

Millennials: The Generation Changing Healthcare Delivery

Simple and Effective Tips for Marketing to Millennial Patients



MILLENNIALS ARE THE healthcare consumer of the future. They are now the largest generation in America. According to the 2015 U.S. Census projections, there are 79.7 million millennials (aged 18-35) compared to 77.4 million baby boomers (aged 51-70).¹

A recent Health Industry Distributors Association (HIDA) study looked at the growing influence of millennials on healthcare.² It showed that they are paying attention not just to the quality of care they are receiving, but also to the quality of the healthcare setting. An astounding 58 percent of those polled say they are more likely to change providers when a provider fails to meet their expectations.



BY SUE MACINNES,
CHIEF MARKET
SOLUTIONS OFFICER,
MEDLINE,
NORTHFIELD, ILLINOIS

“We all want healthcare to be more convenient, but millennials want that to a much greater degree. They expect their healthcare experiences to measure up to what they experience in the consumer world,” said Matthew Rowan, HIDA President and

CEO, further explaining the study results. “So where the baby boomer generation values long-term relationships with providers and accept some of the inconveniences as part of that relationship, millennials are not so patient.”

Healthcare as a whole has become a consumer-driven market, and it is a reality that health systems are still trying to grasp. Millennials will continue to remain significant to the growth of healthcare in years to come. In order to be successful at attracting millennials as patients, a patient-centered approach is required. The following are tips to keep in mind when creating a strategy to retain millennial patients:

1. **Efficiency** – Millennials want care fast. They utilize technology to pay, make appointments, get information on healthcare providers and discuss their experiences. This group does their homework. They don’t want to wait for

“Millennials will continue to remain significant to the growth of healthcare in years to come. In order to be successful attracting millennials as patients, a patient-centered approach is required.”


appointments, test results or a lengthy process to receive a diagnosis.

2. **Convenience** – Millennials seek an on-the-run experience and often visit urgent care facilities rather than a primary-care physician. The HIDA study shows that 43 percent report using an urgent-care site in the past year. The advanced technology these sites offer make the appointments very quick and convenient for patients.
3. **Transparency and cost** – Millennials are very price sensitive, so they will ask about the cost of service up front and are more likely to negotiate a price discount. They will often put off care due to the cost of service.
4. **Amenities and quality of products** – This generation looks at the overall experience. Amenities are important, including clear signage and direction, comfortable seating, snacks and beverages, clean environments and visible display of infection prevention (gloves, masks, hand sanitizer). Clever patient kits are also becoming popular,

especially if the carefully selected contents improve the overall hospital experience. For instance, ear plugs and sleep masks to help with noise control and rest, or puzzle books or hand sanitizer.

Furthermore, millennials represent the largest population of new moms. According to the HIDA study, 90 percent of all new American mothers are in this age group. Labor and delivery is usually the only place in a hospital that a woman is admitted for a positive reason, and the environment and patient gown should help enhance that positive experience. A prestigious hospital recently mentioned that its worst patient experience scores were on maternity floors. Yet, labor and delivery units offer a major opportunity to attract and solidify patient loyalty for life. If patients have a great experience, they are more likely to keep using that health system’s services as their child grows. Consider providing custom diaper bags with branded blankets, baby hats and booties, along with all the items that your nurses are already giving away. Additionally, patient gowns can

also directly impact patient experience. Pay close attention to factors like material quality and comfort and whether the gown allows for discreet breastfeeding. Have some fun with patient gowns. Get a thumbs up from your millennial patients by including actual designs of local sports teams, prints that include key destinations or colors that are trendy.

These are just a few examples on how to market to this generation. While they do not necessarily require higher levels of care, millennials have particular needs that successful health systems must begin to think about now. Consider ways to add convenience and efficiency for young consumers who may switch providers based on one negative experience. Whether it is technology driven applications for remote care or appointments in a click, infection sanitation stations, convenient plug-ins for their phones or Wi-Fi availability, it is crucial to offer millennials an environment that puts them in a more relaxed state. 

References

1. Fry, R. (2016, April 25). Millennials overtake Baby Boomers as America’s largest generation [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/#>
2. *Millennials As Healthcare Consumers* (Rep.). (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.hida.org/Shared_Content/Shop/Departments/Horizon/Reports.aspx

ADVERTISEMENT REMOVED FOR REPRINT PURPOSES.

Interested in advertising in Supply Chain Strategies and Solutions?

[CLICK HERE.](#)