Your Find Care Experience

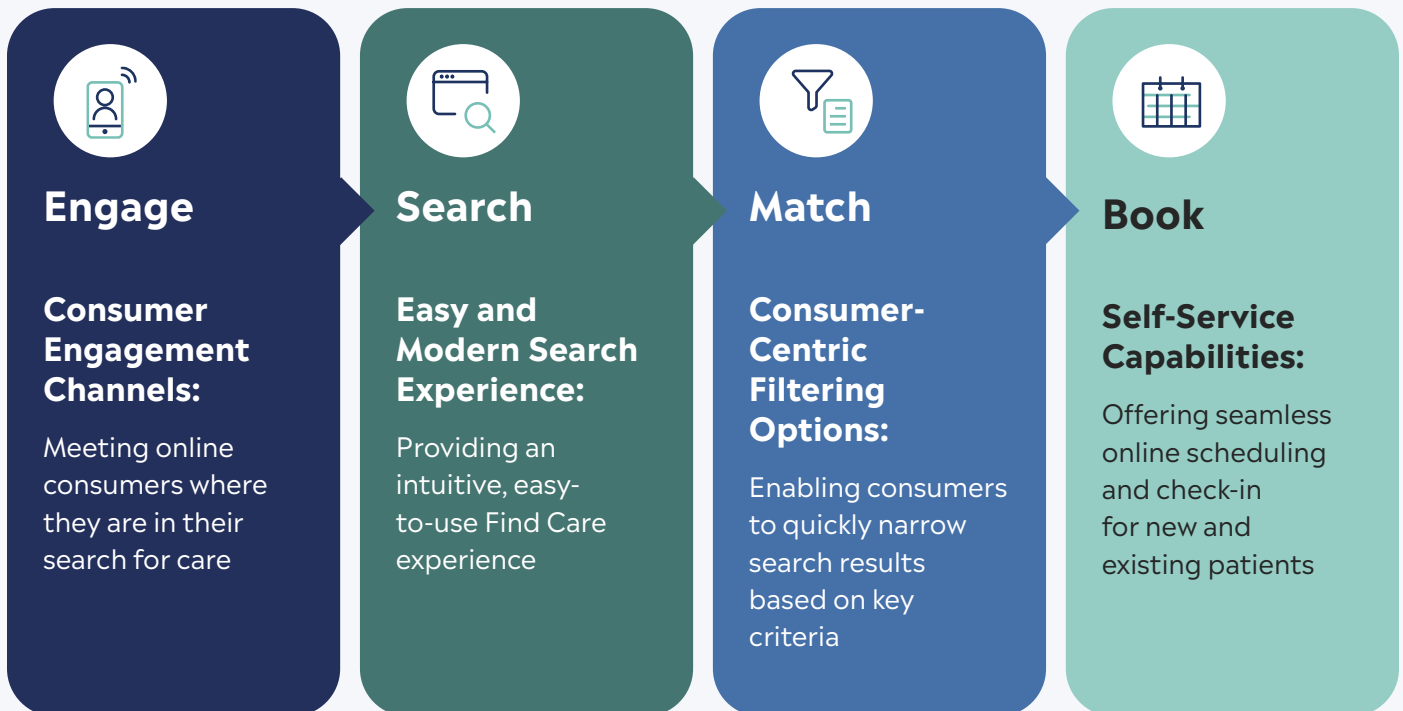Four Key Steps to Converting the Digitally Empowered Healthcare Consumer

Introduction

Healthcare consumers today expect convenience, flexibility, and seamless digital access as a baseline in their journey to finding care. On that journey, they are faced with countless decisions: Who is the best provider for me? Where is the most convenient location to receive care? Can I see a provider virtually?, and so on. With more and more people turning to the internet to find new care options, it's more important than ever for healthcare organizations to make it easy for consumers to understand their expertise and offerings—enabling them to search for, select, and book care in a single Find Care experience.

Creating a truly holistic Find Care experience allows healthcare organizations to take control of their online patient acquisition strategy, build loyalty, and deliver on the convenience and flexibility that consumers demand.

What is a Find Care experience?

Find Care refers to a holistic online experience that offers consumers the ability to find a variety of care types and options—including providers, locations, and services—select the best option for their needs, and book that care online, all within a single, streamlined workflow.

