



# News Notes

• [www.LVBCH.com](http://www.LVBCH.com) •

VOLUME 16 | ISSUE 2 | FALL 2020 | GUEST ARTICLES



## COVID-19: Perfect Time to Implement a Digital Front Door

**Heather Lavoie, Geneia President and CEO**

More than six months after COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, we're beginning to have clarity about changes to consumer sentiment and behavior. As I review research from numerous organizations, two things are crystal-clear:

1. Many patients have deferred healthcare, and nearly as many are hesitant to resume preventive and elective care.

Take childhood immunizations, for example. "A survey of more than 700 parents by Orlando Health found that although 84 percent believe vaccines are necessary to protect their children from a host of diseases, two-thirds fear taking their kids to their doctor because of COVID-19."

2. At the same time, patients are increasingly using technology to access healthcare, even seniors.

"Before the pandemic, 99+ percent of Medicare-funded visits were in-person appointments." In April, 43.5 percent of Medicare primary care visits were via telehealth.

Physicians too are increasing their use of virtual visits, even specialists. In a recent survey of U.S. specialists, "79 percent said their use of telemedicine technology has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic."

I, too, have used telehealth during the pandemic, and as a busy working mother, I plan to use it again. My kids had their first virtual well-child visits with their physician. As a follow-up, their doctor arranged for drive-by immunizations, the only part of the annual visit we were unable to do virtually.

60 West Broad St. • Suite 306 • Bethlehem, PA 18018 • P: 610-317-0130

Our affiliation with these national organizations is a value-added benefit for our members.





# News Notes

• www.LVBCH.com •

**VOLUME 16 | ISSUE 2 | FALL 2020 | GUEST ARTICLES**

The bottom line –

There’s never been a better time for health plans, hospitals and physician practices to implement a digital front door strategy. Patients – and their physicians – have become more technologically savvy and technologically ready during the COVID-19 pandemic, and, as I wrote in a recent Geneia blog, *Restarting regular care: Nine ways to get patients back to the office*, many patients are going to need more personalized outreach, engagement and care to feel comfortable returning to regular, preventive healthcare.

Many industry experts feel the same way.

- As Rock Health recently wrote, “The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented demand and urgency around the shift to digital content, navigation and delivery of healthcare.”
- Summer Knight, MD, managing director, Deloitte Life Sciences & Healthcare Practice, said in a *PatientEngagementHIT* article, “The digital front door is going to create a longitudinal relationship built with trust between patient and provider, and inherently moves away from the old model of sick-care.”

## Digital Front Door Resources

As one who has worked in healthcare for more than 30 years, I know all too well that many healthcare organizations believe implementing a digital front door is a daunting endeavor, especially during a pandemic. That’s why Geneia has created a number of resources to help health plans, hospitals and physician practices, all of which can be downloaded for free from our digital front door content hub.

- Geneia White Paper: Why Health Plans Are Implementing a Digital Front Door Strategy
- Geneia White Paper: Why Hospitals and Health Systems Are Implementing a Digital Front Door Strategy
- Geneia Podcast: Getting Started with the Digital Front Door

60 West Broad St. • Suite 306 • Bethlehem, PA 18018 • P: 610-317-0130

Our affiliation with these national organizations is a value-added benefit for our members.

