

SEPTEMBER 2020

Loyalty in Healthcare, post COVID-19

Disruptions from COVID-19 could lead to 25 million people considering a switch of their regular healthcare providers.



The COVID-19 pandemic has redefined our habits across all facets of life, and healthcare is no exception.

How are patients responding to this change?

In a survey conducted by Hero Digital in August 2020, only about **half** of patients reported feeling loyal to their current provider, with individuals who have relocated or changed jobs being more likely to switch. The pressures of money loss, reemployment, moving, and health concerns are motivating people to find new providers. This transition uncovers a potential audience of about **25 million** who will be searching for a provider who can give them a seamless, integrated experience.

Healthcare companies can appeal to this audience by creating a credible and convenient experience enabled by cutting-edge technology and self-serve tools. New patients will be expecting a multi-touch journey across all channels — from smart watches to telehealth to in-person appointments.

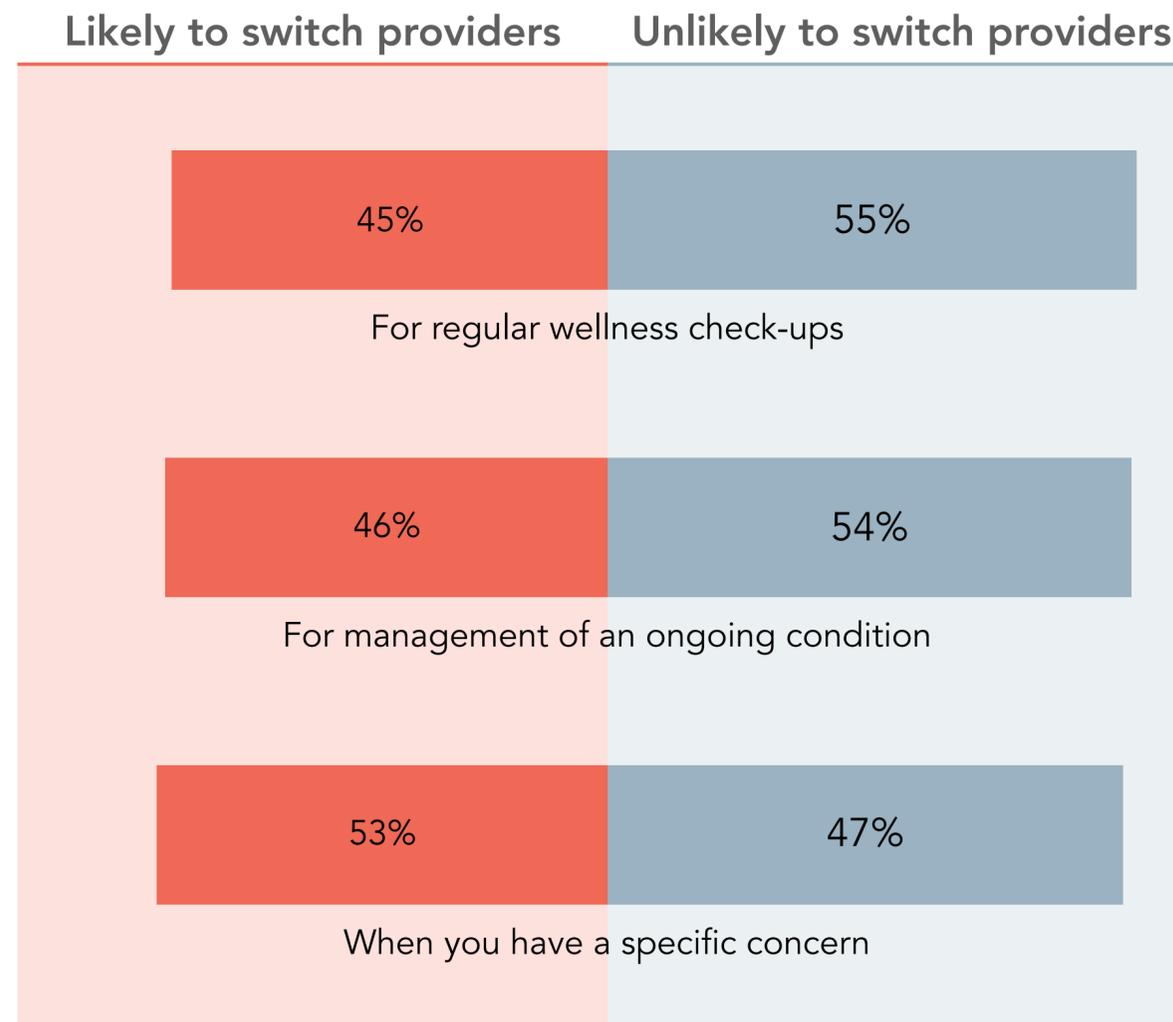
To effectively reach this audience, companies can start by mapping new patients' engagement points, workflows, and pain points. Then, for each stage of the patient journey, companies can find differentiated opportunities to solve for their patients' evolving needs.

