



3 Ways to Succeed in the Great Digital Health Experiment

In some ways, you can trace the rise of the retail health clinic to a single frustrating encounter. In 2000, a father took his son to an urgent care clinic in Minnesota for a strep test and waited two excruciating hours. Upon leaving, the man decided to launch a quick and convenient alternative to traditional healthcare providers. MinuteClinic was born.

Now, almost two decades after CVS acquired that business, retail health is booming. By 2020, nearly 70 percent of Americans had visited a retail clinic, and analysts have slated the sector's market share to double by 2029. Veteran consumer-centric companies like Amazon, Best Buy, and Walmart resolved to pursue their piece of the pie, while new ventures emerged to claim the rest.

To understand retail health's success, consider MinuteClinic's catalyst: Healthcare's shortcomings in [meeting growing consumer expectations](#). That challenge remains as critical today as it was at the dawn of the millennium.

It's not for lack of will. Payers and providers know they must embrace consumerism, but longstanding barriers often hinder change at scale. So, what's the solution?

Although no magic formula exists, the answer certainly entails [leveraging data-driven insights in new and engaging ways](#) and building relationships with leading-edge startups. Through these new initiatives, traditional healthcare organizations can capture the power of innovation and personalization to [better serve patients-turned-consumers](#), while their startup partners gain the institutional support to mature their solutions and establish themselves in a complex, guarded industry.

InterSystems recently convened experts from Seattle Children's, CVS Health, Hawaii Medical Service Association, and XR Health to share their insights into data-savvy partnerships, actionable insights, and patient-focused innovation in the age of consumerism. Here are three actions they say every healthcare organization must prioritize.

1

Define success up front

Data-driven disruption begins with goals. Success typically hinges on satisfying two key groups:

- **External stakeholders:** Healthcare consumers (patients)
- **Internal stakeholders:** Physicians, nurses, and other clinicians

Healthcare consumers want reduced costs, improved care quality, and a positive patient experience — all factors that nurture brand loyalty.

Healthcare providers value those measures, plus efficiencies. During an 8-minute visit, does a clinician really have the time to locate and sift through vast oceans of data to improve care? They need innovations that surface actionable insights when it matters most.

2

Form strategic partnerships

Healthcare technology startups and traditional organizations must form strategic partnerships that play to each other's strengths.

Consider traditional organizations, like payers and providers, as trucks. They're built to last but difficult to divert after they get rolling in one direction.

Startups, meanwhile, are racecars. They zoom toward an objective, meet it, and then speed toward another.

To partner effectively, healthcare organizations and startups need to synchronize their timelines, operating speeds, and expectations.

First, determine whether you're moving toward the same finish line. Strong partners share an understanding of the challenge, obtain stakeholder buy-in and clinical support, and then *kick* into gear at a mutually agreed pace.



Leverage clean, interoperable, and accessible data

Collaboration [requires clean, standardized, accessible, and secure data](#). It's the fuel that powers innovation.

Of course, that requires strict HIPAA compliance across payers, providers, and technology companies. But a strong data strategy also empowers partners with the right information at the right time. When data is siloed or messy, it can slow down innovation and impede the analytics that deliver stellar consumer experiences.

Change management is pivotal. Clinicians and staff may need training and explanations as to how a new data initiative will ultimately help them. Buy-in, after all, underpins every lasting success.

[Learn how to bring data-driven innovation to your healthcare organization](#)