



Embracing Digital: The Transition to Electronic Patient Health Education

Ramesh B.A.¹ Abiramie Chellamuthu¹ Sruthi Sridhar¹ Sathish Kumar J.¹

¹Department of Plastic Surgery, Sri Ramachandra Medical Centre, Tamil Nadu, India

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Address for correspondence Ramesh B.A., MS, Mch, FRCSEd, No. 1 Ramachandra Nagar, Porur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600116, India (e-mail: ramesh.ba@sriramachandra.edu.in).

In the evolving landscape of health care, patient education has become a cornerstone of effective treatment and recovery. With the government's focus on Digital India, electronic handouts are increasingly important. This article examines the use of electronic patient handouts versus traditional printed materials, highlighting the role of quick response (QR) codes in enhancing access to health information.

The Importance of Patient Health Education

Patient health education is essential for empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their health. Effective education not only improves health literacy but also enhances patient engagement, leading to better health outcomes.¹ Research indicates that patients who receive comprehensive educational materials are more likely to adhere to treatment plans and experience improved health outcomes.^{2,3}

The Role of QR Codes in Patient Education

By simply scanning a quick response (QR) code with a smartphone, patients can access a wealth of information tailored to their specific health needs.⁴ This technology is particularly beneficial in clinical settings, where patients often wait for appointments.⁵ For instance, a patient who had skin grafting done could scan a code that provides information on caring for a skin grafted area.

How Was This Done?

The patient education frequently asked questions (FAQs) are hosted on a free blogger provided by Google. The blog's URL is used to generate a free QR code from qrfy.com. This QR code

is then downloaded, printed, and displayed in our outpatient department (OPD). Patients or caregivers can scan the QR code with their mobile camera or Google lens to access the blog directly (→**Fig. 1**).

Benefits of Electronic Handouts versus Printed Handouts

- **Accessibility:** Electronic handouts can be accessed anytime and from anywhere, allowing patients to review

Plastic Surgery Digital Handouts



Fig. 1 Quick response (QR) code for scanning patient education.

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information as needed. Printed materials, on the other hand, are prone to being lost or forgotten.

- *Environmental impact*: Using electronic handouts helps significantly reduce paper waste.
- *Cost-effectiveness*: Creating digital content can be free if done on a no-cost platform, avoiding the ongoing expenses of printing and distributing paper materials.
- *Customization*: Health care providers can easily adapt digital content to suit a patient's specific condition, preferences, or literacy level, ensuring the information remains relevant and comprehensible. Furthermore, updates to digital content can be made without the need for reprinting.

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Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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