In August 2020, Hero Digital surveyed 1,673 people about their preferences and behaviors for interacting with healthcare providers and how they may have changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Half of patients are likely to switch providers

Across healthcare relationships, only about **50%** of patients feel loyal to their regular providers. In every case, there's a great risk of attrition and a great opportunity to win new loyalties.

When customers have acute concerns, the speed and convenience of walk-in clinics and ERs decrease the likelihood of visiting a known provider.

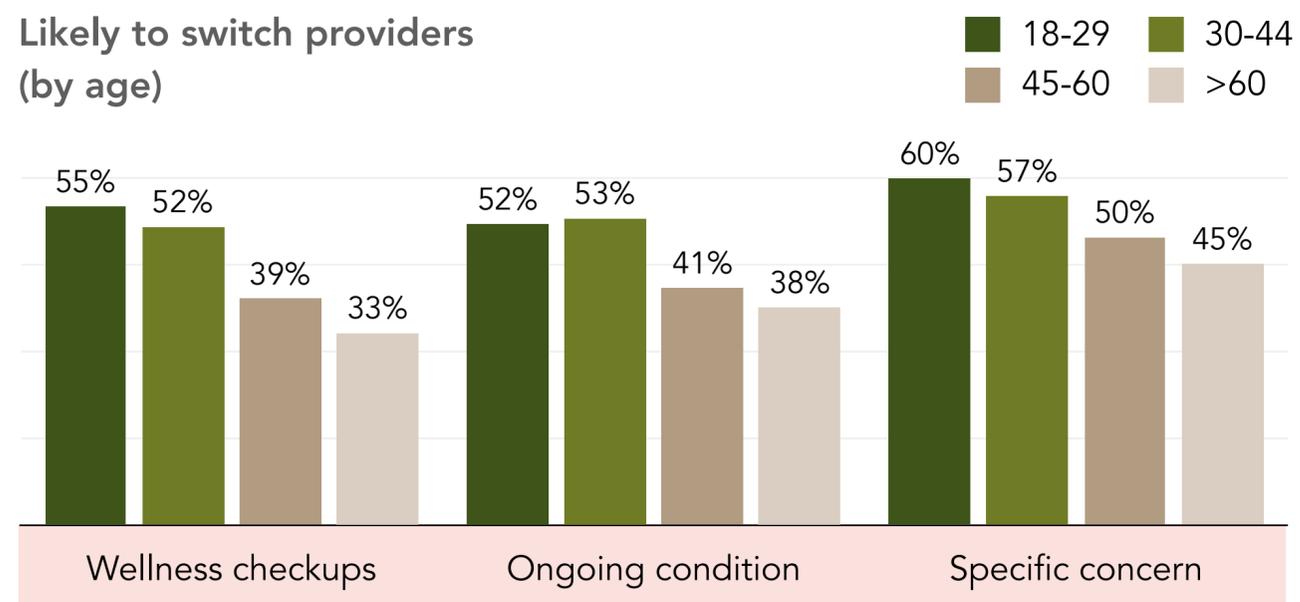


The highest loyalty is with primary and specialty providers where having history and an established relationship can make a difference in the perceived quality of care.

Switchers are younger and more urban

While younger and more urban patients were already open to switching providers pre-pandemic, COVID-19 has acted as a general accelerant.

