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**Letters...**

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## The patient experience

We are excited to publish the third annual Patient Voice issue. This special publication is dedicated to raising the voice of patients and sharing their insights on topics ranging from drug discovery and development through commercialization. We also have tapped nearly 100 industry experts to learn what the industry is doing to elevate its patient EQ. From this year's feedback, it's clear that while progress has been made across the board in terms of organizations being more inclusive of patients' needs and experiences in the healthcare journey, more needs to be done. Patients are asking, in some cases demanding, a seat at the table, starting with clinical trials. IQVIA's 2019 patient survey found that if patients are going to be part of clinical research, they want feedback, including access to their trial data (89%), updates about upcoming trials (81%), study statistics (78%), and reminders and calendar tools (52%) to make participation easier. When this transparency is lacking, patients are less likely to stick around. Patients are the lynchpin of clinical research and their partnership in the process is integral to future success.



According to some of the latest statistics available, there were about 35.7 million hospital stays in the United States, representing a hospitalization rate of 104.2 stays per 1,000 population. The percent of adults who had contact with a healthcare professional in 2018 was 84.3%; the percent of children who had contact with a healthcare professional was 93.6%. The number of physician visits in the United States was more than 883.7 million.

From the numbers, it's pretty clear that the majority of us have been or know someone who has been a patient. We are intimately familiar with the gaps in the system. We also know that there are dedicated physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals who are doing great work. So the question remains: how can all stakeholders — pharmaceutical companies, CROs, physicians, payers, and patients — co-exist in harmony? There is no easy answer or one-size-fits all solution. But as our patients, patient advocates, and industry thought leaders outline in the pages of this special issue, there are definitive steps and solutions that can be undertaken to make sure progress toward true patient engagement continues in the right direction as we strive to move from sick care to healthy care.

We want to salute all of you who have committed your talents, passion, and knowledge to serving patients and caregivers in their healthcare journeys. We welcome your feedback on the topics and insights featured in this issue or anything else that comes to mind.

Taren Grom  
Editor

### Their word...

**ROBIN ROBINSON**  
Senior Editor



*The term patient empowerment has been around for more than 20 years, but as this special issue shows, only now are patients and their voices earning the attention they deserve.*

**KIM RIBBINK**  
Features Editor



*The patient is starting to gain a seat at the table, with more and more pharmaceutical companies seeking their input for clinical design.*

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