

Patient forms: A case study on enhancing the patient experience and enabling more accurate mental health assessments

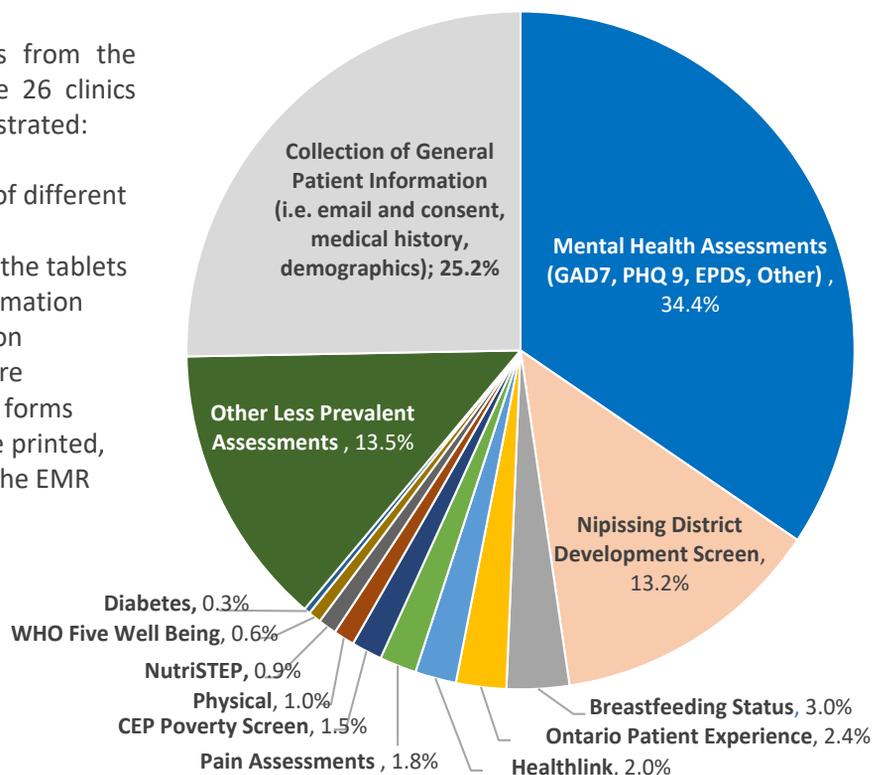
Patient forms via tablets are an efficient method of collecting patient information, resulting in time savings. They facilitate the collection of valuable clinical information using validated assessment tools, enhancing point of care interactions for both the patient and their clinician.

Ontario physicians see an average of 80 patients per week.¹ An incremental gain in efficiency for each patient seen has the potential to translate into time and resource savings for the clinic, primary care providers and staff. The time saved supports a focus on other priorities such as better work-life balance, enhancing quality, and/or improving access.²

As part of work conducted by the eHealth Centre of Excellence, 26 clinics across Waterloo Wellington adopted tablets (during 2017-18) to enhance the efficiency of their practice. A requirement of participation in the program was to use tablets to conduct mental health assessments; however, clinics were also encouraged to use the tablets to meet other needs related to efficiency.

Figure 1 illustrates the findings from the analysis of tablet data from the 26 clinics that have adopted tablets. As illustrated:

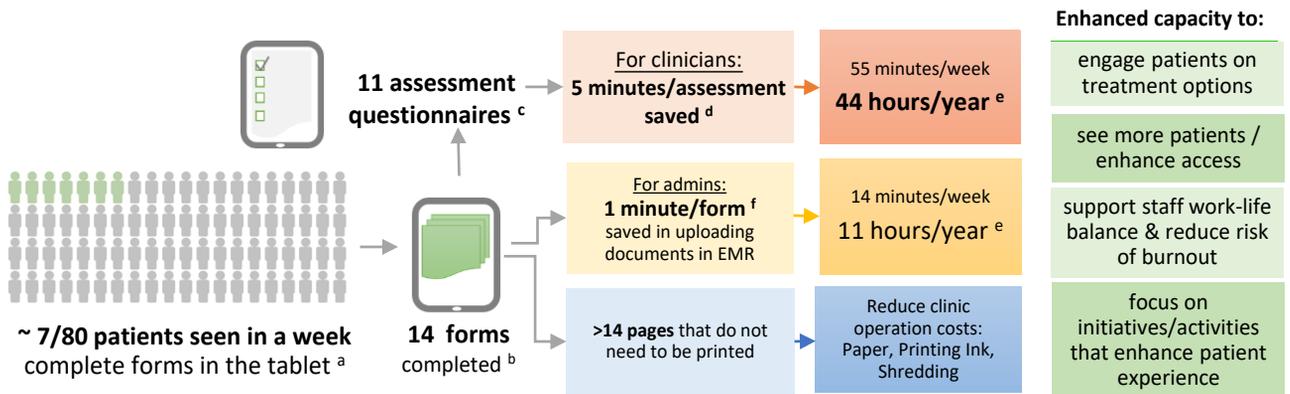
- Tablets are used for a variety of different forms
- 1/4 of all forms completed on the tablets collected general patient information unrelated to a specific condition
- 3/4 of all forms completed were assessments and/or screening forms
- Prior to tablet use, forms were printed, then manually uploaded into the EMR after completion
- For assessments, primary care clinician time was spent completing the questions with the patient, limiting available time to discuss next steps



