

E-Commerce in Healthcare Supply Chain: A Pathway towards Affordable, Accountable & Available Healthcare Services

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***Abstract---** Standardization and integration of healthcare supply chain is must to explore and execute substitute ways of preventive and critical care reaching them through non-conventional methods improving its performance. Use of e-commerce in healthcare supply chain leads to partner relationship, information sharing and supply chain integration. Supply chain integration has the highest standardized total effect on supply chain performance improving flow of information, material and funds. This study reviews how implementation of e-commerce in healthcare supply chain has made healthcare services affordable, accountable and available for all.*

***Key Words---** Supply Chain; e-commerce; standardization; integration; performance*

I. INTRODUCTION

Healthcare industry is under tremendous pressure to improve patient care, managing input cost, technology, quality services and operating margins. Rapid change in technology, government rulings, stiff competition and new advancements has made patients more concerned and demanding. Not only are developing countries, developed countries also struggling to make healthcare affordable, accountable and available for masses.¹ Healthcare executives are under tremendous pressure and finding IT and e-commerce as tools to explore and execute different ways of preventive and critical care reaching them through non-conventional methods to make it affordable, accountable and available. Patients are also accepting and opting for substitute modes of care e.g. telemedicine, mobile healthcare, home healthcare, remote healthcare, clinics at pharmacy stores and many under hub and spoke model. These facilities are helping healthcare service providers to reach and serve masses, optimizing cost, adding comfort and values to patients. Use of technology for such services are helping governments, service providers and patients to save on GDP, time and out of pocket expenses. E-commerce could help healthcare service providers towards better prognosis and treatment, disease management, patient segmentation, evidence-based medicine, multi resource planning, real time critical patient monitoring, on line appointment and patient planning, remote monitoring, optimization of resources, better patient turnover, prevention of claim delay and rejections, prevention of fraud and abuse and many more. E-commerce could help to improve quality of healthcare service, optimizing multi-disciplinary care management, clinical and administrative efficiency, maintaining high levels of transparency, mutual trust and interpersonal relationship by improving interpersonal information sharing and transparency. Standardization and integration of healthcare supply chain is must to explore and execute substitute ways of preventive and critical care reaching them through non-conventional methods improving its performance making it

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