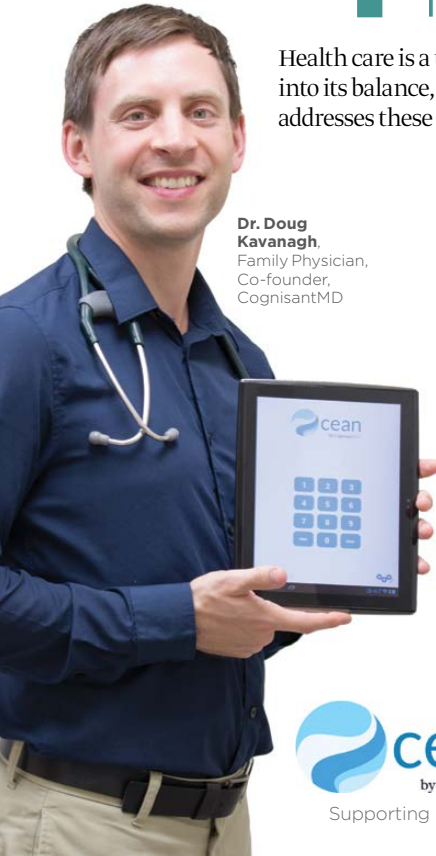# 4 Most Important Features
for Patient-Facing Technology

Health care is a tremendously complex and human system. Sensitivity is required when introducing new technology into its balance, like tablets within the offices of doctors. A well-designed technology and corresponding platform that addresses these four elements can be instrumental in improving efficiency and efficacy in our health care system.

Dr. Doug Kavanagh, Family Physician, Co-founder, CognisantMD

1 Patient Comfort and Accessibility

Presenting patients with tablets in the waiting room allows them to easily provide vital medical information via an engaging interface. And, that engagement is extremely valuable for increasing the quality of the data in electronic medical records (EMRs). "Patients find a touchscreen interface very quick and easy," says Doug Kavanagh, a Toronto-based family physician and co-founder of CognisantMD, the company behind Ocean medical tablets. "And, when they walk into the room and see that I have already seen everything they entered, literally seconds ago, they think that's so cool."

2 Flexibility and Customizability

The needs of any one health care professional when it comes to patient-facing technology will differ from the needs of their colleague. And, the needs of tomorrow will differ from the needs of today. By allowing clinicians to edit and create their own solutions within the tablet, and by extending EMRs in an open manner, a good technology can lay the groundwork for future innovation. "We can't afford not to open this technology up and let independent developers enhance the platform," says Dr. Kavanagh.

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3 EMR Integration

There is no universal standard EMR in Canada. The database and record management tools can vary dramatically from one clinic to another. Technological solutions must be able to integrate with and sit on top of a variety of existing data infrastructures in order to flourish. "Physicians and healthcare workers simply do not want to interact with yet another system," says Dr. Kavanagh. "Asking them to deal with with logins and passwords and then copy and paste basic patient information from one system to another takes away time that could be better spent with the patient. It can also introduce errors in record keeping that could result in patient safety issues."

4 Information Security

EMRs contain some of the most private and sensitive information there is. New technology that interacts with EMRs must be very sensitive to patient data privacy standards like PHIPA. With proper implementation of client-side encryption and safe, Canadian-based data storage, new technologies can make our sensitive data ever more secure.

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