This guide covers 4 key stages to invest in along the patient access journey—with specific tactics for each—to help health systems engage and convert consumers with an effective Find Care experience:

Engage

Consumer Engagement Channels:

Meeting online consumers where they are in their search for care

Search

Easy and Modern Search Experience:

Providing an intuitive, easy-to-use Find Care experience

Match

Consumer-Centric Filtering Options:

Enabling consumers to quickly narrow search results based on key criteria

Book

Self-Service Capabilities:

Offering seamless online scheduling and check-in for new and existing patients
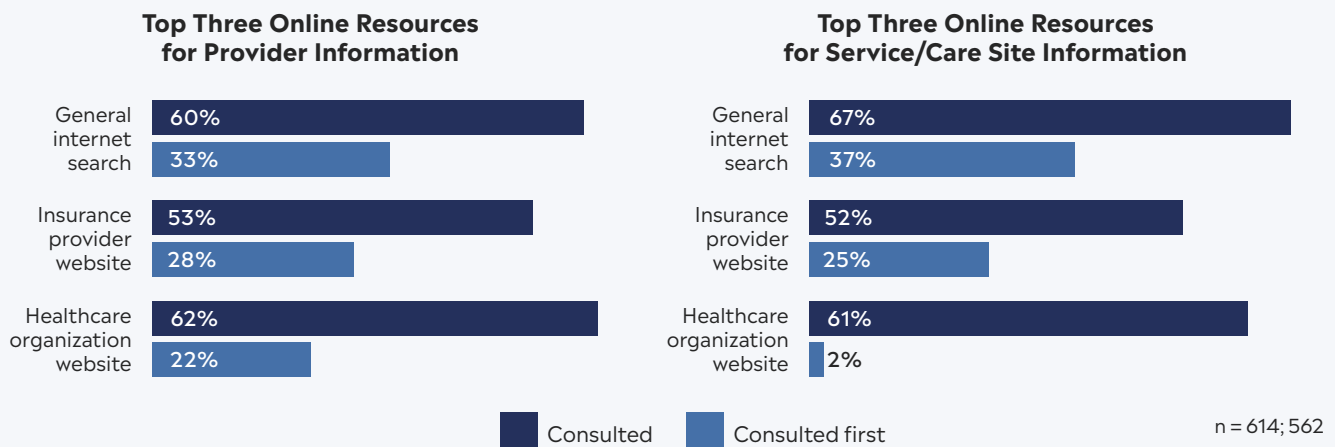
Engage: Meet Consumers Where They Are

Effectively engaging consumers online goes far beyond your website experience. With endless entry points and sources for consumers to consult, healthcare organizations must extend themselves not only within their owned digital properties but also across channels to stand out amongst an increasingly competitive landscape. Focusing on optimizing organic search, your owned digital properties, and your communication channels will ensure that you are meeting consumers at each step of their journey, engaging them effectively, and guiding them to your Find Care experience.

Healthcare organization websites and search engines are top online consumer resources[1]

Top Three Online Resources for Provider Information

Resource	Consulted	Consulted first
General internet search	60%	33%
Insurance provider website	53%	28%
Healthcare organization website	62%	22%

Top Three Online Resources for Service/Care Site Information

Resource	Consulted	Consulted first
General internet search	67%	37%
Insurance provider website	52%	25%
Healthcare organization website	61%	2%

■ Consulted   ■ Consulted first

n = 614; 562

Organic Search: Invest in robust data that you can syndicate across major consumer channels—like in organic search where you can surface provider and location information in search engine results and local listings, sending consumers directly into a booking workflow from the search engine results page. With more than half of consumers conducting a general internet search (e.g. via Google) when searching online for a new provider, organic search offers a major opportunity to engage them right at the beginning of their journey and drive them directly into a seamless Find Care experience.[2]

Owned Digital Properties: Ensure that your website, mobile experience, and mobile apps provide consistent information, prominent calls to action, and self-service options like virtual assistants to engage consumers and funnel them to your Find Care experience. Consumers are increasingly turning to mobile apps with nearly 90% of mobile users' time online taking place in apps (versus a mobile browser).[3] This increased popularity presents an opportunity to enhance digital access for both new and existing patients.

Consumer Communication Channels: Implement a patient engagement and activation strategy using emails, texts, and social media channels to proactively drive consumers to your care options—and motivate them to take action with a one-click experience that simplifies care search and scheduling and may even help close gaps in care. By engaging consumers through these channels you'll remove barriers to entry for those who may be delaying needed care or putting off making important preventive care appointments.

