

# What factors are driving innovation in healthcare analytics?

As modern technology improves, it becomes far easier for healthcare organisations to do new and innovative things with analytics. The entire process is becoming streamlined - they now have more efficient methods of gathering information, analysing it and using their findings to improve the way they deliver patient care.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that all of this growth is coming about as the result of technology.

In reality, there are many factors driving the rise of healthcare analytics. This movement is about people; it's about processes. In short, it's about a new way of doing business. The technology is just a vehicle that helps make that happen.

Here's the real story of how healthcare analytics has reached the next level in recent years.

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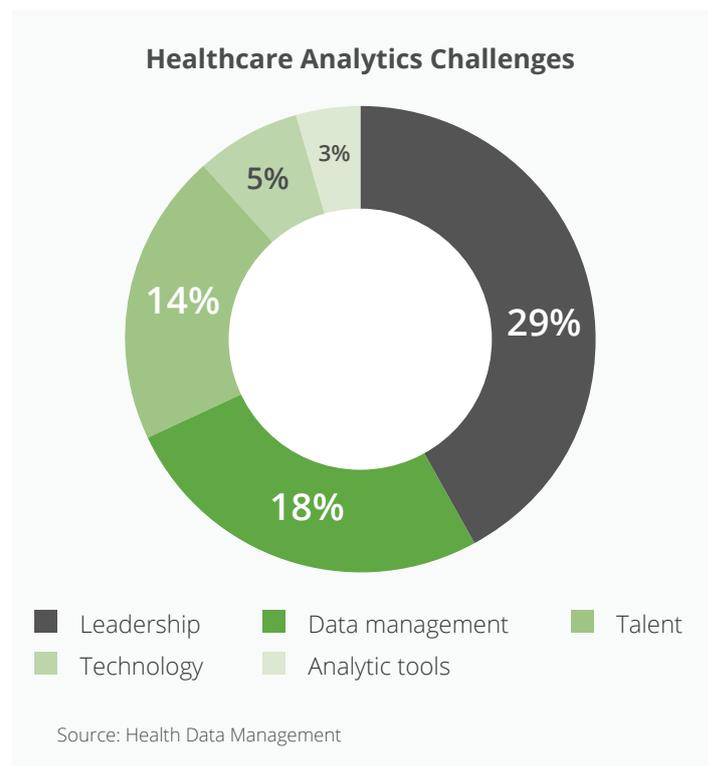
## Identifying the challenges of the era

To identify the primary factors that are driving healthcare innovation, it helps to first look at the motives behind such change. What are the key challenges that have prompted health leaders to try and do better?

The answer might surprise you. Many assume that when it comes to healthcare analytics, the primary challenge is to find superior technology that can support better analytics programs, but that's actually not the case. According to Health Data Management, there are three bigger priorities:

- **Leadership** is a big one. When asked to name a key roadblock keeping them from analytics success, 29 per cent of business leaders said they didn't have the right people in place to lead them forward.
- **Data management** was cited by 18 per cent. While these companies have enough information stockpiled that they could potentially achieve analytics success, they're lacking the infrastructure or organisational skills to pull it off.
- **Talent**, named by 14 per cent of leaders, is another big priority. What good is having the right technology to analyse data if you don't also have the people to use it?

Only 5 per cent of respondents said technology was a key challenge for them, and 3 per cent specifically singled out analytics tools. The tech stuff isn't the main problem; it's everything else that's motivating companies to move forward.



## Looking for analytics leadership figures

So what does it take to provide capable leadership for a company looking to reshape its analytics efforts? First and foremost, a clear vision for the future is important. This means being able to look more than just one step ahead.

According to Computerworld, leading organisations have people in charge who can look beyond just capturing data, considering also the value of optimising the customer experience and finding competitive advantages against rival businesses.

Accenture research has described this process as “establishing a centre of gravity” for analytics.

In other words, your company can only succeed with data analysis if it has people in charge who are able to decide upon organisational priorities and communicate them well.

If your company's leadership team can do this, the hope is that enthusiasm for data will branch out from there. The final product should be a large, interdisciplinary team that performs at a high level with analytics.

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## A new framework for data management

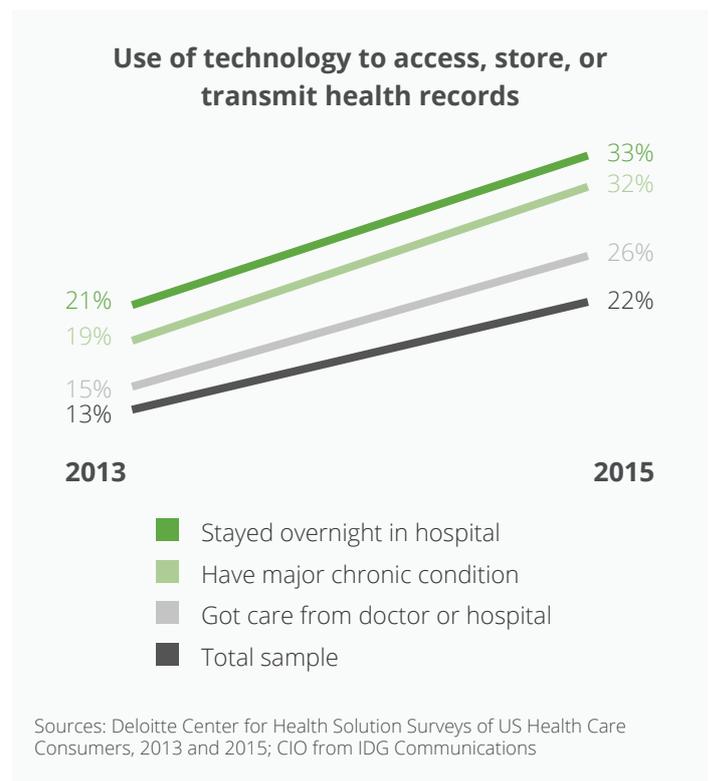
When it comes to data management, the landscape today is trickier than it's ever been. As technology improves, companies discover more and more ways of gathering information and handling it.

