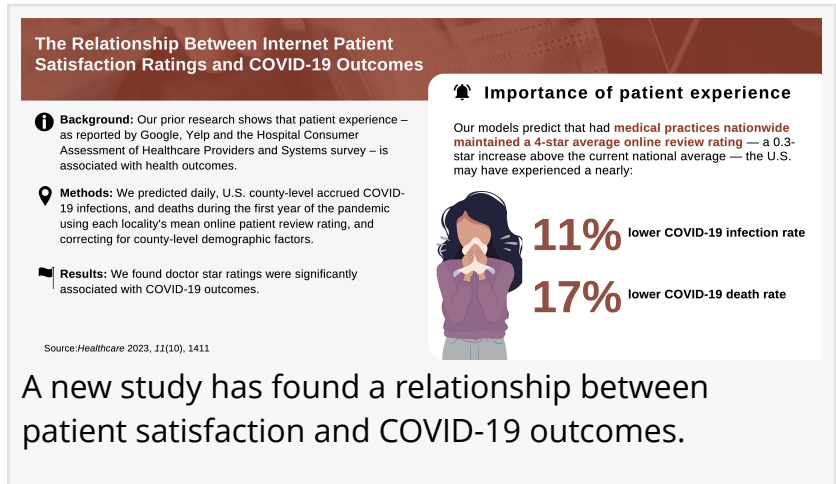


Improved Patient Experience Would Have Significantly Lessened COVID Casualties, Study Suggests

Researchers found higher online healthcare ratings were associated with lower COVID-19 infection & death rates during the pandemic

DENVER, COLORADO, UNITED STATES, June 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New research has uncovered a significant association between healthcare online reviews and COVID-19 outcomes, indicating that better patient-centered care could possibly have spared tens of thousands of Americans or more from pandemic infection and death.



In a peer-reviewed study published in the May issue of Healthcare, independent researchers and [Vanguard Communications](#) team members compared daily COVID-19 infection and death rates

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Ron Harman King

on a county-by-county basis during the first year of the pandemic alongside online patient reviews for corresponding geographic areas. The findings revealed that areas with higher patient-satisfaction ratings fared substantially better during the pandemic, after correction for demographic factors.

Online healthcare reviews afford patients opportunities to rate their experiences from one star for disappointment to five stars for the best possible. According to the study

models, if healthcare providers nationwide had a 0.3-star higher rating during the study period – which would have given a national average of 4.0 – the U.S. may have experienced:

- A nearly 11% lower COVID-19 infection rate.
- 17% lower COVID-19 death rate.

As the world faces risk of future pandemics, these study findings carry far-reaching implications for healthcare providers and patients alike, said the study authors. Beyond the provision of medical care itself, these findings underscore the immense additional value of patient-centered care, emphasizing the importance of healthcare provider-patient communication, empathy and education.

"Other studies have consistently shown that hundreds of thousands of online patient reviews can in the aggregate act as surprisingly reliable indicators of healthcare quality and outcomes," said Ron Harman King, a study author and CEO of Vanguard Communications, a marketing and management consulting firm for physicians and attorneys. "Patients fare much better both physically and emotionally when doctors actively listen, adapt to patient input and prioritize patient satisfaction."

The research builds upon [previous studies](#) by Vanguard and others that established the link between patient experience and health outcomes, as assessed by Google, Yelp, and the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey.

The full study, "The Relationship between Internet Patient Satisfaction Ratings and COVID-19 Outcomes," is published in Healthcare 2023 and available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare11101411>.

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About Vanguard Communications

Vanguard Communications & Process Improvement is a Denver-based firm specialized in research-driven marketing for medical practices and legal firms, as well as practice improvement services. The firm applies data on patient and legal client motivation with the persuasive power of public education and a culture of continuous improvement. Founded in 1994, Vanguard serves specialty private and academic medical practices and legal firms coast to coast.

Vanguard Communications was assisted in this work by Hensley Biostats, a statistical consulting company working in the pharma, medical device and medical services research space that helps clients design and analyze randomized trials and observational studies.

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