



2026 Patient Engagement Outlook

Key Forces Shaping the Industry

At Momentum Life Sciences, we've spent three decades designing and operating patient engagement programs for some of the world's most innovative therapies. We sit at the intersection of people, technology, and data—where human connection meets intelligent systems to drive adherence and satisfaction.

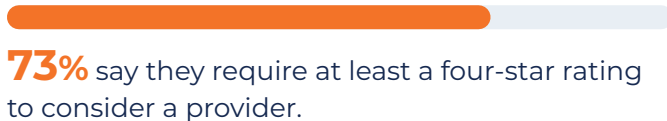
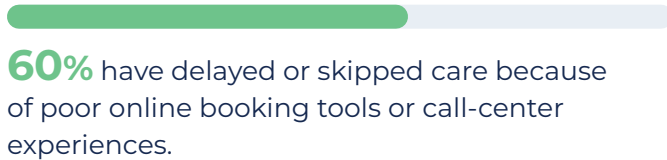
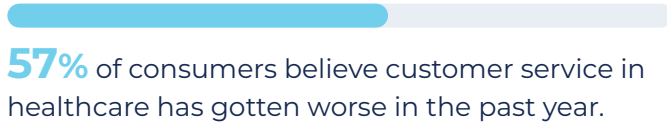
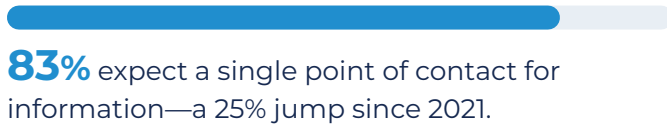
As we look ahead to 2026, one thing is clear: the need for **more intense, connected, and personalized engagement** is accelerating. Specialty therapy pipelines, regulatory shifts, and digital adoption patterns are reshaping how biopharma must think about supporting patients and providers.

The following trends highlight where the patient engagement space is moving—and how leaders can prepare for what's next.

1 Patients Are Consumers—Expecting Retail-Grade Experiences

Patients increasingly judge their healthcare experience by the same standards they use in travel, retail, and banking: ease, transparency, and personalization.

According to data from Press Ganey and Accenture,¹ the gap between what healthcare delivers and what patients expect continues to widen:



Regulatory and technological shifts expected in 2026 will likely enable more accessible, patient-driven care experiences.

In 2026, consumer grade design will consider the call for immediacy, clarity and continuity. Patients want immediacy, clarity, and continuity. For pharma, this means engagement programs must:



Start early. Engagement within hours of prescription drives faster initiation and better persistence.



Personalize communication. Data-driven segmentation and channel choice (text, video, live call) should reflect each patient’s preference and risk level.



Build trust through human connection. Clinical Nurse Educators and Navigators are essential to establishing emotional and informational continuity.



Unify access-focused touchpoints. Information through one consistent guide, creating clarity in the process and confidence in the experience.

At the same time, **direct-to-consumer (DTC)** distribution models are expanding access. Manufacturers like **Eli Lilly** and **Pfizer**² are piloting platforms that allow patients to purchase medications directly from the manufacturer—bypassing traditional intermediaries and simplifying access. Regulatory and technological shifts expected in 2026 will likely expand this approach, enabling more accessible, patient-driven care experiences.

2 AI Moves From Pilot to Platform

Artificial intelligence is rapidly becoming an operational engine for engagement—turning insights into action at scale. In 2024–25, most pharma organizations experimented with narrow AI pilots. By 2026, **AI will be embedded in governed engagement platforms** to power personalization, risk detection, and coaching support.

What's Changing

- **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** Enables analysis of patient sentiment and confusion cues from calls or chat transcripts, allowing teams to intervene early.
- **Next-Best-Action (NBA) Models:** Machine learning identifies optimal timing and content for outreach, improving adherence.
- **Predictive Analytics:** Uses behavioral and demographic data to forecast dropout risk and tailor interventions.

According to *Accenture's 2025 Digital Health Trends*³ report, healthcare executives anticipate home and virtual care to increase **182% over the next decade**, driven largely by AI-enabled engagement and monitoring platforms.

What Matters

AI should **enhance, not replace** human empathy. The best programs use AI to guide Nurse Educators toward the right patient, with the right message, at the right moment—while preserving the trust that only people can build. Using AI for automation and other task-driven purposes enables educators to focus on active listening and deeply connecting with patients.

