International Scientific Journal of Engineering and Management (ISJEM) ISSN: 2583-6129
Volume: 04 Issue: 09 | Sept – 2025 DOI: 10.55041/ISJEM05049
An International Scholarly || Multidisciplinary || Open Access || Indexing in all major Database & Metadata

A Computerized Hospital Portal for Digitalized Patient Records, Online Appointment Booking, And Healthcare Communication

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ABSTRACT

The Hospital Portal is a web-based application to manage healthcare developed as a front-end application using PHP and a back-end database using MySQL technology. Its primary aim is to ease healthcare's responsibilities by providing a web-based platform to connect patients, doctors and administrators. The administrator's role is to manage the platform and oversee the creation of patient and doctor profiles; monitor patient queries; and confirm that all medical information is accurate and reliable. The centralized management also confirms that patients are taking care of their healthcare needs systematically while promoting a positive healthcare experience.

Patients are required to register on the portal and submit their basic details including name and telephone number. After they register, patients can access many services including making queries about disease or symptoms, viewing health-related remedies and treatments; searching specialist doctors; and booking online appointments. When patients require a face-to-face consultation, they must schedule an appointment using the system before coming to the hospital, which helps to lower their wait time in the hospital as well as promote a better coordinated healthcare system. This approach procedure gives the patients an organized, efficient, and convenient way to access healthcare services that are meant to improve their health care system experience.

Doctors are also able to utilize the portal to manage their appointments, maintain records, and clearly respond to patient queries in a more condensed time period. The Hospital Portal improves the efficiency, transparency, and quality of care by incorporating essential features including appointment scheduling, medical records management

Keywords- Hospital Management System, Online Appointment Booking, Healthcare Automation, Patient Registration, Data Privacy.

INTRODUCTION

The main goal of the Hospital Portal is to digitize and simplify health management by building the patient and doctor information on a computer for future access and management. The system allows patients to access an online booking service to see if a doctor is available to secure an appointment available at their leisure, thereby avoiding unnecessary time off work, and helps patients manage their time. By either confirming or denying an appointment athlete, the portal reduces the amount of waiting time at the appointment and facilitates patient-flow, thereby decreasing time wasted in waiting. Also, the portal enhances communication amongst patients, doctors, and administrators, by allowing the users to post questions pertinent to their health, and to receive reliable responses. The portal was designed to enhance efficiency in administration, by providing the administrator with processes to track doctors, patient registrations and appointments in a streamlined manner. The admin, patient and doctor are provided with secure authentication processes to ensure patient data confidentiality and to mitigate unlawful access. The portal is also integrated to provide both online and face-to-face consultation and treatment services, to enhance patient service provision by facilitating patients who need instant medical advice via the portal service while complementing comprehensive diagnostic face-to-face inference and treatment in hospitals.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In traditional healthcare systems, patients visit hospitals and wait in long lines for an appointment, which is often tedious, inconvenient, and frustrating - in particular for elder patients, ill patients, or patients who had to travel long distances. More commonly than not, patients go to a hospital only to find out the doctor does not have a time slot for them or even finds out their appointment was cancelled with no bases of notice. This prevents patients from having prompt evaluations or treatment. Hospitals are challenged by the overwhelming hospital traffic and poorly managing walk-in patients at the hospitals without any appointment. Furthermore, patients records are often kept in binders or poorly kept all together when physicians see the patients, meaning that records and patients medical histories often don't even become available in the office until the patients arrive. When patient records are poorly maintained and there is a lapse in communicating between patients and physicians it is always going to erode the quality of care and increase the time- to-care which deteriorates patient satisfaction. For this reason, the need for an automatic hospital management and appointment system is increasing in society with hopes to improve patient registration, patient scheduling, record keeping, and communication to get some level of transparency and efficiency back into the healthcare system.

OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the hospital portal is to invest in automation and efficiency of healthcare management by digitizing all aspects of patient and hospital experience instead of doing everything manually. In local hospitals, patients have trouble booking appointments, knowing doctor availability, and keeping their medical history updated. The intention

of the portal is to computerize and create a centralized repository for all patient and doctor information so that it can be stored safely and effectively utilized when needed. One of its purposes is to enhance the reliability of online bookings and lessen long waits, unnecessary travel to the hospital, and a backlog of patient care. The online booking process encourages patients to schedule visits according to their own preferences, and provides the doctors the opportunity to approve or reject the appointment, and adjust their schedules in advance, and allows for easier flow of consultations and better time management for patients and providers.

