

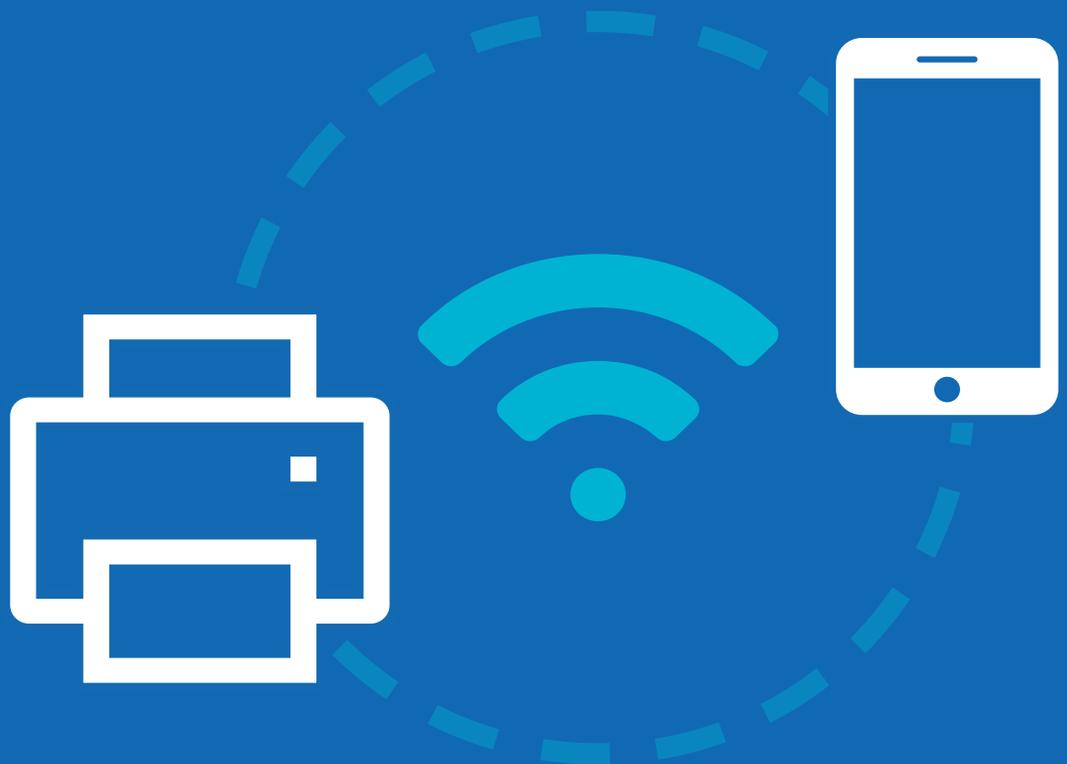
3 Ways Mobile Print Technology is Improving In-Home Care Delivery

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Home Health Care News



As the Internet of Things expands to include mobile solutions for consumers, so too does its presence for businesses, including health care providers. Increasingly, a longtime technology – printing – is being proven revolutionary when applied in an in-home care capacity.

Not only does printing on site improve the experience for the care recipient and the care provider, but it can also make a major difference in terms of time and resources saved with respect to a home care agency's bottom line.

This white paper will explore three ways mobile printing is improving in-home care delivery from the patient experience to the clinician's experience and agency outcomes.



Mobile printing improves in-home care in three areas:

- Patient experience
- Clinical experience
- The bottom line

Improving the patient experience

In-home care recipients, along with their family members, are often the recipients of many communications regarding their health and wellness.

Most often, these communications include

- Care plans
- Medication lists
- Side effects that the prescribed medications carry

With these plans and lists changing from appointment to appointment, particularly in the event of a health intervention or procedure, the communication can become overwhelming for patients, as well as for family members who may visit infrequently.

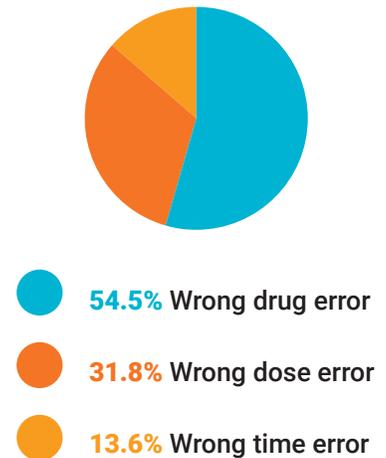
“Specifically our patient population is elderly, and caregivers might not always be around when they need something,” says Natasha Le, Quality and Informatics Coordinator at Philadelphia-based Penn Medicine. “[With printing] we can provide them with something written for when they go to the doctor’s appointment with records of what we are doing for the patient. Or, if they go away for the weekend and something happened, they have a document for what is happening in the home.”

And without printed information for the patient to reference, relaying care instructions to the family and care team can become not only difficult, but also hazardous to the patient's health.

According to a 2019 study of 77 home health patients, 22 identified incidents of medication errors included the wrong drug error (54.5%), wrong dose (31.8%), and wrong time (13.6%).

"The mobile printing experience gives the patient the information they need to know immediately and in a format they can guarantee is readable," says Greg O'Connell, vice president of sales for Brother Mobile Solutions, which provides a mobile printer for use among home health professionals, including Penn Medicine. "It's great to have that information in writing so family members can review it and know what's going on, instead of having to rely on word of mouth, since it's unusual when all members in the care circle are there when the care provider is there."

