

Designing Consumer Health IT: A Guide for Developers and Systems Designers

New AHRQ Guide Identifies Successful Design Methods for Development of Consumer Health IT



At Manage My Practice, we get lots of calls from people with ideas for healthcare products. They want to tell us their ideas and get our feedback. We love to hear about their ideas and strive to help them understand how healthcare works. Now we can also refer them to a new guide from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ.)

The new AHRQ guide, *Designing Consumer Health IT: A Guide for Developers and Systems Designers*, gives recommendations for designers and developers of consumer health IT products. Recommendations include general guidance for designers and design teams on the process of designing and developing a product and guidance that is specific to a design phase such as idea generation, identification of end users, testing, and commercialization. The guide includes results of an environmental scan and grey literature review along with expert interviews to improve consumer health IT design to increase effective use.

This document is designed to highlight key strategies that have been used to produce outstanding consumer IT products. It presents 10 recommendations as a way to introduce new

approaches to consumer health IT developers and companies that want to increase sales and better satisfy customers. The recommendations focus on the design methods and issues to consider throughout the development process and into commercialization. Advice is provided about how to apply these recommendations for consumer health, especially considerations about interoperability, privacy, and product safety.

The following recommendations are discussed in this guide:

1. Assemble a design team consisting of members with appropriate **knowledge and skills** for all product development phases.
2. Strive to **understand customer needs** within the environments that the product will be used throughout all product development phases.
3. Include a **diverse set of customers** when generating ideas for new products and when evaluating early iterations of products.
4. Select and apply well-developed and established design methods in combination with **intuition-based design approaches**.
5. Use **multiple approaches early to learn about customers and the market** to inform the product's design.
6. Drive design decisions and modifications based on learning from **prototyping and pilot testing** activities.
7. **Define and tailor success metrics** based on the needs and contexts of unique customer segments.
8. Balance customer needs with **product safety and privacy concerns specific to health IT products**.
9. Build products based on **established health data and transmission standards**.
10. Incorporate **successful marketing strategies** to promote the product and be responsive to customers once the product is promoted and adopted.

Click **here** to download the document.