In addition to this type of appointment management, the portal has the goal of facilitation communication and interactions between patients, doctors, and administrators. Patients would be able to communicate and post their healthcare related inquiries and a physician would be able to respond with great detail and even try to provide guidance in a timely manner without a patient needing to visit the hospital. Administrators would be able to work systematically within the portal to manage doctor registries, patient profiles, and appointment scheduling to prevent errors and to increase operational efficiencies in the hospital.

SYSTEM ANALYSIS

A. EXISTING SYSTEM

Currently, the traditional setup of a hospital often has a completely manual appointment scheduling system. Simply put, a patient must interact physically with a hospital to make an appointment, usually by standing in a long line and depending on the office staff to tell them if their physician is available. In turn, this means that patients wait a long time and add stress and resources to the process. Elderly patients, patients with severe health constraints, and patients who travelled long distances have to deal with this situation. It is also common for patients to arrive at the hospital, only to be informed by hospital staff that the doctor they hoped to see was not in or that their appointment had been cancelled just before they arrived.

Hospitals are suffering from this antiquated and manual approach as well, as there is no centralized approach to record a patient and their appointment. Appointments become inefficient and cause overcrowding due to a lack of scheduling protocol. Furthermore, patient charts and records are in physical files that are not easily accessible, delaying requests for the patient's history when the physician sits down to consult with the patient.

This reduced the quality of treatment the physician could provide because they may not have access to relevant results from previous tests, prescriptions, or consult notes. There is also minimal interaction between patients, outside of scheduling, thus patients do not receive quality care when they return for a follow up, there is limited guidance in between visits. Furthermore, there is usually little communication between a patient and their doctor, outside of seeing the patient in the hospital, which deprives the patient of any direction in between meetings. These inadequacies cause delays, poor use of time management and affect overall patient satisfaction.

B. PROPOSED SYSTEM

The proposed system is a state-of-the-art Hospital Portal, a comprehensive web-based application designed to address the challenges of a manual system. It automates patient registration, appointment scheduling, and record management, creating an efficient and user-friendly experience. Patients will be able to book an appointment online, at their discretion, see doctor availability in real-time, and receive immediate confirmations, all of which will reduce waiting times and limit unnecessary visits to the hospital. Doctors will be able to manage their schedules, access full histories of their patients, and answer patients' inquiries directly through the system. Administrators will have access to productive tools for managing hospital operations, tracking patient registrations, updating physician profiles, and maintaining an organized consultation schedule. Patients receive real-time appointment booking capabilities, allowing for patients to covert available slots into appointments in an instant and reduce the wait time and queues. With centralized record management, medical histories for patients are kept digitally, and doctors have access to the right information when they need it. Patients, doctors, and administrators each get secure authentication to log in to the system, maintaining sensitive information from third-party access. the portal enhances communication by allowing patients to post their questions online and receive timely follow-up from doctors. In sum, the portal ensures transparency and efficiency by reducing wait times, increasing workflow efficiency, and optimizing hospital resources.

Advantages include the reduction of wasted time, improved patient care, stronger doctor-patient communication, data management that would more secure and reliable, and coordination between the hospital and its patients.

SYSTEM DESIGN

A. MODULES

Registration Module: Allows patients and doctors to register using attributes like name, contact information, medical history, and specialization. Each user will receive their own unique registration ID.

Admin Module: This module will provide the administrator with capabilities to manage the doctors, approve new patient registrations, modify the schedule, and send messages to users by mail or SMS.

Appointment Module: Allows patients to schedule appointments by choosing a doctor, date and time, who can view and confirm the booking real-time.

Facility Module: Provides patients with extra features such as the ability to edit profiles, check appointment status, and securely log in/out.

Query Module: Allows patients to ask questions related to health, which doctors can then respond to directly the system itself.

B. INPUT DESIGN

The input design of the hospital portal significantly enhances the precision, usability, and efficiency of data entry. Patients and doctors alike interact with user-friendly forms that simplify registration and

appointment scheduling. The straightforward form facilitates efficient work while limiting confusion and enabling rapid completion, a situation highly valued in a healthcare environment where timely access to information is crucial.