“Having tablets in our clinic has dramatically improved our ability to gather clinical data and track changes over time. I am so impressed with the speed and efficiency of the tablets and how easy they are to use.”

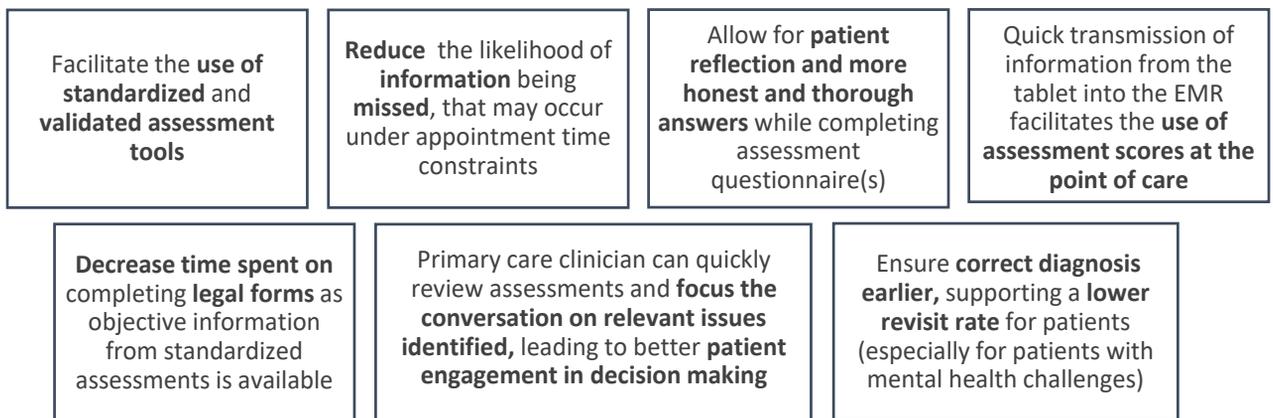
- Dr. Jessica Seibel, The Boardwalk Medical Centre

Ninety-two per cent of patients responded positively (n=1,907), indicating that the tablets were easy to use. In addition, tablets enhanced the patients' ability to communicate, helping them to feel more comfortable answering difficult questions, and allowing clinicians to reach a greater proportion of individuals.



^a- tablet use estimated based on 26-clinics including 126 clinicians who used the tablet for an average of 7 patients/week, and the average patients seen per week based on 2017 CMA Physician Survey; ^b - average 2 forms for patient; ^c - estimated based on ¼ forms being assessments, requiring more time for the clinician to complete, ^d-average time for common assessments, based on clinician feedback ; ^e - based on 48 weeks of work/year; ^f - estimated based on front line staff feedback

Additional benefits noted:



If you have any questions or would like further information on this case study, contact communications@ehealthce.ca.

Authored by: Lirije Hyseni, eHealth Centre of Excellence

Published: February 2018 (Original)

Works Cited:

1. Brien S. et al. (2015). Taking Stock: A Report on the Quality of Mental Health and Addictions Services in Ontario. An HQO/ICES Report. Toronto.
2. Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council.(2016). Better Mental Health Means Better Health. Annual Report. ON: Toronto.
3. Ferrari, M., Ahmad, F., Shakya, Y., Ledwos, C., & McKenzie, K.(2016). Computer-assisted client assessment survey for mental health: patient and health provider perspectives. BMC Health Services Research, 16, 516. <http://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-016-1756-0>

This document is not to be reprinted without permission from the eHealth Centre of Excellence.