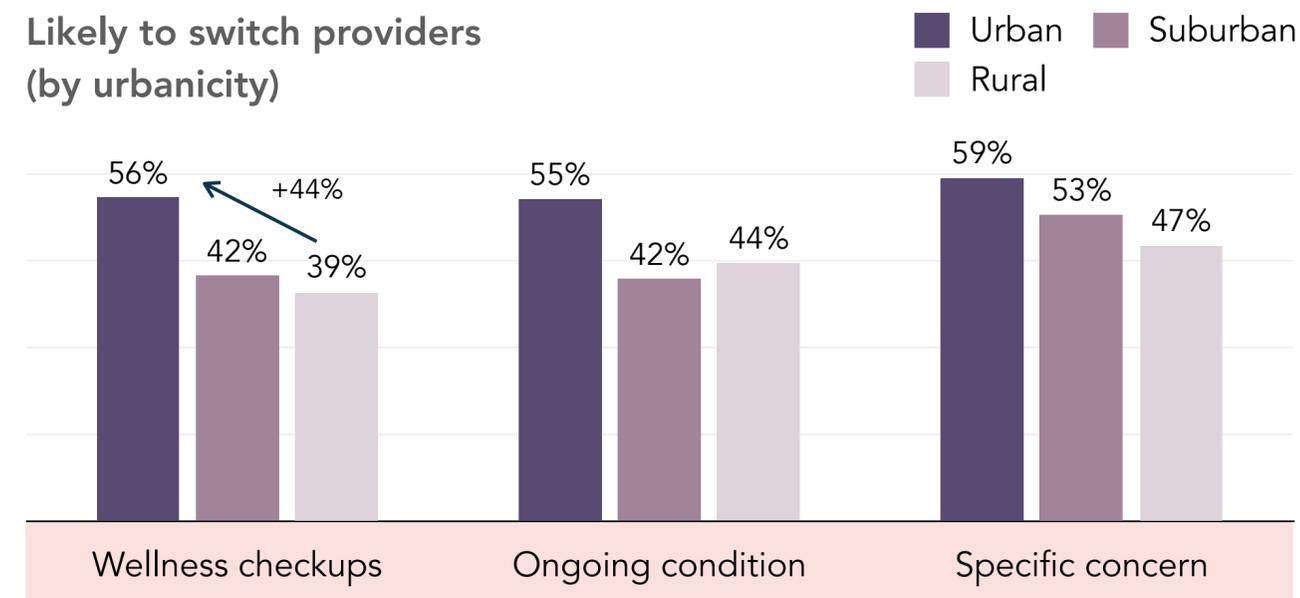
Likely to switch providers (by age)



Over half of 18-29 year olds are likely to switch primary providers, compared to **a third** of 60+ year olds.

1 in 6 individuals under 44 say that they are actually more likely to switch providers following the pandemic.

Likely to switch providers (by urbanicity)