Data integrity is assured through comprehensive validation checks at each data entry point. A user cannot enter inaccurate information, such as an invalid date, unfilled required fields, or incorrect information combinations. Users are also limited by the use of items like drop-down menus, radio buttons, and other pre-defined options such that inconsistency is minimized and bogus data input is unlikely.

When incorrect information is entered, either an error message will appear or the system will make an audible sound to signal that the patient needs to correct the information before submission. This warning captures user attention and encourages attention to the data form. By creating a data entry system that includes user-friendly forms, validation protocols, and error messages, the

C. OUTPUT DESIGN

The output design of the hospital portal ensures that all results generated from the information system are presented in a clear, organized, and user-friendly manner. The primary goal is to make information accessible and comprehensible to all users—patients, physicians, and administrators so they can make informed decisions quickly. For patients, the portal provides easy access to appointment confirmations, physician replies, and their personal schedules in real time. This immediate visibility of information enhances patient engagement and satisfaction while reducing confusion or missed appointments.

Physicians benefit from structured outputs that allow them to view relevant patient histories, upcoming appointments, and queries efficiently. By presenting this information in an organized and logical format, doctors can focus on patient care without being overwhelmed by unstructured or incomplete data. The system ensures that critical details are highlighted and easily retrievable, enabling physicians to make timely clinical decisions and maintain smooth communication with their patients.

Administrators require outputs that support operational oversight and strategic planning. The portal provides dashboards, reports, and industry-relevant summaries that help monitor hospital performance, track resource utilization, and identify areas for improvement. All outputs are designed to be versatile: they can be viewed directly on the screen, printed for physical records, or grouped as sample reports for archival purposes. This flexible approach to output design ensures that the hospital functions efficiently while maintaining accurate, accessible, and actionable information for all stakeholders.

D. DATABASE DESIGN

To ensure that hospital data is stored securely and efficiently, we utilize MySQL as the database management system. The data is normalized, removing redundancy and maintaining consistency. Each of the entities (patients, doctors, appointments, hospitals, and queries) relate to one another requiring

separate tables in the database containing primary and foreign keys. The relationships between the tables will also provide accuracy to the data being entered, maintained, and retrieved. Even as the data size increases, indexing and optimizing queries will help maintain performance and efficiency in retrieving the data. Security measures are in place (authentication, database, and data backups) that ensure the protection of sensitive data (medical related) from unauthorized access or loss.

SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

The Hospital Portal is developed as a web-based application that utilizes PHP for server-side logic, MySQL for database management, and HTML/CSS/JavaScript for the interface. PHP serves as the backbone of the application and manages key operations such as patient registration, scheduling appointments, doctor management, and user authentication. PHP communicates with the database to store and retrieve records. This ensures that all processes are secure and efficient. The client-side is formed of HTML, which provides the structure of the interface, CSS, which makes the interface visually appealing, and JavaScript, which provides interactivity and validation to enhance the user experience, create a better environment to use the application, and make it responsive to devices. Together, these technologies provide a cohesive environment in which patients, doctors, and administrators can communicate with the application.

The application is also implemented with security and scalability in mind. Role-based access control management limits which types of users (patients, doctors, and administrators) access which features to protect sensitive information. When patients access their file, information such as their medical history and personal information is safeguarded. The MySQL database is designed to reduce redundancy to strengthen reliability and indexes and optimized queries to keep a quick response rate, even under high usage. When the portal is deployed to the web server, the centralized platform can be accessed from anywhere there is network access.

PHASES OF IMPLEMENTATION

The Hospital Portal was developed through systematic iterations to ensure that its outputs would be accurate and trustworthy. During the test with sample data phase, we utilized several sets of dummy patient and doctor records to ensure that the system delivered the expected output. This established that the registration, appointment scheduling, and query handling modules correctly saved data and displayed the correct output. This established the validity of these modules and confirmed that each transaction (such as booking or creating an appointment) updated the database as intended.

