



# Physician-Parent E-Mail Improves Communication And Patient Care

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Parents who have e-mail access to their child's physician report improved communication and care. In a new study, "Patient-Physician Email: An Opportunity to Transform Pediatric Health Care Delivery," 121 families in a pediatric rheumatology practice used a physician email service over a two-year period. During that time, data was recorded on each message, including its level of urgency, subject, volume, time received, and physician time spent responding to the e-mail. At the same time, similar data was collected on parent questions called in by telephone. The study found that physicians were able to complete email responses 57 percent faster than returned phone calls. In addition, the families who utilized the email service reported greater access to their doctor, and improved care. Email communication between parents and pediatricians and pediatric subspecialists can help provide optimal consumer-driven health care, according to the study authors.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: In a related study, "Impact of Clinical Alerts Within an Electronic Health Record on Routine Childhood Immunization in an Urban Pediatric Population," researchers found that electronic health record systems that alerted medical staff when patients were in need of immunizations, optimized immunization opportunities at both sick and well visits, and significantly improved immunization rates at age 2.]

**Texas Parent to Parent**

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