Guardrails for Governance

Ethical AI frameworks are no longer optional. Industry standards emphasize principles such as:



Patient centricity –

AI must benefit the patient directly.



Fairness and transparency –

ensuring equity in data use and access.



Privacy protection –

maintaining control over shared health data.

These themes mirror guidelines from the **World Health Organization (WHO)** and **U.S. HHS AI Strategy Framework**,^{4,5} both of which underscore that AI is an imperfect but powerful tool that must be refined and governed responsibly.

3 The Hybrid Model Becomes the Gold Standard

Purely digital engagement continues to underperform. While 90% of patients express willingness to use digital health tools, only 58% have ever downloaded a healthcare app—and half stop using it within a month, according to the American Medical Association (AMA).⁶

The hybrid model—**combining human interaction with digital intelligence**—is now proven to outperform single-channel approaches across adherence, satisfaction, and time-to-therapy metrics.

Momentum Life Sciences' hybrid model demonstrates measurable impact, validated by IQVIA analysis⁷:

- **Reduced time to first-fill** from 18 to **9.79 days** with proactive outreach.
- **Double-digit gains** in 90-/180-day persistence.
- **5/5 patient satisfaction** among specialty cohorts.

Data, Governance, and Trust— The Foundation for Scale

The blending of human and digital resources requires keen compliance and data security measures. Regulatory changes—including updates to **Medicare Part D benefit design and global data privacy frameworks**^{8,9}—require that pharma partners demonstrate **data integrity, security, and equitable access by design**.

True accessibility means accounting for:



Variability in device access and digital literacy



Multilingual support



Inclusive, culturally adaptive content

Trust remains the ultimate currency in patient engagement. Programs that balance **data intelligence with human sensitivity** will be those that scale successfully in 2026 and beyond.

Why It Works

- **Personalization through data:** Patient insights shape outreach cadence and tone.
- **Human connection:** Clinical Nurse Educators build trust that supports addressing emotional barriers.
- **Omnichannel flexibility:** Programs align outreach with milestones—first dose, refill, or side-effect check-ins—across phone, video, text, and chat.

Hybrid engagement isn't just a delivery model—it's an operational mindset. It allows pharma to scale support, improve access equity, and adapt faster to therapy complexity.

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4 Behavior Science Drives Adherence and Empowerment

Nonadherence remains a multi-billion-dollar challenge, and most drop-off isn't intentional. According to **OMJ**,¹⁰ leading contributors include poor communication, complex regimens, low self-efficacy, and lack of social support.

In 2026, engagement programs that **integrate behavioral science** into coaching models will lead the market. This approach shifts support from education alone to **ownership of health behavior**. Key strategies include:

- **Goal setting and habit scaffolding:** Building sustainable routines tied to therapy adherence.
- **Cultural and emotional intelligence:** Adapting communication to learning styles and motivation.

- **Caregiver inclusion:** Recognizing the impact of family and peer support on adherence.
- **Self-efficacy reinforcement:** Increasing confidence in managing treatment and side effects.

Behavior-science-informed coaching—grounded in proven methods like **self-determination theory and motivational interviewing**—transforms engagement from transactional to transformational.

Momentum's Clinical Nurse Educators embody this approach, combining education, behavioral coaching, and continuous support from the moment of prescription.

5 Utility at the Point of Care—Simplifying HCP Engagement

For healthcare providers, time is the rarest resource. A 2024 **AMIA survey**¹¹ found that **77% of clinicians** work after hours due to excessive documentation, and **two-thirds** report no improvement in EHR-related workload.

In this environment, engagement tools must function as **utilities—useful, fast, and adjacent to care delivery**.

The next evolution of patient support will focus on **HCP enablement**, not just patient education. That means embedding microlearning, EMR-adjacent tools, and nurse-led demonstrations directly into provider workflows.

Examples can be seen in the **Epic Showroom**¹² and **Oracle Cloud Health Marketplace**,¹³ where plug-in engagement tools streamline scheduling, education, and follow-up.

