples of consumerism in health care? How can the industry better meet the needs of patients? Join the conversation by finding us on Twitter @CNSICorp.