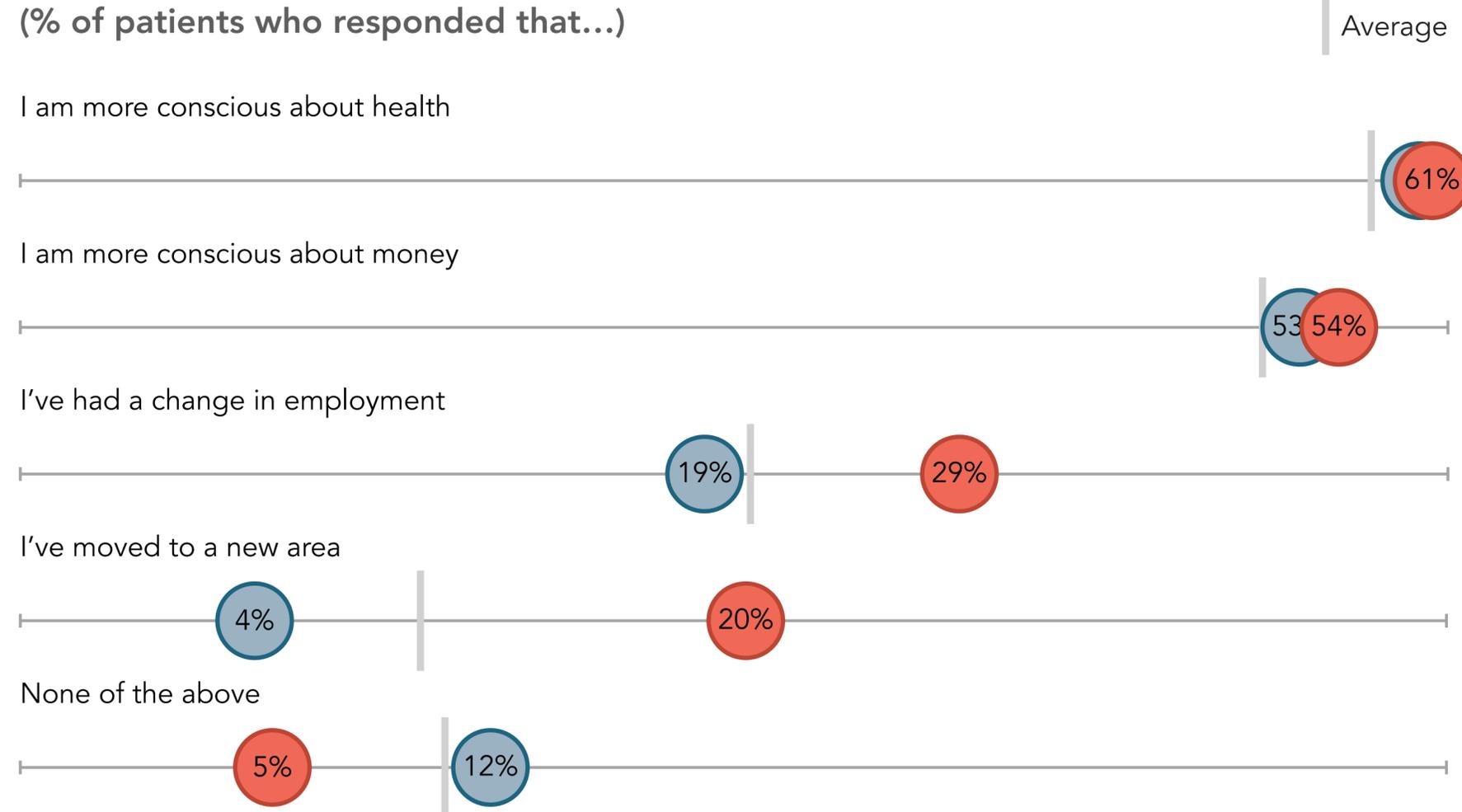
Urban patients are **44% more likely** to consider changing healthcare providers than rural patients.



Lifestyle disruptions contribute to switching

The ways that COVID-19 has impacted people's lives has a large role in their likelihood to switch providers, whether from internal preferences or external events.

Ways in which COVID-19 has impacted your life (% of patients who responded that...)