Incidents of medication errors



Source: Provider Perspectives of Medication Complexity in Home Health Care: A Qualitative Secondary Data Analysis. Medical Care Research and Review. 2019.



Conditions of Participation and Printing

Not only do printed communications provide convenience and safety for home health care recipients, but some organizations are interpreting a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) 2018 Home Health Interpretive Guideline to actually require some printed documentation.

Interpretive Guidelines §484.60(e)(2)

The HHA must prepare, and provide to the patient and his or her caregiver (if any) written information regarding the patient's medication regimen as based on the results of the medication review conducted at §484.55(c)(5). The medication administration instructions must be written in plain language that does not use medical abbreviations.

“The mobile printing experience gives the patient the information they need to know immediately and in a format they can guarantee is readable.”

Greg O’Connell, Vice President of Sales, Brother Mobile Solutions



In addition to commonly printed documents like medication lists, some providers are finding additional benefits to the mobile printing solution.

At Penn Health, clinicians have used printouts to:

- Allow social workers to print Meals-on-Wheels forms for patients
- Enable physical therapists to print exercises and education for therapy patients
- Explain medication regimens to patients instead of having to hover over a laptop screen

“In terms of patient engagement it has been a positive thing,” Le says of Penn



Mobile printing with Wi-Fi® and AirPrint® support

Brother’s PocketJet 773 allows users to print full-page documents while on the move. The PocketJet 773, with built-in Wi-Fi and AirPrint compatibility, is small enough to fit easily in a briefcase or shoulder bag, or mount in a vehicle—providing the freedom to print virtually anywhere, from essentially any mobile device. Printing takes place over Wi-Fi, via Bluetooth®, or by USB connection.



Medicine's recent rollout.

Improving the clinical experience

Accurate documentation leads to consistency of communication, both for the patient and for the entire care team.

By printing documents at the site of care and by documenting electronically at the same time, clinicians can relay information to their colleagues about the patient and care plan streamlining the process and saving time.

Printing on site serves four critical functions:

1. Supports medication management.

Mobile printers enable home health professionals to easily print updated and personalized medication lists in the patient's home, along with clear instructions on how to administer the



Best practices for mobile printing

Printers on-site provide convenience, but there are considerations for home health agencies that opt to implement a fleet of mobile printers. Here are some lessons learned from Penn Medicine's implementation.

Handle printouts with care. Develop a protocol for destroying old printouts and copies of patient information. Penn Medicine requires clinicians to collect outdated documents and to shred them at the organization's offices.

Keep hardware secure. Advise caregivers to carry the printer with them rather than to leave it unsecured or visible in their vehicles.

medications, potential side effects to watch for and drug interaction data.

2. Speeds and facilitates appropriate treatment. Clinicians can print patient care plans, therapy instructions, test results, medical records, follow-up visit schedules and educational materials, making it possible to convey complex information in what is often an emotionally charged situation. In addition, clinicians can print consent, waiver and refusal of service forms, and get all necessary signatures on the spot to ensure proper and desired treatment.

3. Improves care coordination. Many patients have multiple providers who routinely visit. Access to the printed versions of up-to-date patient medical history and care plans contributes to preventing problematic gaps and overlaps in care, aids seamless hand-offs and results in a more positive patient experience.

4. Keeps the focus on patient care. The ability to quickly, easily and reliably print all necessary documents in the patient's home saves busy clinicians time, and frees them to focus on patient care rather than administrative tasks. This in turn increases patient and family satisfaction.

By serving these functions, home health clinical staff are better able to complete their tasks efficiently, which can serve as a retention tool for employers.

"The No. 1 problem for home health organizations is employee retention," O'Connell says. "[Clinicians love] the system because they can complete all of their paperwork at the patient's home and at the end of the day, the work is over. In the old system, they had to do that paperwork at home and put it in folders."



Mobile printing and Star Ratings

Among the questions included in CMS's Home Health Care CAHPS Survey, several focus on communications between the home health agency and the patient.

Agencies report that providing documentation for communications such as medication side effects help reinforce the communications, leading to more favorable survey results and in turn, higher star ratings.

EXAMPLE:

CAHPS Survey Question 14: *In the last 2 months of care, did home health providers from this agency talk with you about the side effects of these medicines?*

"I have heard three organizations say star ratings increased dramatically on that question," O'Connell says.

Improving the bottom line

In addition to employee retention, mobile printing solutions are proven to save time. This savings is largely gained through the time saved from caregivers/clinicians not having to go back and forth to the office.

Using mobile printers to print patient documents in the home, clinicians can save 20 minutes or more per visit, enabling an extra one to two patient visits a day.

Agencies can realize additional benefits, such as in the event of an acquisition by a large health network or hospital system that is challenged by the traditional home health staffing model.

“Using mobile printers to print patient documents in the home, clinicians can save 20 minutes or more per visit,” O’Connell says. “Small agencies pay caregivers on a per-visit basis. But when hospitals acquire them and employees come on full-time, with added mileage and benefits, the 1 to 2 visits saved could be the difference.”

From a liability perspective, agencies can also benefit from the printed proof that a caregiver was on site for a given patient visit.

A mobile printing revolution

In the race to go paperless, there are still many applications where hard copy documents can provide convenience and clarity to home health patients, as well as fulfilling today’s requirements of home health care delivery. Hard copies can serve as a way to improve communication for patients and their families; streamline operations among caregivers and their fellow staff and managers; and improve the bottom line for today’s home health agencies.

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Contact

For more information on how mobile printing can help improve clinician and patient experience, contact Brother or visit brothermobilesolutions.com/health-care

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