

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue and white striped long-sleeved shirt and blue denim jeans, is sitting at a wooden table. She is looking down at a black smartphone in her hands. The background is a bright, modern interior with a white door and a glass of water on the table.

**How Digital Statements and A  
Text-Based Billing Process can  
Benefit your Bottom Line.**



**SALUCRO<sup>®</sup>**

# Introduction

Today's patients want effective communication and payment options. The days of waiting for a paper statement are gone, but some healthcare systems still rely on outdated methods of reaching their patients. Here's how providers can deliver personalized communications that improve the patient financial experience.

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# Today's patients demand new communication and payment options.

Patients rank the ability to choose the communication method their providers use as one of the most important aspects of receiving billing statements.



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It is no secret that patients are paying online in growing numbers. In fact, according to a recent Salucro survey, 62% of respondents pay by debit or with credit card using an online portal most often. This underscores the importance of having an intuitive, easy to use online portal and a seamless, secure online payment process.

Yet, providers should not leave behind alternative payment options including text-to-pay, automated phone payments, and paying by mail. 38% of patients still prefer to pay outside of a patient portal. While some of these methods are declining in popularity - like sending a check by mail - others are gaining momentum, like text-to-pay.

Providers that offer multiple payment methods, both traditional and emerging, allow patients to pay the way they prefer, which can lead to a better overall patient financial experience and have a direct effect on your bottom line.

Your payment is due for your recent lab services with Great Healthcare.

Great Healthcare | Pay Your Bill





# Patient payment communication trends point to digital statements and text-based billing.

Text message communications are more likely to reach the recipient, with a 98%<sup>1</sup> open rate compared to email's average open rate of 18%.



<sup>1</sup> - <https://www.slicktext.com/blog/2018/11/44-mind-blowing-sms-marketing-and-texting-statistics/>

## Data clearly shows that patients pay faster when they are notified the way they prefer.

When providers use a patient's preferred method of communication, they get paid faster. Over half of all patients surveyed in the 2022 Trends in Patient Payment Communications report said they would pay their bills more quickly if they were delivered using their preferred communication method.

A majority of those who said they would pay faster chose digital notification preferences like text messages and online statements. This presents a cash flow opportunity for providers as patients continue to adapt to new technologies. Simply put, traditional methods tend to delay the payment process rather than speed it up.

An increasing number of patients are using text-to-pay to complete their healthcare payments. Providers that implement text-to-pay services ahead of many of their contemporaries have a head start on their competition.

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According to a report from Podium<sup>2</sup>, text has a 209% higher response rate than phone, email, or Facebook. Consumers are nearly twice as likely to prefer texting to any other communication method, and the highly personal channel lends itself well to medical billing and statement communications.

In order to engage all patients, providers need to implement flexible solutions that meet the patient where they are most likely to act.

<sup>1</sup> - <https://www.slicktext.com/blog/2018/11/44-mind-blowing-sms-marketing-and-texting-statistics/>

<sup>2</sup> - [Podium.com/guides/business-messaging-trends/](https://podium.com/guides/business-messaging-trends/)

# How does Salucro's Integrated Digital Payment Experience benefit your organization?

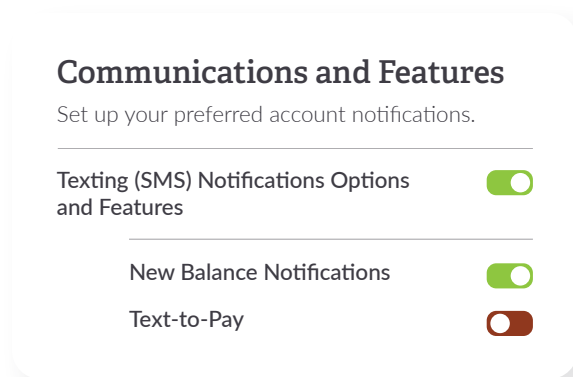
More than just a payment platform, we create purposeful patient financial engagement solutions for healthcare providers and your patients.



## Collect More Payments.

Salucro allows providers to focus on patient-centered care and track results with efficiency. Improving self-pay collection outcomes involves continually collecting and evaluating patient feedback, and implementing changes to the self-pay collection process that meet patient expectations. As more and more patients embrace mobile technology to communicate and make payments to healthcare providers, it is important to have an established system to send and receive important billing information, and adapt to the latest communication preferences.

Salucro's Text Payment Solutions program works in harmony with a suite of patient financial engagement features and utilizes a powerful Patient Portal that allows patients to opt-in to their preferred methods of payment and communication. This streamlines the notification and billing process, allowing patients to quickly and easily make payments.



## Reduce Operating Costs

Digital statements and billing notifications can reduce the need for postage expenses, while also reducing the manual process of sending out paper statements, saving valuable FTE hours.

62<sup>3</sup> percent of healthcare providers' administration costs are spent on billing and insurance-related activities. Hiring in-house staff to oversee billing is not always the most cost-effective solution for providers. Most will agree that the focus of a healthcare provider and its staff should be on the treatment and care of its patients. Time spent processing payments and chasing unpaid invoices keeps employees from addressing more urgent issues faced by consumers. Outsourcing billing services to third-party operations reduces the costs of employing and training in-house staff, purchasing billing materials, and dealing with customer service requests.

<sup>3</sup> - <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2673148>



## How does Salucro's Integrated Digital Payment Experience benefit your organization?

- 1. Reduce Customer Service Costs:** Providing clear and concise communications will most likely reduce calls to the provider for clarification, which will reduce time and money healthcare providers need to spend on customer care training and management.
- 2. Decrease Collections Costs:** Statements designed with direct calls-to-action and customizable messaging helps communicate valuable program and availability information to patient. This can improve collection rates, reducing the need to send additional notifications or enlist the services of a collection agency.
- 3. Decrease Mailing Costs:** By offering more digital payment options you can reduce the amount of time and money spent on paper, toner, envelopes, postage, and physically processing additional statements.