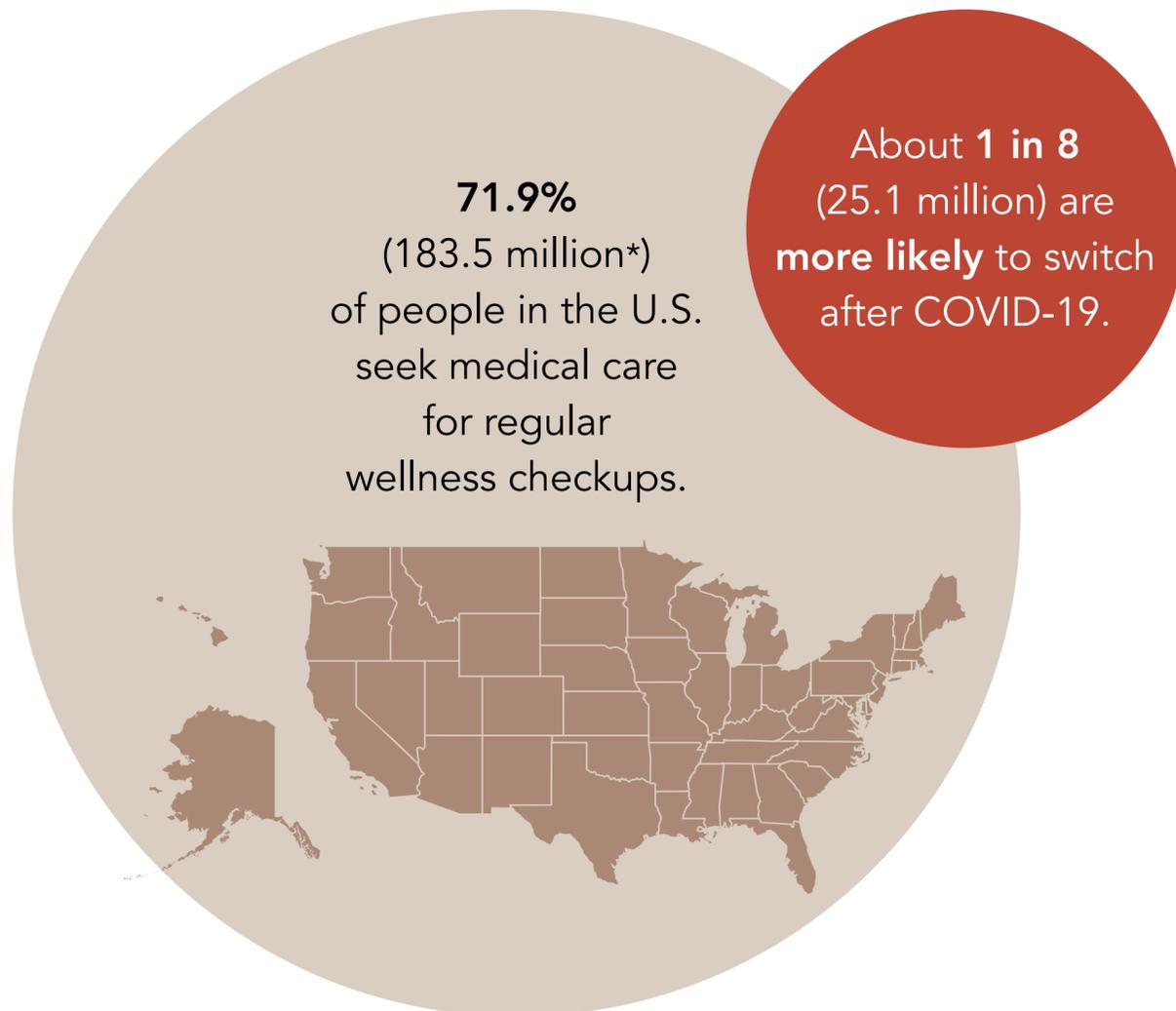


More likely to switch after COVID:
Most commonly people who have experienced meaningful life changes including losing a job or relocating because of COVID.

More unlikely to switch after COVID:
Most commonly people who are more conscious about health and money but relatively less impacted by COVID overall.

25 million are now more likely to switch

The shifting loyalty landscape resulting from COVID-19 highlights a need to better understand those patients who are most at risk and what they may be looking for in their next provider.



Just as likely to switch providers post-COVID

31.8% of patients

Skew towards....

AGE



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More likely to switch providers post-COVID

13.7% of patients

Skew towards....

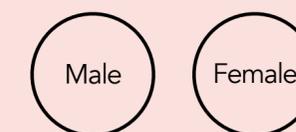
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Switchers are comfortable with digital

The audience of people most likely to switch providers post-COVID are more likely to engage in digital healthcare experiences.

COVID-impacted switchers more commonly...