Search: Provide a Simple—But Powerful—Search Experience

Once you've engaged consumers effectively, retaining that engagement will require you to provide a simple, but robust, search process to advance them on their journey to finding care. Healthcare organization websites are not only the most used resource (62%) but often the first resource consulted when consumers search online for a new provider.[4] With this in mind, it is essential that the care search experience offers key elements such as clinical keyword search, natural language processing (NLP) capabilities, and the ability to surface an array of care options inclusive of providers, locations, and services.

Free text is a top search type amongst consumers searching for care[5]

37%	35%	14%	11%
Specialty	Free Text*	Provider Name	Condition
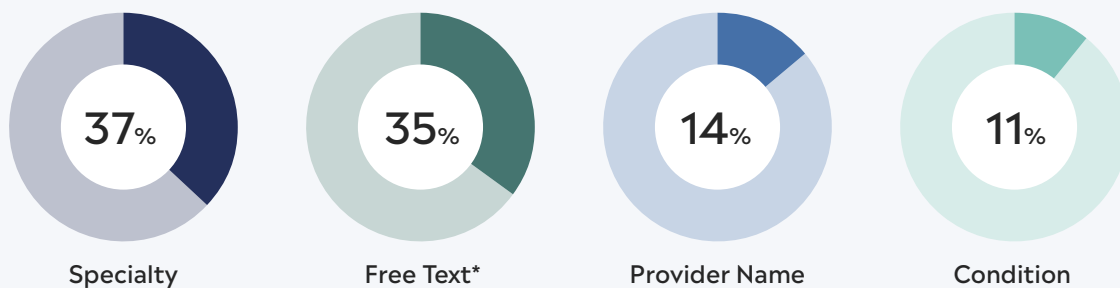
*Free text refers to consumers entering phrases or long-tail keywords in their own words.

n = 30M searches

Clinical and Lay Synonym Taxonomy: Empower consumers to search by a variety of clinical keyword types—as opposed to limiting searches to basic specialty or provider names—to create a more inclusive and user-friendly care search experience. Mapping clinical keywords to lay terms and synonyms in the underlying taxonomy also allows consumers to search in their own words, making it easier for them to arrive at the best matches for their needs without needing to know specific clinical terminology (e.g., tennis elbow mapped to lateral epicondylitis).

Natural Language Processing: Incorporate NLP capabilities into your search tool, allowing consumers to more successfully search with long-tail search terms directly relevant to their needs. With NLP users can search using phrases like "primary care providers who speak Spanish near me" and find providers who match on all of these criteria in search results—increasing the precision of matching and decreasing likelihood of a dead-end result.
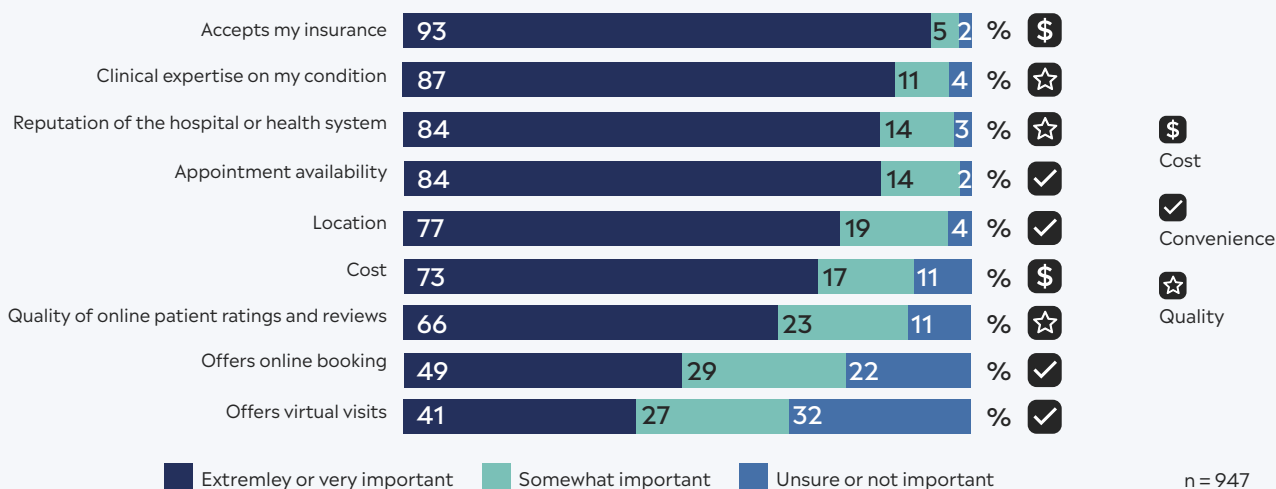
Broad Range of Care Options in Search Results: Expand online care search and scheduling beyond individual providers, offering the ability to showcase your care offerings more broadly, within a single experience. Incorporate services (e.g., vaccines, imaging, labs) and care sites (e.g, urgent care or retail clinics) to surface care options aligned with both the type of care consumers are looking for and where they want to access it.

