

PATIENT EDUCATION ENHANCED BY DIGITAL PRESENTATION

Patients' first contacts with a practice may be through its website.

BY GILLES LESIEUR, MD



Advertising is not allowed in France, but unbiased patient education must be provided at every visit. This process can be made easier and more comprehensive by taking advantage of the potential of new digital technologies.

POINT OF FIRST CONTACT

Digital technologies are important at every step of the patient experience. For example, for many patients, the first contact with our practice may be through our website (www.centre-iridis.fr) to learn about our offerings or schedule an appointment. In France, the contents of every medical practice's website must be reviewed and verified by the conseil de l'ordre, a French legal review board. Additionally, although not mandatory, it is wise to obtain verification from Health On the Net (<https://www.healthonnet.org>), a nongovernmental organization that promotes reliable online health information.

On our website, all the surgical procedures we offer are described with embedded videos, and patients are able to download official informed consent forms from the French Society of Ophthalmology (SFO).

OFFICE VISIT

Once patients are in the office, during their stay in the waiting room, they can watch educational videos with subtitles provided by Echo (Eyemaginations) on widescreen TVs (Figure 1). The Echo system supplies information about a range of procedures, often including those that the patients are waiting to speak to the ophthalmologist about. The videos can inform patients, reinforce information already provided by our practice, and help to prompt patients to ask about certain options when they come face-to-face with the physician. Other widescreen TVs in the waiting room show films on nature and other nonmedical subjects.



Figure 1. In the waiting room, patients can watch educational videos with subtitles provided by Echo.



AT A GLANCE

- Digital technologies can assist during every phase of the patient encounter, saving time for the staff and physician and enhancing patient education.
- The videos available on Echo can inform patients, reinforce information already provided by the practice, and help to prompt patients to ask about certain options when they come face-to-face with the physician.

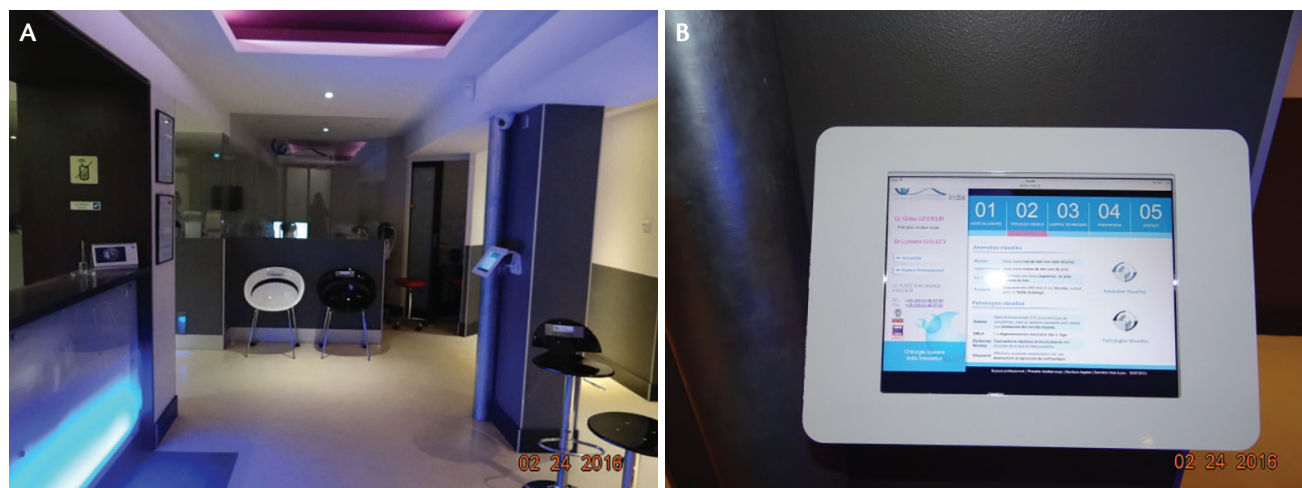


Figure 2. In the waiting area, tablet computers connected to the practice website supply news and information on the practice (A). Tablets can display information on diseases and surgeries (B).



Figure 3. Tablets also can be used to schedule future appointments.



Figure 4. Patient information brochures are available in each examination room.

Also available in the waiting area are several tablet computers connected to our website, which can supply news and information on the practice (Figure 2). These tablets can also be used to schedule future appointments (Figure 3).

In each examination room, during preconsultation with the orthoptist, informative leaflets are available (Figure 4), and relevant educational Echo videos can be shown as a means to explain more about the nature of the patient's disease or planned surgery. Mobile tablets are also available to display patient-specific information.

After consultation with the physician, links to Echo videos can be sent to the patient's home by email to reinforce and provide further explanation regarding the patient's case.

SUMMARY

Digital technologies can assist during every phase of the

patient encounter, saving time for the staff and physician and enhancing patient education. Although there is no age limit to the use of digital technologies, there may be a limitation with some older patients if they do not have an email address. In this situation, a younger family member may be able to provide the missing link. ■

Gilles Lesieur, MD

- Ophthalmologic Center Iridis, Albi, France
- Member, *CRST Europe* Editorial Board
- g.lesieur@centre-iridis.fr
- Financial disclosure: Consultant (PhysIOL), Investigator (Bausch + Lomb, Carl Zeiss Meditec), Recipient of royalties (PhysIOL ophthalmic knives, Rumex instruments)