CIO noted that the Internet of Things has played a significant role in this. Seemingly every device is connected now, ranging from our medical devices to wristwatches we wear while exercising. All of these tools have become hubs for data collection - which means for health organisations, the key is figuring out how to efficiently gather and use that knowledge.

**“As technology improves, companies discover more and more ways of gathering information and handling data management.”**

Online and mobile data have also presented challenges. It used to be that health organisations only got information about patients either over the phone or through the mail - both rather slow and inefficient processes. The stream

of new data sources in use today adds another level of complication. This is pushing companies to devote more time - and money - to improving the data curation cycle and making their work with analytics more efficient.



## Potential for future economic growth

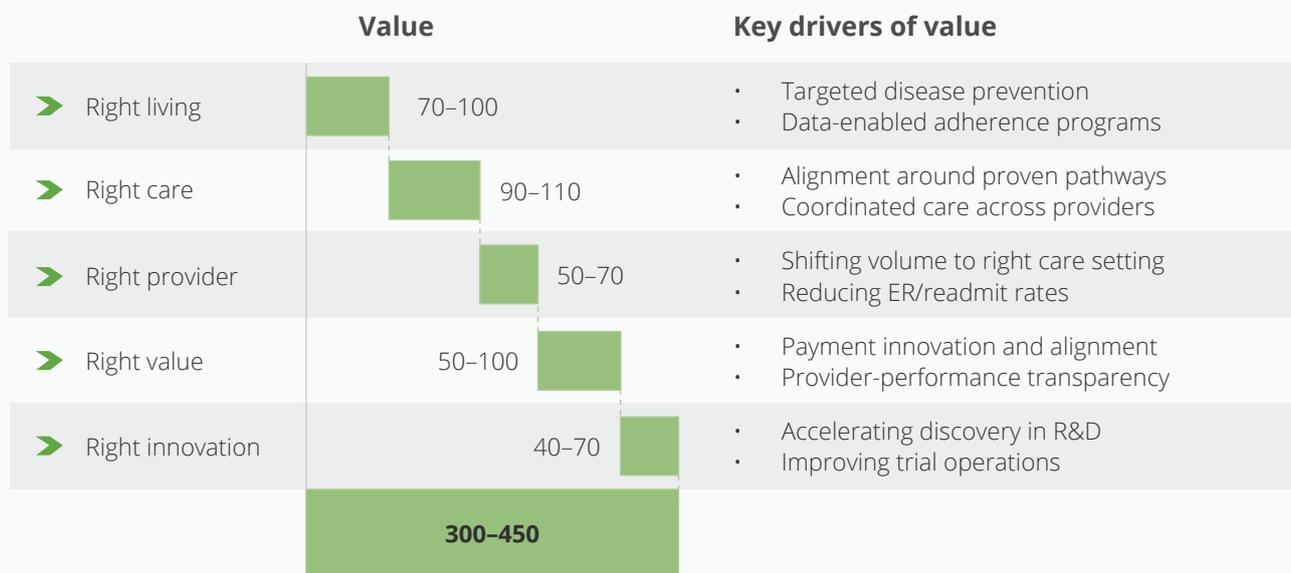
At the end of the day, every business wants to make money, and here's the good news - as healthcare analytics continues to improve, there's a good chance they can make more of it. McKinsey and Company found in a recent study that with the rise of analytics comes an opportunity for significant economic growth in the industry.

The research organisation cited the United States as one example - in that nation alone, improving the existing pathways for healthcare service could account for somewhere between \$300 billion to \$450 billion in reduced healthcare spending each year. This represents

between 12 per cent and 17 per cent of the country's total \$2.6 trillion baseline for health spending.

This massive improvement is the result of an accumulation of small victories. For example: Using aspirin to help those at risk for coronary heart disease, screening people for cholesterol trouble and using data-driven strategies to promote quitting smoking are all small steps that can add up to produce great cumulative effects. In the US alone, this could lead to almost half a trillion dollars in savings; scale that out to the entire world, and the impact is simply staggering.

### Value at stake (\$ billion)



Sources: American Diabetes Association; American Hospital Association; HealthPartners Research Foundation; McKinsey Global Institute; National Bureau of Economic Research; US Census Bureau

*Applying early successes at scale could reduce US healthcare costs by \$300 billion to \$450 billion.*

## How BI consultants can grease the wheels

If you're looking to guide your organisation into the next era of health analytics with a new, innovative mindset, it certainly can't hurt to have a team of highly skilled business intelligence consultants on your side. Working with a BI consultancy can help you identify the challenges in front of you and attack them with confidence.

At AtoBI, we look to deliver that sort of service. We begin by listening carefully as you describe your BI needs;

from there, we design and prototype solutions that are personalised to fit the specific objectives of your business.

With investment in health analytics on the rapid rise, it always helps to have strategic allies who can make sure your time and money don't go to waste.