

Reporting Live from Your Stomach

[Save to myBoK](#)

While millions of health conscious consumers are strapping health tracking devices around their wrists, doctors are prescribing a more invasive device for another group of consumers. To boost compliance with life-saving medications for people with chronic conditions like high blood pressure, depression, and diabetes, doctors at the Chicago, IL-based Rush University Medical Center are asking patients to swallow their health trackers.

These sensors, called Proteus pills, are the size of a grain of sand and are added to a capsule of a daily prescription medication prescribed to the patient. Once the capsule reaches the patient's stomach acid, the sensor is activated and relays a message to a Bluetooth-enabled patch on the patient's abdomen confirming that the patient took their medicine that day. The Bluetooth device is connected to an iPad that sends out alerts, via text message, when a patient has missed a scheduled dose, according to an article in [Crain's Chicago Business](#).¹ The sensor system also collects other information about the patient such as heart rate and sleep cycles. All of this data is stored on a patient portal, via the iPad, which, like any portal or electronic health record (EHR), can be accessed by doctors and nurses. In the future, health information management (HIM) professionals could have a hand in this technology, whether implementing the portals, or running analytics on data that's collected. Rush's population health professionals are heavily involved in this project.

"There's a fairly significant gap between the prescriptions providers write and the prescriptions patients take," Dr. Anthony Perry, vice president for population health and ambulatory services, told *Crain's*. "When it comes to high blood pressure, the vast majority of patients respond nicely to medication. The trick is to ensure they're taking it."

Patients are prescribed pills with these sensors for only three months—the length of time, experts say, necessary to establish a pattern of compliant behavior.

Note

1. Sweeney, Brigid. "[This new smart pill reminds you to take your medicine](#)." *Crain's Chicago Business*. June 5, 2017.

Article citation:

Journal of AHIMA Staff. "Reporting Live from Your Stomach" *Journal of AHIMA* 88, no.8 (August 2017): 56.

Driving the Power of Knowledge

Copyright 2022 by The American Health Information Management Association. All Rights Reserved.