Using informatics to engage patients and healthcare providers

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This issue of *JAMIA* focuses on the many “meaningful uses” of mobile health (mHealth) and health information technology in healthcare. An editorial by Tang et al. introduces nine articles (see pages 5, 12, 19, 29, 38, 48, 60, 74, 80, 88, 94, 105, 110, 119, 129, 137, 149) that compose the special focus issue on “Interactive Systems for Patient-Centered Care to Enhance Patient Engagement.” Other mHealth-related articles focus on the effect of tablet computers on hospitalized patients’ knowledge (see page 159), smartphone-based diagnosis of preeclampsia in resource-limited settings (see page 166), use of mobile technologies to enhance immunization (see page 207), mHealth adoption by healthcare professionals (see page 212), and the effect of mobile technologies in interventions for stress and anxiety (see page 221). Additionally, a review on whether electronic games help improve knowledge and self management in young people with chronic conditions (see page 230) is presented in this issue of the journal.

Various technological platforms are currently used by patients and providers. However, the type of platform is only one factor in the quality of patient engagement, since the best healthcare system in the world will not be

complete without an effective means to communicate health information to patients and their caregivers. Articles in this issue show how the use of infographics can mitigate health illiteracy (see page 174), and the importance of measuring a patient’s reading level (see page 202). Patient-provider electronic messages do not always match readability levels appropriate for a specific patient.

Patient engagement is as critical as having access to a healthcare system where decisions are based on evidence. Data can have a transformative role in healthcare and research. Electronic systems for data management are impactful in various contexts, such as support of multi-center networks operating in resource-limited settings (see page 184), automated assessment of bias in clinical trials (see page 193), and health information exchange.

As the articles in this issue of *JAMIA* illustrate, biomedical informatics continues to be an exciting field that is ripe for innovations that have a direct impact on human health. *JAMIA* is proud to disseminate innovations that stimulate researchers, clinicians, and patients to think of better ways to promote health and ease the burden of disease.