Match: Surface Information That Consumers Value Most

A simple search experience should return a range of detailed, appropriate care options that consumers can sort and filter based on their unique clinical needs and personal preferences. Building on a strong data infrastructure to create rich, detailed provider, location and service profiles—all in one place—is key for converting demand online. And, year over year, consumers point to the same top decision-making factors: insurance eligibility, clinical expertise, reputation, appointment availability, and location, making those priority elements to include in your Find Care experience.[6]

Consumers prioritize criteria related to cost, convenience, and quality[7]

Criteria	Extremely or very important	Somewhat important	Unsure or not important		Category
Accepts my insurance	93	5	2	% $	
Clinical expertise on my condition	87	11	4	% ☆	
Reputation of the hospital or health system	84	14	3	% ☆	$ Cost
Appointment availability	84	14	2	% ✓	✓ Convenience
Location	77	19	4	% ✓	☆ Quality
Cost	73	17	11	% $	
Quality of online patient ratings and reviews	66	23	11	% ☆	
Offers online booking	49	29	22	% ✓	
Offers virtual visits	41	27	32	% ✓	

■ Extremley or very important ■ Somewhat important ■ Unsure or not important   n = 947

Detailed Provider, Location, and Service Profiles: Facilitate the right patient-provider match by surfacing rich, detailed provider, service, and location profiles that are central to increasing online conversion. Kyruus Health's analysis of aggregate customer data revealed that including certain key elements on provider profiles boosts online conversion rates—such as appointment availability (5x), patient ratings and reviews (5x), clinical expertise (4x), accepted insurances (4x), and provider profile picture (4x).[8]

Top Preference Filters: Allow consumers to sort and filter results by key criteria that are most important in the decision-making process enabling them to confidently select a provider (or care site) that best meets their needs. According to Kyruus Health's research, insurance acceptance, appointment availability, and location top the list of criteria for consumers when selecting a new provider.[9] Including these filterable options will help to increase the likelihood of meeting consumer needs, giving them confidence in their choice to obtain care with your organization. A map view in search also provides a familiar experience for consumers, giving them the option to visualize their care options and plan their visit accordingly while also delivering key decision-making information simultaneously.
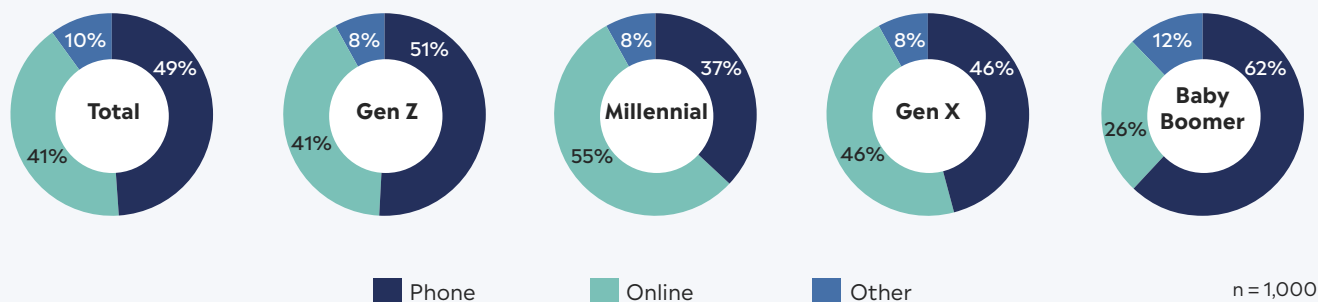
Appointment Availability in Search: Display real-time appointment availability in search results to give consumers the priority information they are looking for, allowing them to select the most timely and convenient choice for care. With over 80% of healthcare consumers saying that appointment availability was very or extremely important when selecting a new provider, providing this information earlier in the search process enables users to find the right provider—and appointment—even faster.[10]

Book: Create a One-Stop-Shop For Digital Self-Service

Consumers increasingly prefer to find care and schedule appointments through digital, self-service channels. In fact, over 40% of consumers now prefer booking appointments online—an increase of 15 percentage points over the last five years—underscoring that convenience is a key factor for digitally empowered healthcare consumers.[11] With a robust Find Care experience, inclusive of self-service booking options, simplified scheduling workflows, and digital check-in, healthcare organizations can effectively convert online demand across a range of care types, while also delivering on consumer expectations for a modern and seamless digital access experience.

