

## Embracing digital tools for patient care

Social media is emerging as the communications tool hospitals use to engage patients. "Social media outlets have become a valuable tool in reaching the public with upcoming hospital events, local health care coverage changes, and personal health care education being posted to Facebook and Twitter on a frequent basis," says Travis Albright, information systems director, Woodlawn Hospital, Rochester, Ind.

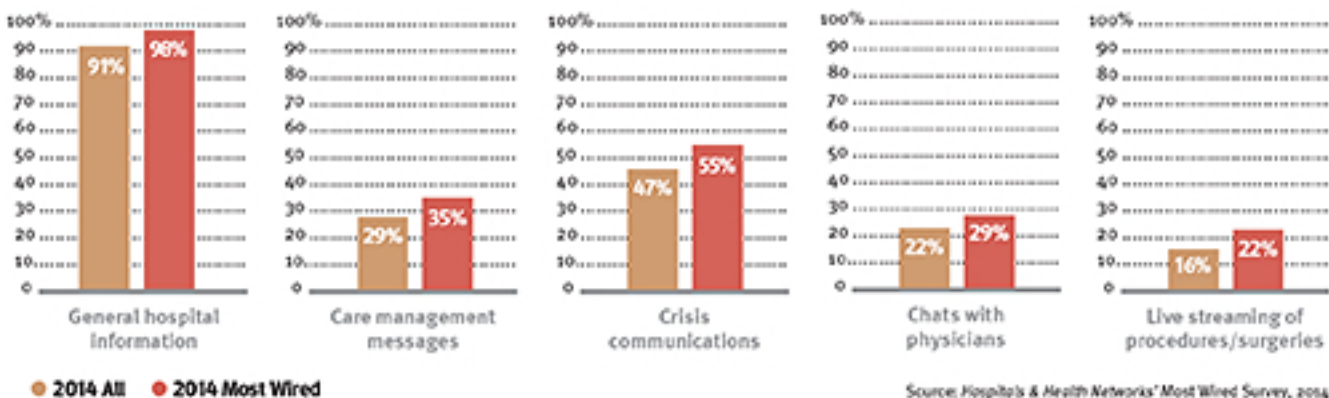


Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs and mobile Web apps are the major channels in use. The top applications remain community engagement, health care tips, patient education and crisis communication. Use of social media to personalize medical advice and to support adherence to care plans are emerging applications. More than three-fourths of Most Wired hospitals use social media for patient education and one-third offer care management messages and chats with physicians.

Many hospitals lag in extending their healthcare expertise beyond the walls of the hospital and into the online world in which patients increasingly are seeking information, according to "The Digital Health of Today's Best Hospitals," a report by Evolve Digital Labs. Barriers that prevent hospitals from maximizing use of digital media for patient care include: concerns regarding regulation of digital content; lack of clinical oversight of published content leading to inadequate sources of information for patients; a hospital's lack of investment in digital media; a lack of understanding of the value that digital media can play in enhancing patient outcomes; inefficient internal systems and processes; and an emphasis on legacy business methods that are not adapting or changing fast enough to deliver to patients the digital innovation available today. — SUZANNA HOPPSZALLERN

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### Social media is used by hospitals and health systems to provide ...



### Top social media outlets Most Wired hospitals and health systems are using