Next, we addressed any errors that were detected. Input validation checks were enhanced and tested to ensure data entry had taken place correctly. For example, that phone numbers only contained numbers or that appointments could not be booked for a date prior to the testing phase. After verifying the requirements of the modules, we started testing each function verification against user requirements to assure functionality as intended and run integration testing to ensure that all modules worked together effectively. The end-to- end testing

validated that when patients registered and booked appointments, doctors and administrators were notified in real-time without conflicts, confirming that the system was ready for deployment.

USER TRAINING

Training is a crucial component of implementation since the success of the Hospital Portal relies on users being able to use it with confidence. A user manual was created that includes instructions for each task, such as how to log in, book an appointment, check a schedule, and manage records related to any patients. This user manual would serve as a constant reference for users and would lessen the dependence on technology staff. Moreover, the portal has on-demand help screens available as instructions were built right into the portal. An example of the live instructions was when users identified difficulties in filling out the forms or booking appointments. The help screens provided concise instructions that users could sift through when they needed assistance to ensure a better user experience.

In addition to documentation, there were live training demonstrations for patients, doctors, and administrators. Patients were shown how to create an account and book an appointment. Doctors were trained on how to check schedules and respond to queries from patients. Administrators were shown how to manage users and create reports based on the different roles in the portal. These live training demonstrations not only helped familiarize users with the portal; they also allowed the users to have their queries answered in real time. The hospital promoted multiple modes of training to ensure that all users were quickly and confidently engaged in the new digital system.

MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM

The Hospital Portal must be maintained to ensure that the system is stable, secure, and remains current after deployment. Perfective maintenance involves enhancement or expansion of the system through new functionality. For example, we could add telemedicine support to allow patients to consult with doctors virtually, or send automated text/email reminders to patients to help reduce missed appointments. More advanced features could include digital prescriptions, uploading laboratory results and integration with mobile health communities, to provide additional value to the system within modern healthcare.

At the same time, preventive maintenance is crucial to maintaining reliable system operation. Backing up the databases on a regular basis will help to protect against data loss, the application of security patches will help to protect sensitive patient information, and system performance monitoring will protect against any downtime. Preventive maintenance will also prepare the system for future capability in terms of service use, resource experience and patient load when the various components of the Hospital Portal are scaled without prompting performance issues. Using perfective and preventive maintenance, the Hospital Portals maintenance plan will ensure they are valuable tools that are reliable and secure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Hospital Portal will address the inadequacies of the manual hospital management system. Patients will experience reduced waiting times, easier appointment booking, and access to healthcare services. Doctors will have better control of their schedules and have immediate access to patient medical histories, promoting timely and accurate treatment. Administrators will have more streamlined table management, with less occurrence of errors and improved transparency.

The system mitigates occurrences of errors like double-booking and lost patient records by centralizing the data in a secure database. Real- time updates prevent miscommunication and modular queries that allow the patient to remain connected to the doctors outside of face-to-face visits. Ultimately, the Hospital Portal appears to be scalable, reliable, and adaptable for hospitals both large and small.

CONCLUSION

The Hospital Portal offers a secure, efficient, and user-friendly solution to modernize hospital management. By digitizing patient records, allowing online patient appointments, and smoothing out communication channels, the system addresses the problems associated with manual processes. It enables accurate data management, reduces patient waiting time, and improves doctor-patient interactions. Beyond efficiency, the system enhances the quality of healthcare delivery by providing doctors with rapid access to medical histories, which reduces paperwork and administrative time, and leads to improved patient satisfaction.

In conclusion, while the Hospital Portal is a tool for maintaining medical records, it offers a complete hospital management solution to facilitate transparency, efficiency, and overall quality of care.

FUTURE ENHANCEMENT

The Hospital Portal has considerable room for future improvements to improve its accessibility and efficiency. One of the very big improvements will involve the inclusion of a mobile application and SMS-based service that could allow patients to register, book their appointments, and receive updates on their phones. Over time, this will allow more users to have access to the system. Some people may not always have access to a desktop computer, but they may have access to their phones. More features could be added by possibly implementing automated SMS or email reminders to notify a patient about their upcoming appointment, a follow-up appointment, or a prescription refill. Although medical care may be preempted due to inclement weather or a factor preventing timely care, more and more patients in newer technology will rely on faster care. The system can be improved by being able to access laboratory reports, so a patient while registered will not have to return to the hospital to know his or her diagnostics. This information could also improve the portal in that some of the patient data could be improved with a QR code or biometric authentication.

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