By 2026, as Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) affordability reforms take fuller effect, investment in Clinical Nurse Education Programs could reduce patient non-adherence by 15-20% through targeted HCP training on subsidy navigation.¹⁴

Solutions like Momentum's RightStart model bring this vision to life. Providing peer-to-peer education through locally-based Clinical Nurse Educators, **HCPs experience a collaborative dynamic that integrates seamlessly with their routines**. These relationships become a trusted proactive and reactive resource that complements their schedules and enhances care delivery for patients.

2026 Patient Engagement Scorecard: Key Elements for Success

Patient expectations are evolving, specialty therapies are increasingly complex, and healthcare providers' time is limited. Based on trends highlighted in this report, the following elements define programs that effectively engage patients and support HCPs in 2026.

1. Patient-Centric Design

- **Single point of contact:** Assign a dedicated advocate (e.g., Nurse Navigator or Clinical Nurse Educator) to guide patients, troubleshoot, and provide clarity across all interactions.
- **Personalized support:** Tailor coaching and education to each patient's needs, preferences, and learning styles.
- **Early and proactive engagement:** Reach patients quickly post-prescription to establish trust and promote therapy persistence.
- **Address non-cost barriers:** Support patients with emotional, logistical, and knowledge challenges to enhance the overall experience.

2. AI: From Pilot to Governed Platform

- **Next-Best Action (NBA):** Use AI to recommend personalized interventions for patients in real time, enabling timely, effective support.
- **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** Analyze structured and unstructured patient communications to detect sentiment, confusion, or risk signals.
- **Ethical, patient-centric AI:** Ensure AI supports human decisions, protects privacy, and enhances patient engagement without replacing personalized human interaction.
- **Data-driven refinement:** Leverage AI insights to continuously improve engagement strategies and clinical support.

3. Hybrid Support Models

- **Integrated human + digital programs:** Blend nurse-led interactions with digital tools to educate, coach, and reinforce adherence.
- **Omnichannel communication:** Engage patients through phone, text, email, video, and apps, based on preference and therapy stage.
- **Responsive, data-informed interventions:** Use insights from patient interactions and digital tracking to guide timely next-best actions.

- **Design for trust and equity:** Embed data integrity, security, and equitable access into all hybrid engagement solutions to protect patients and strengthen confidence in pharma partnerships.
- **Flexible, scalable approach:** Adapt communication methods and intensity based on therapy type, patient needs, and engagement patterns.

4. Behavior-Science-Informed Coaching

- **Personalized behavior support:** Adapt education and guidance to each patient's learning style, motivations, and cultural context.
- **Address adherence barriers:** Factor in habits, social support, affordability literacy, and logistical challenges to encourage therapy persistence.
- **Progressive, goal-oriented engagement:** Build patient confidence and ownership over their care through structured coaching.
- **Integration with digital tools:** Reinforce behavior change through reminders, tracking, and feedback while maintaining human connection.

5. HCP Engagement

- **Address Education Gaps:** Provide just-in-time product education.
- **Workflow-adjacent tools:** Embed microlearning, nurse-led demonstrations, and EMR-adjacent resources directly into provider workflows.
- **Trusted partnership:** Equip HCPs with actionable insights and timely guidance to improve patient outcomes.
- **Integration with provider systems:** Coordinate scheduling, education, and follow-up to reinforce therapy adherence and continuity of care.

Moving Forward

The next evolution of patient engagement will be defined by **integration, intelligence, and empathy**. As therapy complexity grows, the measure of success won't be how many patients start treatment—but how many stay on it, understand it, and feel supported throughout.

At Momentum Life Sciences, we believe the future of patient engagement is **always forward**—driven by human connection, powered by data, and guided by the singular goal of helping every patient experience success on therapy.



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About Momentum Life Sciences

Momentum Life Sciences is the leading provider of patient engagement solutions integrating human connection, advanced technology, and real-world data to deliver holistic support in a dynamic and personalized environment. Leveraging 30 years of experience in patient engagement, we know consumers want to build and develop relationships with the pharma companies whose products they utilize, and the research shows these relationships are vital to achieving the right health outcomes for patients and business outcomes for clients.

Our innovative and award-winning platform, One Voice™, can empower your brand teams to build authentic relationships with patients by uniquely combining data-driven technology and human interventions using our proprietary, intelligent algorithm to determine the right level of support for each patient based on disease state, product type, adherence risk profile, social determinants of health, real-world evidence, demographics, and psychographics to optimize the right mix of human and technology-driven interventions.

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