## Improve Security and Compliance

Providers looking to implement text messaging as both a communication and payment method must utilize a HIPAA-compliant text messaging platform. These platforms are closed systems, allowing only authorized individuals to use the platform. Implementing new communication and payment methods must always include attention to compliance and security.

Help your patients make a payment using a mobile device without having to log in to a patient portal, remember their account number or worry about sharing personal information over the phone.

*For example, a work-from-home healthcare billing employee can initiate a text message directly to a patient while on the phone with them, allowing that patient to then click a secure link that takes them to a quick checkout workflow. From there, the patient can make a payment.*



# How do digital statements and text-based billing options help your patients?

Over 40% of patients said they would consider leaving their provider due to a poor billing experience.

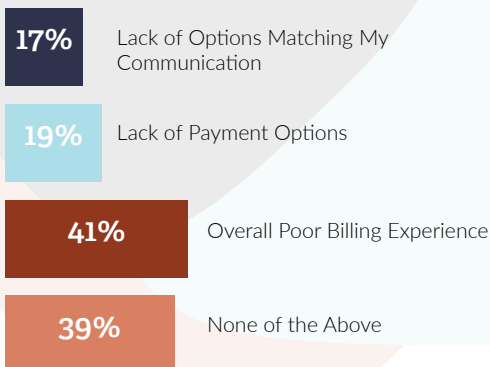
## Enhance The Patient Payment Experience

While quality of care is of the utmost importance in a patient's interaction with their medical provider, over 40% of patients said they would consider leaving their provider due to a poor billing experience. There are several opportunities along the healthcare journey for a provider to either delight or disappoint a patient. From the first interaction to the last, patients want to feel heard, cared for, and appreciated.

Survey<sup>4</sup> respondents said inaccurate billing statements were among the top reasons they would write a negative review about their healthcare provider. Poor communication and lack of financing options were other factors that could potentially instigate a negative review.

According to a recent report, nearly half of all patients use online reviews to help them choose a healthcare provider. In order to maintain a strong online presence that attracts new patients, providers should focus on reducing billing errors, increasing communication methods, and providing multiple payment options.

Aside from the quality of care, which of the following would cause you to consider switching healthcare providers?



The billing experience plays a considerable role in maintaining consumer loyalty.

It's important for consumers to have choices when it comes to receiving statements and making payments. 36% said they would consider switching to a provider that offered more payment options or if their communication needs weren't met.

Consumers want simple, accurate billing with multiple payment and communication options.

<sup>4</sup> - 2022 Trends in Patient Communications Report



How do digital statements and text-based billing options help your patients?

## Strengthen Patient Loyalty

When patients are empowered to select their preferred communication and payment methods, and customize the type of notifications they receive, they are given more control over their experience with a provider. This can lead to higher patient satisfaction, faster payments, and improved revenue cycle results. It is important for providers to inform patients of their options in order to achieve the best results when implementing digital statements and a text-to-pay program.



From the patient's perspective, an effective text-to-pay program is as easy as receiving a balance notification, responding "PAY," and getting a confirmation of payment. The patient can quickly pay their bill and get on with their day as opposed to delaying payment for a more convenient time when they are in front of a computer or their checkbook.

## Protect Payment Information






More and more, we are hearing that patients expect a more retail-like experience with their healthcare provider, but they don't necessarily trust those retail-first companies with their medical payments.

Patients trust their healthcare provider and their third-party partners twice as much as they trust large technology companies like Amazon and Google. Providers have an opportunity to mimic the retail experience with the added benefit of additional trust from healthcare consumers. Still, one third of patients prefer to not share their payment data. Providers should prioritize security and educating their patients in order to build trust with online platforms.

# Are You Ready?

## Provider Checklist For Statement Reminders

How do your existing solutions stack up against the latest patient preferences? Use the provider checklist below to identify areas to adapt and evolve.

-  **How easy is it for patients to change their communication preferences?** A difficult opt-out process can cause frustration for the person receiving the message, regardless of the channel, and could trigger compliance issues if it goes unaddressed.
-  **How frequent and consistent are the communications?** Inconsistent messaging can cause confusion, missed payments, and other complications. Yet overly frequent messages can burden the recipient unnecessarily. The key to finding balance is to understand your patient audience and to adapt to their evolving preferences.
-  **Is your online portal optimized?** An optimized patient portal delivers concise and secure payment information, multiple payment options, and 24/7 live chat support. It should be easy to navigate, custom-branded, and designed to showcase your quality of service and attention to detail.
-  **Is your message personalized to the individual?** People do not want to receive generic, impersonal communications, especially when it comes to their healthcare. They want personalized, accurate, and detailed statements. Audit your existing statement solution for missing data elements and personalized communications that would help your patients better understand their bill.
-  **Does the recipient have the option to choose their preferred communication channel?** Allowing for patient choice can ensure they are receiving the messages in a timely manner and on the channel they use most, where they're most likely to act. According to survey data, 42% of respondents said the ability to choose the communication channel is the most important factor when receiving a statement or payment reminder from their healthcare provider.

# About Salucro

From online bill pay solutions to provider-facing payment integrations, the Salucro platform brings cohesive payment experiences to healthcare providers, patients, and third-party collection agencies. As a PCI DSS Level 1 Service Provider, Salucro belongs to an elite group of organizations worldwide that have earned HITRUST CSF Certified status, proving Salucro's continued commitment to managing risk and improving payment security and compliance.

To get started with Salucro's digital statements and text-based billing solutions contact your account manager today!

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