+19%

Visit a doctor's website

+49%

Use of at-home lab testing (+49%), digital health monitors (+34%), and mail-order pharmacies (+31%)

+80%

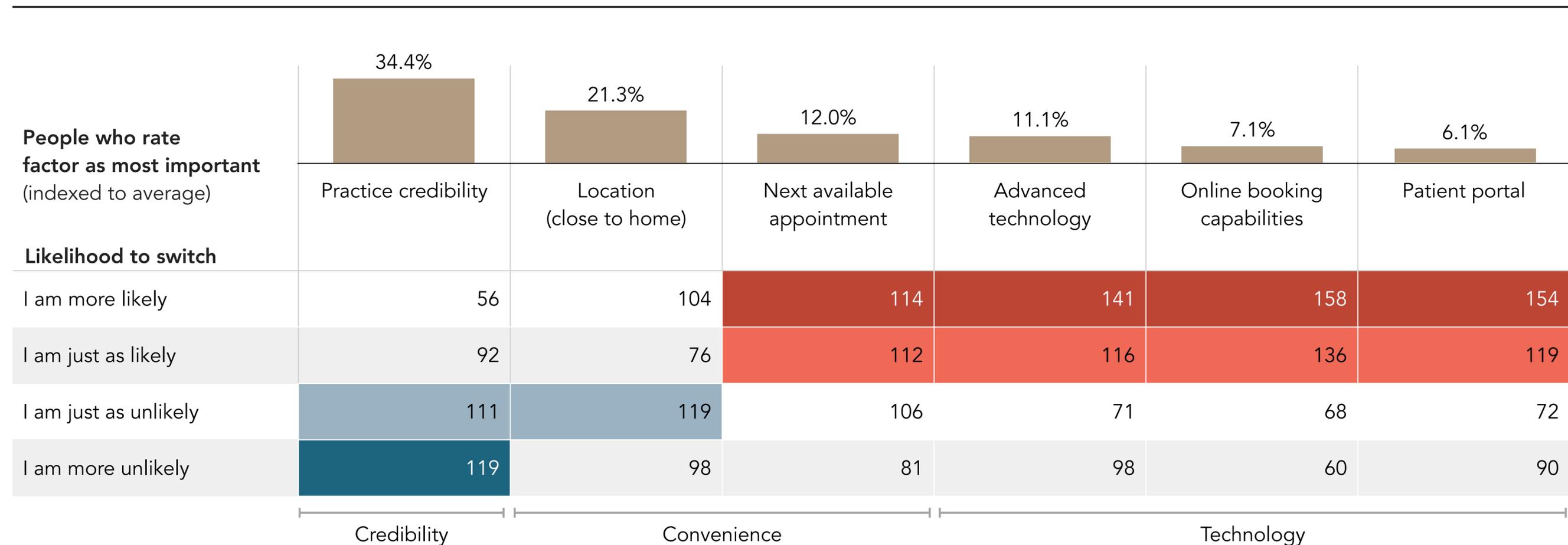
Were frequent telehealth users prior to the pandemic

+103%

Say they are 'definitely' willing to give personal health data to their provider

Technology, convenience drive change

Patients who are the most at risk following COVID-19 disruptions are the most influenced by availability and technology offered by their doctors.



At-risk patients are more heavily influenced by technology drivers.

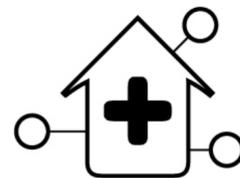
Patient preferences are changing.

Healthcare providers must offer new experiences if they are to build and hold on to loyalty into the future.



COVID-19 has disrupted traditional drivers of loyalty.

The pandemic has added new risks and hurdles to care that have forced a reassessment of patient relationships. Don't rely on the status quo to keep them coming back for care.



Patient experiences extend far beyond the office visit.

Gone are the days when a patient's experience consisted purely of in-person interactions. Healthcare today is a multi-touch journey that demands a seamless, digitally-enabled experience integrated with the patterns of modern life.

How Hero Digital can help you get started

How to make sense of the business, market, and technological implications for defining the ideal digital patient experience.

1 Synthesize

Map the ways your patients interact now and find opportunities to better fit into their demanding and increasingly digital-driven lives.

2 Prioritize

Plan and rank your services based on your patients' evolving needs, as well as your ability to meet them, and adjust your roadmap accordingly.

3 Envision

Construct a north-star vision that will guide your investments in activities that deliver optimal customer-business impact.

Trusted by healthcare leaders



To learn how Hero Digital can help you act on these insights to improve your patient experience, contact us at business@herodigital.com.



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