Consumers show preference for self-service across generations[12]

	Phone	Online	Other
Total	49%	41%	10%
Gen Z	51%	41%	8%
Millennial	37%	55%	8%
Gen X	46%	46%	8%
Baby Boomer	62%	26%	12%

n = 1,000

Scheduling for Providers, Locations, and Services: Enable online scheduling for a variety of providers and care types to meet consumer demand for convenience. Consumers continue to prioritize online scheduling when choosing care, with nearly half of those who prefer online booking saying they'd switch providers to have this option.[13] While many health systems offer online scheduling for already established patients—for example through a patient portal—they have not yet invested to convert online demand from new patients, creating a missed patient acquisition opportunity. What's more, consumers want the convenience of online scheduling for all types of services, including urgent care, imaging, labs, vaccines, and more.

Simplified Scheduling Workflows: Streamline complex scheduling workflows to ensure you're matching patients with the most appropriate provider or service based on their needs. Leveraging standardized pre-booking validation questions, tied directly to robust clinical keyword mapping, helps to match consumers with the right care while ensuring your organization receives the vital information needed to effectively schedule certain appointments online. For example, offering a simple clinical verification prompt allows consumers to ensure that the provider they've selected actually treats their need (e.g., confirming that the patient has a knee injury, for a selected orthopedist that specializes in knee injuries).

Digital Check-In: Extend the self-service experience beyond appointment booking by offering consumers theopportunity to check in for their appointment with a barrier free workflow—before they ever step foot in the exam room. Additional self-service options are top of mind for consumers, with 93% indicating marked interest in completing tasks such as providing pre-visit information, making payments, and providing insurance information and confirming coverage through digital self-service.[14] Offering patients this option ensures they'll provide key information you need to give them high quality care- and alleviates burden on adinistrative staff, enabling them to spend time on other, higher-value tasks.

Four Steps to Optimizing Your Find Care Experience

Use this checklist to assess how robust your website's Find Care experience is in enabling digital patient access based on the main stages of the patient access journey:

Engage | Consumer Engagement Channels

Can consumers find robust provider, location, and service data withing your local listings in organic search? ☐

Can consumers consistently find and schedule care across your mobile and desktop experiences? ☐

Can consumers engage with you through multi-channel communication streams (e.g, text, emails, social media channels)? ☐

Search | Easy and Modern Search Experience

Can consumers search by clinical and lay-term keywords? ☐

Can consumers search in their own terms using long-tail keyword phrases? ☐

Can consumers find an array of care options such as providers, locations, and services? ☐

Match | Consumer-Centric Filtering Options

Can consumers view provider, location, and service profiles that include robust, conversion boosting data elements (e.g., profile picture, availability, patient ratings and reviews, philosophy of care, insurances accepted, and clinical expertise)? ☐

Can consumers filter by key needs and preferences when selecting care? ☐

Can consumers see availability in search results (e.g., next available provider or real-time availability information)? ☐

Book | Self-Service Capabilities

Can consumers self-schedule online for providers, locations, and services? ☐

Can consumers leverage simplified scheduling workflows (e.g., pre-booking validation questions to verify they are an appropriate match for the provider, service, or location chosen)? ☐

Can consumers initiate the check-in process after their appointment is scheduled, allowing them to input key demographic information, sign forms, provide medical history, and more? ☐

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Endnotes

1   Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

2   Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

3   Yoram Wurmser, The Majority of Americans'
    Mobile Time Spent Takes Place in Apps, eMarketer, 2020.

4   Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

5   Kyruus Health aggregate customer data, 2022.

6   Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

7   Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

8   Kyruus Health analysis of aggregate customer data, 2022.

9   Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

10 Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

11 Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

12 Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

13 Kyruus Health, Patient Access Journey Report, 2022.

14 Kyruus Health, Patient Access Preferences Report, 2022.

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